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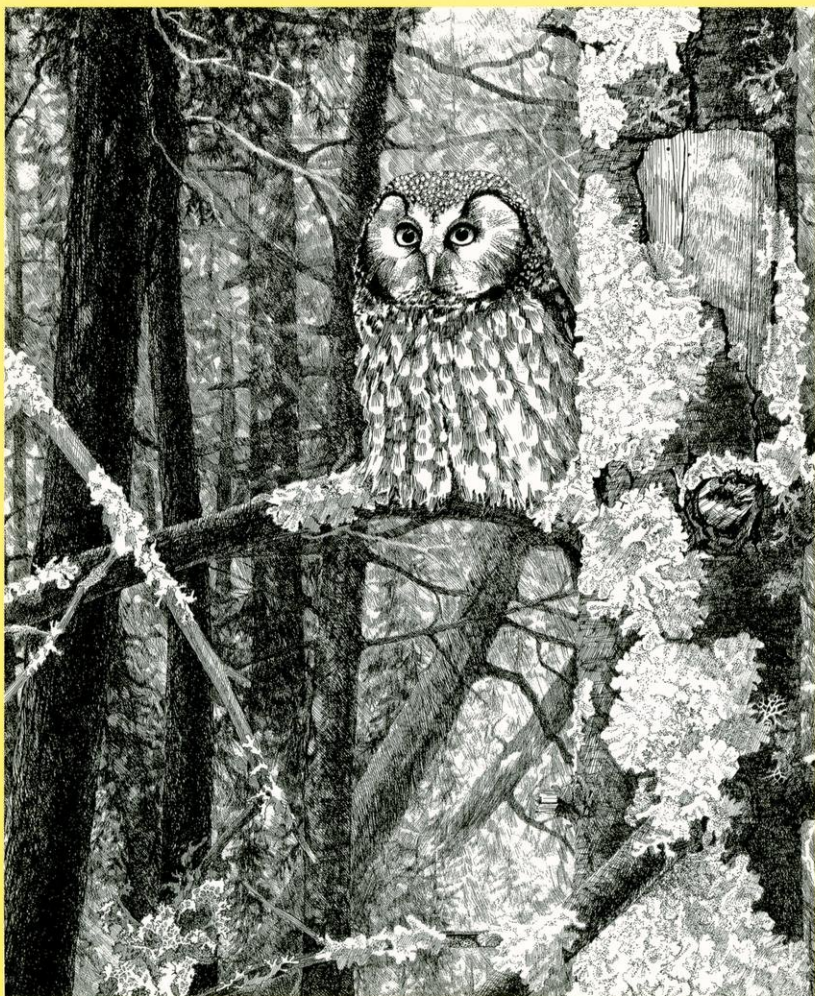
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The *Passenger* **PIGEON**



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THE PASSENGER PIGEON

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Send all manuscripts and related correspondence to the Editors. Information for "Seasonal Field Notes" should be sent to the Bird Reports Coordinator (see inside back cover). Art work and questions about the art should be sent to the Associate Editor for art (see left column). Manuscripts that deal with Wisconsin birds, ornithological topics of interest to WSO members, and WSO activities are considered for publication. For detailed submission guidelines, see pages 3-5 of the Spring 2000 issue (Vol. 62, No. 1) or contact the Editors. As a general guide to style, use issues after Vol. 60, No. 1, 1998.

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Front Cover: Boreal Owl as drawn by Robbye Johnson. This represents the least seen of the three owl species that invaded Wisconsin during the winter of 2004-2005.

Future or Now?

I remember, when I first started birding, listening to all those unfamiliar bird songs and calls on the Peterson *Birds of Eastern North America* vinyl records that I borrowed from my brother. I also remember being constrained to my dorm room stereo system, not to mention the unusual looks I'd get from my roommate or whoever would walk in while I was listening. Soon the vinyl gave way to cassettes which gave me more mobility, but their use was still pretty cumbersome. Fast-forward, rewind, fast-forward, rewind . . . trying to find a song, and that worthless 3-digit counter on the player, especially if the tape wasn't rewound or you didn't zero the counter if it were. Years later—and probably the most-used medium these days—the Compact Disk or CD and a hand-held CD player. What an advance that was for us birders. We now could quickly switch from one song to another in a matter of seconds, that is, if you had the right CD in the player. Unfortunately, because these CDs could only hold about 74–80 minutes of music, you had to reference two, three, or four different CDs if you wanted access to quality and quantity of songs. This meant you had to switch from one delicate CD to another, hoping that you didn't scratch them too badly.

The newest and probably fastest-growing medium these days is MP3 digital music and myriad of different MP3 players, such as the Apple iPod. These new players come with software, for your home computer, so you can convert your CD music files to MP3 files. Once they've been converted, these new files can be stored on the MP3 player's hard drive. These players have anywhere from 4 to 60 GB (Gigabyte) drives, which means you can store from several hundred to several thousand of these files/songs—no more fumbling with multiple cassettes or CDs in the field. Searching and finding bird songs is as quick as, if not quicker than, with your CD player. Species can be grouped by family, habitat, birding location, or any way you would like. You can have access to all of North American bird songs and much more at the touch of a few buttons.

For the last 7–8 years, I've used various Palm PDAs (Personal Data Assistant devices) for work and personal data storage. However, in the past few years I've also been using them in the field, to enter my birding observations on a checklist style database and then downloading them to AviSys birding database on my computer. The process is very simple, quick, and efficient. These hand-held devices (computers) are on the verge of taking birding to a whole new level. These little devices are evolving as fast as technology can go and birding has hopped on for the ride.

Some of these new generation hand-helds now have expanded memory which in turn has expanded their use as birding tools. They are no longer just phone and address data entry/storage devices. They have enough storage capacity for numerous file types such as MP3, photos, and text. There are related applications on these devices as well, for each of these file types such as a built-in MP3

player as well as a digital audio recorder. Some of these units have removable memory cards, further expanding their potential.

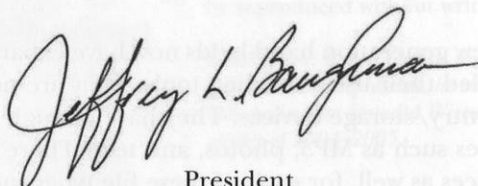
Besides binoculars and a spotting scope, most of us birders have a portable CD or MP3 player, 1–3 general field guides, 1–3 specialized field guides, a digital or SLR camera, and possibly a GPS unit packed in the car when we head out birding. What would you say if I were to tell you, that other than your binos and scope, all the rest could be carried in your shirt pocket? That's right, instead of carrying around a bulky fanny or back-pack we'll have a 3" × 4½" hand-held devices loaded with all the reference material we might need. Here's where I seen this "new" birding tool going . . .

Remember those CDs we converted to MP3 files? Well now they'll be readily accessible on the hand-held. Soon you'll see every possible field guide converted to digital format and stored on a memory card for your quick reference. You'll be able to insert one of these ¾" × 1" memory cards, containing your favorite field guide, into the hand-held and see an image, read text, and play vocalizations of any species. Instead of carrying a bulky pile of "book" field guides (they can stay at home in your library), you'll have a small pouch of memory cards each representing one of your favorite field guides.

Remember the birding database I use to keep track of sightings? Imagine this, you open up the database check-list and insert a memory card containing your favorite field guide. Highlight a species from the list, click a button and you see a series of images of that species; adult male, female, immature, juvenal, sub-adult plumages, etc. Click on a different button to read reference text for the species and then after pressing another button you are listening to various vocalizations of that species.

What about accessories? There have to be accessories! The vocalization doesn't sound right or you aren't sure of the species? Just connect a directional microphone to the hand-held, make a digital recording of the singing bird with the built-in digital recorder, and save it for farther study or documentation. You've found something unfamiliar, unusual, or rare and you want documentation. Use the recorder to narrate your documentation of the sighting. Now, connect a digital camera; mount it to your scope, and record images to the hand-held. You want to help others find this bird, so you attach your GPS unit and let the satellites do the work. You can even send an email to fellow birders or Wisbirdn right from the spot if you would like.

Sound like a far-off futuristic tale? Not really, it won't be long and this scenario may play out very close to the description I've given you. Most of what I've described, you can already do on a hand-held device but the integration of these features is not a reality yet. Stay tuned. It's coming soon.



President

A Boomer's Journal

Color Fund for *The Passenger Pigeon*

We hope all of you enjoyed Volume 67, Number 1 of *The Passenger Pigeon* that you received in May. We also hope you noticed the beautiful **color** maps on pages 37, 40, 41, 44, and 45. These were done at the request of the author and the cost was covered by his employer. In working on this with Allen Press (printer of *The Pigeon*), we discovered that the cost of doing color in the *Pigeon* has gone down from what it once was. There are some restrictions about placement that must be met, but it is not a major problem. Therefore, at the July Board of Directors' meeting, the Board voted to have color photos in the *Pigeon* from time to time, as appropriate, and to have the front cover photos or art in color for each issue, if appropriate.

If you would like to help provide for color photos in *The Passenger Pigeon*, you may do so by sending Christine Reel, WSO Treasurer, 2022 Sherryl Lane, Waukesha, WI 53188-3142 your check made out to WSO and marked Color Fund. As long as the Society can afford to do so, we will provide color covers and photos of state firsts or other record-setting birds. Thank you for helping the *Pigeon* in this fashion.

You can also help by taking those fantastic color shots of the birds you see and sending them to our Art Editor, David Kuecherer, 726 Harvard Drive, Neenah, WI 54956, dkuecherer@new.rr.com.

The Editors are most pleased to welcome Randy Hoffman as the new Bird Reports Coordinator, and also to thank Wayne Rohde for his service to WSO in this position for several years. Please send your Fall 2005 reports to Randy at the address given on the inside front cover of this issue.

In this issue you will see some color photos of state and seasonal record species. And since this issue contains the Winter 2004–2005 Seasonal Report about the massive invasion of Great Gray Owls, Northern Hawk Owls, and even some Boreal Owls, you will find that the filler art for this issue is all owls.

If you remember Fran Hamerstrom, or just love Prairie-Chickens, you will find some delightful reading in the first article in this issue, "A Boomer's Journal" by Marion Stocking. It is a loving tribute to Fran and her husband Fred and the work they did with this species for so many years. As this issue goes to press (in August), it is seven years since Fran died in August 1998, but the lessons to be learned from her life are still quite relevant.

Bettie and Neil Harriman, Editors



Great Gray Owl photographed by Cathy Gagliardi.

A Boomer's Journal

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WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

Darkest before dawn. A warm foggy night. Down the road the tail lights of the car that dropped me off are going, are gone. I have my orders: under the fence, walk a quarter mile straight out over the prairie, duck under another fence, walk some more, and find a blind. Clutching my clipboard and spotting scope, I wriggle under the roadside fence, soaking up some of the condensed fog off the grass. On into the blackness—no stars penetrate the fog—guessing at a quarter mile. Wonderful! I find the next fence and crawl under. Keep going. How far? Keep going. Keep . . . Oh, yes. I remember, "If you think you're lost, get down on the ground and scan the horizon. The blind will show up as a box shape against the sky." Down. Sure enough; there it blessedly is—Hanson blind. Crawl in under it, settle on the little bench, peer out the viewing slit into the dark (maybe a shade lighter now). Record the time: 5:05 a.m. Close the flap. Listen, listen hard, at the silence.

Then something begins to peep, then burble—Western Meadowlark. And then—a Song Sparrow?—no, buzzer—a Savannah. The dawn cho-

rus on the Buena Vista Marsh is tuning up. I recognize the whistling winnow of the Common [now Wilson's] Snipe's courting flight—nothing like the rough "bdrupp" we used on snipe hunts at camp.

Suddenly, in close, a whirr of wings and a soft thud as a large bird hits the ground right in front of me. I hear it pound its feet and emit a low Hooo-hoo-hoo, each Hoo a little higher. The resonance suggests someone blowing across the top of an empty beer bottle. Booming. The first Greater Prairie-Chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido pinnatus* himself) has arrived. I crack the canvas viewing slit cautiously out and make out a dark football-shape with vertical projections fore and aft. I can now see other cocks strolling out of the grass and taking up their territories on the booming ground. Now to map their territories and read their bands, if they're banded. Impossible.

But dawn is beginning to flood the marsh, the cocks are hard at it—a chorus of thumps and booms. Now I can see that when they boom the extension at the rear is their raised fan-tail, while at the other end the distinctive pinnae (three-inch feather tufts) rise straight up, as below them his great orange air sacs puff out. When another

cock approaches, the defender attacks, and they both fly straight up. Now I see how mapping territories is going to be possible. The birds know exactly where the lines are. Soon the booming ground adds a steady barnyard clucking to the solo booms. And look at that! One upper band has two big numerals on it—easy to read. I'm in business. My boomer life on the prairie has begun.

I have to confess that all of this but the date and the time are from my 56-year-old memory. If anyone—Dan Berger, maybe—says Hanson was closer to the road, I defer.

NOW LET'S BACK UP A DAY

It was the evening of 2 May 1958 in Plainfield, Wisconsin, and, with daylight-saving time, still light when Dave and Hazel Cox and I drove down Wisconsin Route 73 to where county KK came in on the left. Dave turned right onto a dirt road and pulled into a yard between a barn and a long unpainted frame house—a very plain house of well-weathered wood: two stories, grey clapboards that appeared never to have felt the swish of a paintbrush. Where to enter? There was an ell off to the left, and we pushed carefully (the door missing some panels) into a shed with a hand pump and sink. This led to the kitchen, where Frederick and Fran Hamerstrom greeted us.

Fran (pronounced in her proper Bostonian accent Frahn) was ebullient in her greeting, an outstandingly pretty woman, with soft brown curly hair, dressed in work clothes with a splendid Navajo turquoise bracelet which she said she never took off. Tall Fred (known in the family as Hammy)

handsome in an elegantly trimmed white beard and moustache, smiled down graciously, nodded silently, and disappeared. Hazel set down the food she had brought, as requested, and as she and Fran chatted like long-lost school pals I asked the way to the bathroom. "Back out through the shed. First building on your right." I later heard that Fred declared that "the only thing you flush around here are grouse."

Back in the kitchen, as Hazel and Fran talked, I was left to gaze around me. The kitchen (no running water, but electricity) had a refrigerator, a stove, and a wash bench with a water pail, a basin, a silver mug full of toothbrushes—and a slop pail on the floor below. A sideboard piled high with catalogues and egg cartons. The floor stacked with cages and traps. I could not imagine then how many thousands of gabboons, boomers (hold on; definitions follow) and distinguished guests from around the world would be fed from this little kitchen.

The living room provided a symphony of contrasts, dramatically representing the double lives Fred and Fran led—the inheritance of elegance in their early upbringing and the stripped-down economy of the lives they had since lived as naturalists. The magnificent six-foot-tall Royal Oak columnar wood stove, cast iron with baroque curlicues, dominated—wood heat in high nineteenth-century style. The elegant oak parquet confessed that owls flew freely over it. (There were four: Great Horned Owl Minerva and a downy owlet free-flying indoors, plus two more on the screened porch.) A heavy fishnet covered the door to Fred's office to keep out intruders (principally owls). Animals

were at home indoors here. A scrabbling on my jeans leg called my attention to Domino, daughter Elva's pet ferret. Tiny squeaks issued from a stack of mouse cages, each with its little drinking tube. In contrast, a grand armchair suggested the Renaissance; elegant silver serving dishes stood on open shelves. In a window dangled strings of large bird bands. I also noticed sleigh bells, socks drying over the stove, tape and electronic equipment stacked on tables. Book cases were jammed tight and books and magazines towered from the floor. These people were readers and scholars. An elegant gold-framed oval mirror reflected the scene from the wall above a sofa buried under what looked to be field notes. Someone upstairs was playing a guitar. Rugged efficiency co-existed with intrinsic refinement.

Fran told me to "take the little room at the top of the stairs, this side of the ballroom." She explained that the house had been almost completed when the builder, an English gentleman named Walker, the first judge of Waushara County, was called off to the Civil War, leaving the ballroom as it has remained, its lath unplastered, now serving as a bunkroom for male boomers and gabboons. At the top of the stairs I paused to study a tall display of rodent skulls, illustrating, if my memory serves, identification by dentition. I unrolled my sleeping bag and hurried back down. It was time for boomers' briefing.

ABOUT THOSE BOOMERS

Boomers were the volunteers who had been granted the privilege of sitting out on the Buena Vista Marsh and

keeping track of Greater Prairie-Chicken booming grounds. Beside Dave and Hazel Cox I remember the Fristers from Milwaukee were in the party that was probably a Wisconsin Society for Ornithology (WSO) weekend, organized by Ed Peartree. Dan Berger was living with the Hamerstoms that season as a gabboon and needed no briefing. A gabboon was an apprentice, primarily to Fran's hawk studies, a name, Fran explained, for the menial slaves kept by some African tribe. Like Dan Berger and Helmut Mueller, many a gabboon went on to a distinguished career in ornithology. (I often in later years during hawk migration saw Dan and Helmut at their Cedar Grove Ornithological Station near Sheboygan on Lake Michigan.) Look up the often hilarious reminiscences of gabboonships in the festschrift honoring the Hamerstoms (Bolen 1992).

The briefing room (Fran's study after the booming season) had on the wall behind the long table a museum-quality Chinese silk embroidered screen, perhaps five feet long and four tall, of birds in a bamboo thicket. For my eleven years as a boomer I would sit across from it and gaze on its exquisite detail and delicacy of color. Over those years some broken threads would ravel out, but it never failed to nourish me with its beauty.

Fred held the briefing that evening, from 8:30 to 10, instructing us boomers on our responsibilities. "There are thirty-five booming grounds this year, where the cocks display on their territories, with blinds on fifteen of them. A gabboon will escort you to our study site in time to be in your blinds before the chickens come in at first light." Dan Berger would be

my escort. With our spotting scopes we were to map each cock's territory and if he was banded to record the numbers on his bands. We were to keep a detailed time log of everything we observed, with special attention if a hen came on the booming ground. We received a form to fill out, which we would turn in, with all our notes, when we returned to the house for debriefing. There was more instruction. And more. Minerva flew back and forth, scattering papers to the floor. I was suffering from sensory and information overload and took few notes. I was ready for bed, knowing I'd be up long before first light.

But sleep was slow coming. I could smell bacon being pre-fried for quick crisping in the morning. I could hear the owls hooting softly in the fog. Through my open window I luxuriated in a counterpoint concert of Whip-poor-wills and timberdoodles (American Woodcock). The timberdoodles were new to me, peenting their low blat and then sky-dancing, spiraling up and up and up with a liquid chittering, and then descending with a twittery burble. Whip-poor-wills drifted me back to my New Hampshire camp days, when I compulsively counted the repetitions in a single call. I fell asleep trying to figure out how many nightbirds I was hearing.

The next thing I heard sounded like a flock of sparrows chirping in my home lilac bush. Wake up! It's four o'clock, and the sound was Fran crisping up the bacon for our early breakfast. Scrambled eggs and coffee I remember. I asked "What can I do to help?" "You can empty the slop bucket." Now that was something I could do. But I recall one helpful soul stacking the plates as people finished

and hearing Fran's commanding voice: "DON'T STACK THOSE PLATES." "Oops, sorry," came the reply. "You stack them and you have to wash egg off the bottoms of them too." That was a lesson in the economy of a house with pumped water heated on the stove. Getting boomers up, fed, and into their transport in time required a tightly choreographed routine. I was impressed.

WHERE ARE WE, REALLY?

Fred has written about the country we would be observing as he first explored it in 1935—a hundred thousand acres of sand and peat:

Widespread marshes and timbered swamps once dominated the landscape; they were drained and chopped out. Fire ate out the peat. Bluejoint grass and willow, or aspen where the peat was burned, now hold the old marsh beds. White and red pine once grew on the better soils of the intervening sand ridges and island, jack pine and scrub oak on the poorer. The saw mill has claimed the good timber, fires destroyed the leaf litter which grew it, jack pine and scrub oak have taken its place. The old lumber holdings were drained and cut up into farms. Poor soil, unseasonable frosts, and drainage taxes drove out all but the hardiest farmers.

It was this ravaged region, "lumbered off in the [18]50s . . . drained, burned, farmed, abandoned," to which he had been hired to study for wildlife management (F. N. Hamerstrom, Jr. 1939).

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Now you need to meet my cast of characters. First, Hazel and Dave Cox.

After I had met them in Beloit's Ned Hollister Bird Club (NHBC), they had adopted me into their Wisconsin birding life. The Coxes had helped found the NHBC and were active in the WSO, where Hazel served for years as secretary and Dave had a term as president. Dave Cox had achieved his bird-banding permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service after apprenticing to Ed Peartree, and the two of them would soon initiate me into the banders' ranks. With the Coxes, almost every Sunday was a birding expedition. Dave and Hazel were always like family to my husband David and me. When they acquired the Honey Creek farm that would, when they were gone, become the WSO's David and Hazel Cox Nature Center, my husband and I were often there. One summer when Hazel was recuperating in Beloit after a fall, my student Linda Beattie earned the first undergraduate major in oral history recording Hazel's autobiography.

Now about Frederick and Frances Hamerstrom. I knew them as both gracious and demanding (*both* in both senses). I was aware that they were distinguished field ornithologists, working for the Wisconsin Department of Conservation on a fifteen-year Greater Prairie-Chicken project. I knew about Alfred O. Gross's studies initiated in 1928, with the support of Aldo Leopold, to assure perpetuation of a then-valuable game species (Gross 1930).

But I had a lot more to learn, much of it only when Fran began publishing her ten books. There I found out that she was born in 1907 to a wealthy Boston family, from whom she ingeniously managed to conceal her childhood adventures in hunting, fishing,

falconry, and veterinary skills. (Don't take my word for it; read those serious, hilarious, altogether extraordinary books yourself starting perhaps with her last, *My Double Life* (Hamerstrom 1994).

Fred and Fran had met at a fraternity party while he was still a Dartmouth undergraduate. They very soon realized that they were in love and that both craved careers in the outdoors. They married in 1931: wonderfully well matched in their scientific and esthetic and intellectual passions, beautifully complementary in their personalities. A subtext of most of Fran's books is a love-letter to Hammy. Their children Elva and Alan were similarly complementary—Elva, a wildlife artist; Alan, when last I heard, a yacht broker.

We never felt intimate enough to call Fred Hammy, let alone the European version, Hammi, with the *a* as in *Fran*. In her books, Fran refers to him as Frederick—occasionally as Hammy—but I shall refer to him here as the Fred I knew. I remember him as a handsome quiet man, over six feet tall, with that beautiful white moustache and beard, his eyes always smiling, even when he was correcting my misreading of a band. He had taken his Master's degree with Paul Errington at Iowa State College and then, after two years at Necedah as project game manager for the depression-era Resettlement Administration (where he and Fran became deeply interested in the Greater Prairie-Chicken) the two of them enrolled in Aldo Leopold's new program at the University of Wisconsin, where Fran became the first woman to take an advanced degree under Leopold, her M.S., and Fred took his doctorate (Hamerstrom, F. N., Jr. 1983).

I myself had something of a double

life. I had always known I'd be either a biologist who was a frustrated English major or vice versa. Although Fred was the English major, his writing was, as far as I know, all in scientific journals. Fran also published prolifically on her research, but when I first knew her I felt an odd tension between us. I longed for her scientific knowledge and expertise. She wished she could be "a writer." I remember telling her to just write, and I did pry a poem out of her for the *Beloit Poetry Journal*, Spring 1970:

Lullaby 1969

We got to the moon
but babies are dying
babies who never asked to be born
too many children and
more coming soon
is there space on the moon . . .
they are crying and dying
yelled at and shelled at
is there space on the moon?

To the end of her life she would care passionately about what the human species is doing to itself, and the rest of creation, through destruction of its habitat.

Fran was also a born story teller, a born writer—accurate, graceful, eloquent—with that glorious sense of humor that could see herself from outside and share the laughter. Like their friend Konrad Lorenz, she had a double life both as a pioneering scholar and as a writer who could share knowledge with a general audience. It wasn't until I was re-reading for this article that I discovered in my copy of Fran's *Harrier: Hawk of the Marshes* (Hammerstrom 1986) her inscription: "For Marion—who encouraged me to write—with gratitude and love." Although I

cannot imagine that she would not have found her career as a writer without my encouragement, I was profoundly moved to discover those words.

I should add that Fran was also a gifted artist, with awards for her painting. See her Prairie-Chicken (Fig. 1) on the cover of *The Passenger Pigeon* (Spring 1970) and a handsome drawing of Turkey Vultures for a *Beloit Poetry Journal* cover (Spring 1979).

BACK (FINALLY) TO THE HANSEN BOOMING GROUND

As I watched and listened and mapped and counted and recorded bands, that first morning flew by. I'd had thirteen cocks, (only two of them banded: one, left leg red band, right leg white 15 over red; the other, left leg red), but no hens, no predators, no surprises. At the appointed hour I flushed the last birds and trekked back to the road, where Dan Berger awaited me. I silently thanked the Coxes for having arranged for us to go out two mornings. I still had a whole day ahead of me in this new world.

First came second breakfast. It may have been grilled cheese sandwiches. It may have been some baked treat like kugel, brought by a boomer. Fred was immediately at work processing our maps and chronologies, asking questions, correcting errors. He seemed to know the band numbers and territories of every banded cock on the prairie. Then the rest of the crowd departed and Fred and Fran went back to bed.

In the afternoon, Fred vanished into his study and Fran went about her "spare time" work, generously allowing

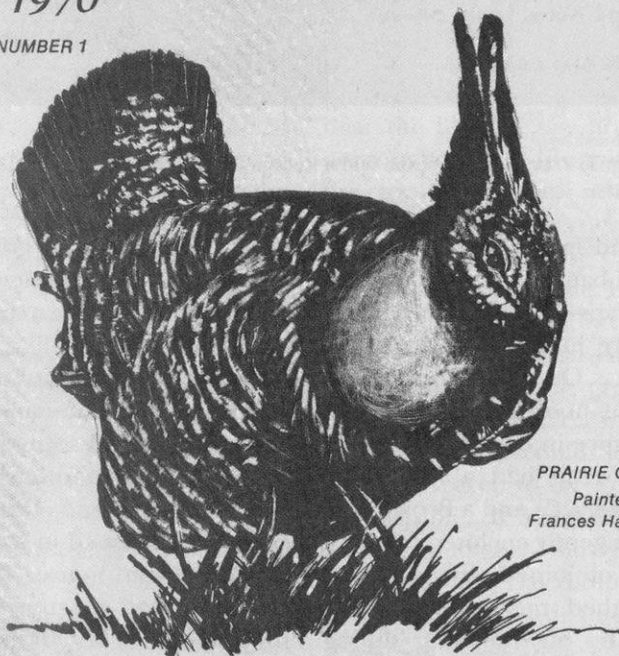
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Spring 1970

VOLUME 31, NUMBER 1



PRAIRIE CHICKEN

Painted by
Frances Hamerstrom

Frances Hamerstrom

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Figure 1. Prairie-Chicken drawing by Fran Hamerstrom as it appeared on the Spring 1970 cover of *The Passenger Pigeon* (Vol. 31, No. 1).



Figure 2. Fran Hamerstrom and a Red-shouldered Hawk — 4 May 1958

the Coxes and me to watch. She was trapping and banding raptors. We saw her kestrel traps—a rat or mouse tethered as a lure in a bal-chatri trap, a chicken-wire Quonset hut with monofilament nooses across the top. There were mice in one-pound Prince Albert cans. Fran had a Red-shouldered Hawk (Fig. 2) and a Broad-wing (Fig. 3), each gently enclosed in a ventilated tube of joined tin cans. She banded, weighed, measured, and collected parasites on the living/dining room table and the floor.

I remember now that this was a few months after the serial killer and ghoulish Ed Gein had been apprehended at his home in Plainfield. (Gein attracted international attention and was to be the inspiration for Norman Bates' role in Hitchcock's *Psycho* and for another serial killer, Buffalo Bill in *The Silence of the Lambs*.) Fran said that

when Elva and Alan got home from school on the day the news broke—the day the butchered carcass of a neighbor was found dangling upside down from a beam—she asked them, “Do you know someone named Ed Gein?” “Oh, sure. He’s a sort of nice old guy. He invited us out to his house, but we haven’t got there.” Fran added that sightseers swarmed in from all over to see the Gein house, the graveyard where he had exhumed bodies, and his belongings scheduled for auction once he was safely incarcerated for life. Five weeks before I arrived in Plainfield, the Gein house had been mysteriously torched. Nevertheless, Fran sighed, the morbidly curious continued to pour in. One couple in an out-of-state car drove right into the Hamerstrom’s yard and asked how to find the site of the Gein house. Fran informed them with a straight face



Figure 3. Fran Hamerstrom and a Broad-winged Hawk—4 May 1958

that the townspeople had become so irritated at the thrill-seekers swarming over the town that they'd put out the word that the house had been burned, hoping to discourage the gawkers. But "since you folks have come all this way, I might as well tell you that this is the house." Cameras clicked. No one ever accused Fran Hamerstrom of lacking a sense of humor.

Later in the afternoon, Fran arranged for the Coxes and me to go into a blind at the edge of a Sharp-tailed Grouse dancing ground. We were eager to see these birds, similar to the Prairie-Chickens, but with long light-colored pointed tails and purplish air sacs, without pinnae. Like the chickens, their dance involved foot-stamping and wing-lowering and sac-puffing, but their high-pitched calls were unlike a Prairie-Chicken's boom. We were in the blind by 3:30 p.m., and seven birds finally flew in from the southwest at 5:10. I began to take notes. Unlike Prairie-Chickens, they seemed very shy but finally settled in

near the blind. I saw no bands. One nervous cock flew five minutes later to the top of a tree, returning after twenty minutes. One cock made what I could only describe as "worried sounds" the whole time. Finally at 5:40 they began to dance, but two minutes later when a Northern Harrier moved in and perched, the grouse miraculously disappeared. As we waited out the Harrier we could see that each bird had frozen to the ground—virtually invisible. At 6 o'clock the Harrier gave up and the Sharp-tails flew off. Today, reading David Sibley's description of their "weird, unearthly hoots *yooowum, gyowdowdyom, gloooowum . . .*" (Sibley 2000), I could wish to have had more of a concert.

Next morning we observed chickens again. But it was a cold day with a sharp east wind, and I took no personal notes. Somewhere, I fantasize, is an archive of more than 7,000 boomers' maps and field notes, where, had I world enough and time, I could recover what I saw and heard. As it is I

carry a memory of Savannah Sparrows, American Golden-Plovers, and—wonderful—a flight of Sandhill Cranes, a first for me, remembering Aldo Leopold's eloquent "Marshland Elegy," in which he imagines this "symbol of our untamable past" might vanish off the marsh with "a silence never to be broken" (Leopold 1966). To hear its bugling cry over the marshland was to me a great gift. Today I give thanks to the pioneering Wisconsin organizations like the WSO and the International Crane Foundation that have worked with great success to protect these and other crane species around the globe.

Next year

On 4 April 1959, twenty-one of us gathered for briefing under the screen of silken birds. This time I knew to take notes, so here is a record of one of Fred's briefings.

I. Introduction

A. "This is the peak of the breeding season, and hens are coming in in numbers. Watch for banded hens."

B. "Note which cocks are mating NOW. No cock is in mating condition all spring, only for about three weeks. Get any distinguishing features of mating cocks."

C. Then we got an individual briefing for each blind. Mine would be Schmickle. "Watch for a difficult banded hen. She's been in two days, but the wrong left leg colors have been reported. Read the colors carefully on the left leg. Up to ten other hens have been in, several banded. There have been four to six cocks."

II. How to find your blind and how to behave.

A. If lost, scrunch down and scan the horizon.

B. If the birds are in, flush them. "Don't worry; they'll return."

C. When you get in

i. Close all the windows till the cocks get really going.

ii. "The harder they're at it, the freer you are."

D. Leaving: "Wait till at least 7:00, unless it's pouring rain. But it makes no difference if they're flushed at the end of the morning."

III. Note taking.

A. "You may make a copy of your notes, but you must leave the original."

B. "Keep a detailed chronology: every twenty minutes or so do a new count, how many cocks, how many hens."

i. "Time every arrival and departure: "5:03, 2 hens in from north" etc.

ii. Mating: which cock, which hen, where on the map, what time.

IV. Mapping.

A. "Get your territories mapped early. The blind is usually on the east edge."

B. Make a key: "banded, not banded, not checked."

C. "You may also be able to identify a cock by broken primaries, scars on air sacks, missing tail feathers, etc. Under tail coverts are very varied."

V. Distinguishing sex, species, and visitors.

A. "The male has the orange color—eyebrow and air sack—and the long pinnae (ear tufts). Females are irregular. They may come and go; they may cluster. They usually drift on and off. Record the maximum in sight at one time."

B. There may be some sharp-tails in.

"They have no neck tufts; the air sac is lavender; the breast is white with little dark W's at the top; they have dancing grounds, not booming grounds. There may be some chicken-sharptail hybrids."

i. The hybrid has short neck tufts.

ii. The hybrid cock's air sack may go either way—orange or lavender.

C. "Pay attention to late arrivals. A resident cock is recognized. A visitor is always in a fight and usually gets thrown out."

VI. Copulations: the booming ground is the mating ground.

A. Note how many cocks involved.

B. Note which cock mounted, and where on the map (inside or outer edge).

C. Note whether copulation was disturbed or not.

D. Estimate probability of success.

i. "The inside cocks must be tougher than the outside cocks; they can't back up. Once he's squarely mounted, it's probably a success."

ii. "A successfully mounted hen usually ruffles her feathers and shakes very hard. And disappears at once. If unsuccessfully, she may ruffle and stay around."

VII. Bands. Normal banding is two on one leg (usually the right), one on the other.

A. On the right, the lower is the state band, aluminum, red, green, yellow or black, with year and serial number, hard to see and not readable. The upper is the "reader" band with a large number: white, yellow, red, or green.

B. On the left, the same as the lower right, color with a serial number.

C. Your priorities:

i. Banded female.

ii. Banded visiting cock,

iii. Banded resident cock.

NEXT MORNING

Out in Schmeikle blind at 4:00 a.m. it was cold and windy, with some moonlight behind the clouds. While waiting for the chickens, I enjoyed the Vesper Sparrow's descending trills ("Listen to my pretty si-i-i-inging"). Snipe winnowing, like water being poured out of a bottle—a spooky gurgling. I could see Harriers gliding low over the marsh and hear Horned Larks ascending, twittering like English Skylarks. The whole expedition was worth it for the prairie dawn chorus. At 4:30, four cocks flew in, but a darkening sky and high wind quieted them down. At 5:15, I had five cocks (only one banded) and three females: two of the hens unbanded, the third, just arrived, I was proud to record wore red 13 over yellow on the right, black 32 on the left. The cool hens provoked much frantic booming, but, alas, no copulations.

The next morning I was back in Schmeikle. Five cocks and two unbanded hens in. While I was watching one hen I glanced back and caught the other ruffling. Oh, no! I'd missed the big scene—if there was a big scene. She pecked around eating, then shortly after flew off. Success? I hated being uncertain. The second hen flew off early, and the cocks had wandered away by 6:15.

A YEAR LATER

On 16 April 1960, I had a quiet morning in Anderson blind. At 6:00 a

Rough-legged Hawk flew in, flushed the eight cocks, and perched for a while on a fencepost. Only seven returned, and at 6:40 a Harrier flew over, flushing four.

At debriefing Fred said it had been a slow spring in the establishing of booming grounds. He was paying close attention to cyclic phenomena, not only the apparent ten-year cycle in grouse populations, but also to snowshoe hare and even business cycles—a concern of game managers since at least 1928 (Gross 1930). Fred said “cycles seemed to be clear in the northern hemisphere only, and more obvious the farther north.” This was a new idea to me. Indeed, talking to any biologist I come up with a lifetime’s supply of unanswered questions—enough to inspire the career I never had when I settled into English.

“WITH HEY HO, THE WIND AND THE RAIN.”

In 1961, 5 May was an unforgettable day for the Stocking family. I had arranged to go booming with my husband, David, who had become what the British call a “keen birder” and a licensed cooperator at our Turtle Creek banding station. It was a cold spring. We had had frost three nights in May, and the weather was dark and windy, but we left Beloit early and birded on the way to Plainfield, checking Goose Pond and byways where Whistling [now Tundra] Swans were ducking like huge puffs of whipped cream on cornfield ponds. Suddenly somewhere north of Arlington the car began to make a fearful racket. We limped into Portage, where I swear the owner of the auto dealership was out on the

sidewalk rubbing his hands. He could tell that *that* car wasn’t going anywhere. And he was right, since we had thrown a piston rod and then driven miles on back roads. We purchased the cheapest vehicle on the lot—a little run-down Nash coupe—and continued to Plainfield.

It was dark when we pulled into the yard. Strange. No other cars? No lights on? We knocked, hollered, and pushed our way in. No one home. Now what? Before I could break into tears, a car pulled up, and Fran rushed in crying, “There you are! We’ve been trying all day to phone you to say not to come. The weather’s too miserable. There are wind warnings out. But since you’re here, sit down. We can probably put you out tomorrow anyway if the weather isn’t too bad.”

Since Dave was new and I can always use a refresher, Fran briefed us, the only time in ten visits that we got her show. And it was a show. She acted out every detail we should observe and emphasized everything so vividly we couldn’t possibly forget.

“Sit **dead still** until the birds are **full booming**.”

“Keep a running diary of **everything**: coyote, skunk, hawk, tractor, and someday there will be a bear.”

“Don’t leave before 7:00, and **never** leave the ground if there’s a hen on, even if it takes till 10 a.m.”

She asked me how I’d tell a hen from a cock. Gulp. By behavior? “No. That’s how the **cock** tells. **You** tell by the length of the neck tufts. The chickens can’t tell by appearance. “If the cock acts like a lady, he’s treated like a lady.”

To illustrate the cock’s response to behavior rather than appearance, she recalled “three beautiful sleek hens

and one crippled one on the booming ground. The crippled hen had to throw out her wings to keep from falling [Fran flapped about] and she was [Fran smiling broadly] the belle of the ball. She was mounted four times in one morning while the cocks ignored the smooth sleek ones." This story seemed to give Fran enormous satisfaction.

On the sharptail hybrids: "The males are tremendous fighters but have never been seen to mount a hen. Though the hen hybrids seem fertile, the males are apparently sterile. But those hybrid hens flirt ineffectively, run too far, flirt their wings too far off."

"The chances," she said, "were against our seeing Prairie-Chicken hens, but if they come on the cocks have a 'Ladies present!' call—like the high honking of Canada Geese. Most of the hens are mated now, but there's been some plowing lately, and a hen will come back to be re-mated if her nest has been plowed."

Fran then treated us to a dramatic four-act performance of the hen's seductive behavior. 1) "When she first comes on she's shy and hides. It usually takes about five visits before she's mounted." 2) "Her next visit she puts on a display of indifference to all the frantic booming and fighting around her. She sticks up her long, slim neck, strolling coolly, while the cocks go wild." 3) "Next visit, she starts flirting. She trots and flicks her wings." 4) "Finally she's downright seductive." [Fran is acting this all out, eloquently. Is this the behavior she had learned at Milton Academy and Smith?] "The cocks make nuptial bows, slowly, with spread wings. The hen reciprocates with the same poses. It's like a minuet—a gor-

geous thing to watch. A cock will never force a hen, but if she spreads her wings, she's ready." You'll find a deliciously detailed account of "The love life of the prairie hen," with photographs, in Fran's *Strictly for the Chickens* (1980). The book came with a jacket photo of a strutting prairie hen superimposed on a glamorous formal portrait of Fran in a ball gown, descending a grand staircase in exactly the pose of the chicken.

"On the 64,000 acres that are being worked here," she continued, "almost all the males' bands have been read. We banded thirty-four last winter, ten the year before, two hundred the year before that. About 110 banded birds are still alive. The total population is about 500. That's a real decline."

After the briefing Fran mentioned that last winter she and her gabboons had responded to a Snowy Owl invasion with an enthusiastic banding project. She spoke about a Snowy feeding on rats at a city dump, and eating "runner muskrats, one coot, and some crippled ducks." My husband David commented that on the way up we'd noticed a dead Snowy Owl beside the road. "Did you collect it?" "Well, no; we were on the freeway." To which Fran straightened up and demanded, "Marion, why didn't you throw your pocketbook out the window?" For a fuller account of that winter's owl-banding adventures, look up her article in *Audubon Magazine* (Hamerstrom 1962). It was the first evidence of her genius in writing scientific material for a general audience. I used it as a model for article-writing in my advanced writing classes at Beloit College. But it was still to be eight years before she published her first book, *An Eagle to the Sky* (Hamerstrom

1970b). Then followed her two children's books, her classic *Walk When the Moon Is Full* (Hamerstrom 1975) and *Adventure of the Stone Man* (Hamerstrom 1977).

Next morning, on 6 May before 7:00, Dan Berger let David and me off in a light rain for Meils blind, behind an electric fence. Ten cocks came on, but by 6:30 it was blowing hard, with only four visible, not booming, just sitting or feeding. They drifted on and off the ground until at 7:05 it was pouring rain and Dan soon arrived to pick us up.

The Hamerstoms graciously invited us to stay over and try again the next morning. I was put to work helping to make the bal-chatri traps that Dan Berger and Helmut Mueller had adapted from traditional bird traps in India. I learned how to make a string of monofilament nooses, looping them over a thick knitting needle, and in my notes I have a diagram of how to attach them to the chicken wire of the trap. I learned to recognize "a wing" as a Broad-winged Hawk, a "tail" as a Red-tailed Hawk, a "shoulder" as a Red-shouldered Hawk.

Fran told one story after another. I wish I'd kept more notes. I remember she expressed her contempt for what the British call "tickers"—people who just want to tick off a species on their life list. A couple from another part of the country had made reservations to observe the chickens, and they burst in that evening, gushing, "We don't have to stay! We saw a Prairie-Chicken on the way in, so we have it for our life list." "You did? Where did you see it?" "Oh, right on your road as we came in just now." I wish I could remember whether Fran congratulated them and sent them on their way or whether she

couldn't resist informing them they'd seen a Ruffed Grouse.

Another story was about Fran's being in a long caravan of birders way out on the Nebraska plains. A little old farmer stood by the road, with his hat over his heart and his head bowed on the assumption that it was a funeral procession. Then he heard laughter from the cars and looked up. She had no idea what he made of this obviously not funereal procession.

Later in the day we went out for a raptor-banding lesson, observing how the bal-chatri traps were dropped from the open sliding door of the VW microbus, and seeing how Fran gently handled the birds, quieting them in the appropriate-sized tin cans. We stopped to collect a hawk a farmer had been keeping in a cage. He complained that it wasn't eating, and indeed the bird appeared thin and weak. Back at the microbus, Fran announced, "I think it's just starving." She reached in a tin, pulled out a live mouse, broke it in half (gasp!) and stuffed half down the hawk's throat. When she offered the other half, the hawk seized it and was on its way back to health.

Come supper time, Dave and I prepared to run in to Plainfield for supper, but Fran said, "Hammy, isn't it time to finish off that Black Angus that's been hanging on the porch all winter? We need that porch for the owl." He agreed, and she brought in a fine chunk of beef and carved it into generous steaks. She then announced that she had a head of cauliflower, which she proceeded to put in the pressure cooker. (I confess I winced, having been indoctrinated to cook cauliflower, like sweet corn, no longer than four minutes.) When the cooker

was muttering away she set the small table in the middle of the living room, heated a skillet, and when it was zinging hot lay down each steak (loud *whoosh*), immediately turned it over (*whoosh*) and put it on a plate. She drained what was left of the cauliflower and served it around. When I sat down, she said, "Marion, you'll feed Ambrose." Ambrose was the young Great Horned Owl, still downy. She plunked the agreeable owl on my right shoulder and out of the refrigerator brought a chunk of freshly road-killed pheasant and set it beside my plate. "Be sure you give him bites with feathers and bone, not just meat." All right. I wrenched off a bite-sized chunk which Ambrose wolfed down. Then I'd cut off a chunk of the Black Angus, seared on the outside, warm in the inside, and chewed it. Dee-licious! I have yet to taste beef as exquisite. So a bite of raw pheasant to Ambrose, a bite of rare beef to me. Both of us happy. And it occurred to me that if I were to confuse one serving with another, crossing my arms, neither of us would have objected. Of the sorry cauliflower, enough said, but when I got Fran's *Wild Food Cookbook* (Hamerstrom 1989a), I grinned as I read it, recalling that one supper I had so memorably enjoyed.

In the evening Fran and David and I with Dan Berger and one or two other gabboons drove out to collect roosting House Sparrows to bait the bal-chatris. (As banders, we knew that House Sparrows, which in England we'd been conditioned never to call English Sparrows, were one of the few birds not federally protected.) We covered over twenty-five miles on back roads, stopping occasionally to ask to be allowed to enter a barn, fi-

nally achieving permission to collect in a grand old barn. We had flashlights, but Fran was having acute problems with her eye and warned us that if we shined a light at her it would be excruciatingly painful and she would kill us. We each got a gunny sack. Fran (always a fearless climber) and Dan clambered up to the highest rafters, plucking the sleeping birds out of the eaves into their "bait bags." Dave and I searched the lower rafters, finding only a few. I recall only one yelp of pain from Fran on high. Then another yelp—this time of disgust—when she got down and discovered that her gunny sack had had a seam out and all her prizes had escaped into the night. For Fran's account of a rather more adventuresome bait raid, see her *Birding with a Purpose* (Hamerstrom 1984).

The next morning the Coxes and other WSO members had joined us (Fig. 4). We Stockings were assigned to Brandt blind. It was a misty crisp morning, turning bright. Finally we got to see the mating drama. An unbanded hen sent the nine cocks into a stomping, booming tizzy as she fluffed up and flapped her wings, making seductive little runs. The cocks leapt several feet off the ground ("flutter jumps" Fran called them), attacking their rivals in mid-air. A few feathers flew, but I saw no real injuries. We didn't get to see the minuet, because one cock rushed in to mount the inviting hen but got knocked off by a rival from an inner territory. Since she did not ruffle and did stick around, we realized the try had been unsuccessful. Fifteen minutes later—triumph! She accepted a cock, ruffled briskly, and stayed around a few minutes, not flirting, and just before sunrise flew off to



Figure 4. Photo from the Oconomowoc Enterprise, 11 May 1961, of S. Paul Jones Bird Club members who had visited the Hamerstoms to participate in the Prairie-Chicken study. Standing: Unknown birder, Ed Peartree (second from left), David Cox, Frederick Hamerstrom, Hazel Cox, two unidentified birders, Ed Gauerke, and Dan Berger. Sitting: from left, unknown birder, Fran Hamerstrom, unidentified boy, Marion Stocking (author), Lucy Gauerke, Gladys Sauer.

the east. (I can be specific now, because I had learned to copy my notes before turning them in.)

A few hours later, as we were saying our farewells, I overheard one woman came up to Fran and say, "Thank you for a lovely weekend, Mrs. Cox." Fran allowed a flicker of reaction to show. "Oh, I'm sorry, I mean Thank you, Mrs. Horner." Fran beamed and said, "Just call me Hazel."

IT'S SPRING AGAIN

In 1962 and 1963 Dave and I returned to Plainfield in the first week of April—a great week for bird-watching en route, but too early for much ac-

tion on the booming grounds. On 2 April 1962 spring peepers were calling on a bright, clear, cold day, and at Goose Pond we watched Canvasbacks, Redheads, Buffleheads, and a few Canada Geese (two hundred or so). Whistling Swans were everywhere—eight flocks of up to a hundred each. At Hamerstoms we went out to Hajnecki blind. It was 15° F on the marsh; we could appreciate how frost had been the primary force that drove farmers off this low drained swamp-land. Fred quotes some of his neighbors as claiming frost here thirteen months of the year (Hamerstrom, F. N., Jr. 1983). Despite the chill, seven cocks came in to boom. Dave said "They sound like Mourning Doves

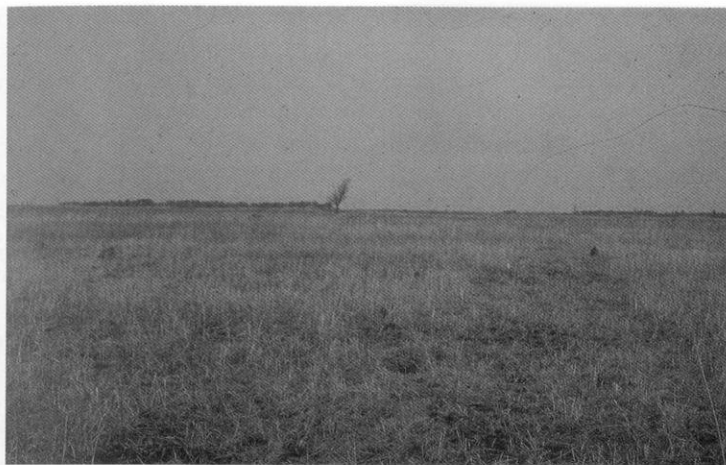


Figure 5. The section of a booming ground staked off with orange stakes to indicate mowed areas. Ray Anderson's project was to investigate whether the chickens preferred shorter turf. 7 April 1963

with electric guitar attachments." Professor Gross describes it as "Whooooo-doo-dooooohh," a call, he assures us, not very helpfully, that "can be fairly well reproduced by an experienced person by using the proper intervals in blowing across the top of an empty two drachm vial" (Gross 1930). Paul Johnsgard calls it a "far-sounding cooing sound, *old muldoon*" (Johnsgard 1983). Fran compares it in *Strictly for the Chickens* (Hamerstrom 1980) to "low-pitched organ music." The only other sounds on the marsh that icy morning were Western Meadowlarks, Horned Larks, and lots of crows. By 7:55 all the other cocks had flown or hiked off, but one lone unbanded chicken still was booming actively, with frequent flutter jumps. He carried on heroically, as though he were the last cock on earth, booming for his life. We had finally to flush him to leave, wishing him better luck on a warmer morning.

A year later it was somewhat warmer (30° F) and brilliantly clear. We heard

swans flying over Hamerstroms' house at night. Under a hazy full moon we went out to Big R blind, where gabboon Ray Anderson had mowed some strips and marked them with orange stakes to test whether the chickens preferred shorter cover (Fig. 5). We had to flush one male who was already right at the blind. In five minutes the whole cocky crew walked in with little purrs and clucks. It was a quiet morning, no hens, but the birds showed no sign of leaving. Since we had no way of knowing that Danny Thompson, our gabboon driver, had arrived at seven, we didn't flush the birds till 7:45.

We said farewell to Fred and Fran and Dan Berger and Ambrose (the only owl resident this year) for we'd be back in England next year, for workdays in the British Museum and weekends off on field trips with the London Natural History Society or banding birds at the Rye Meads Ringing Station. Like Fran, we led multiple lives,



Figure 6. Fran's Golden Eagle, Chrys. One could imagine her looking smug, having just laid her first egg. 10 April 1966

in our case as literary scholars and editors as well as birders.

BACK ON THE BOOMING GROUNDS

Dave and I swung by DePere on 14 April 1965, where Suzanne Gross was poet in residence at St. Norbert's College, and brought her with us to Hamerstoms. Suzanne and I remember three residents—Ambrose, now full grown, a young Red-tailed Hawk, and Nancy, Fran's Golden Eagle. Dave and I were assigned to Damon blind, while Suzanne went with two others to what was referred to as the "Disney pavilion"—the plywood blind built by the Walt Disney crew when they shot "The Vanishing Prairie." My notes re-

mind me only that it was a cold rainy day, no hens, six banded cocks, all flushed by—of all things—an American Bittern.

The next year, 1966, was also early—9 April. Dave and I stopped en route to check a hillside where we had always found pasque flowers—at County B on Highway 22 in Marquette County. On the hill, which we had always understood to be a protected prairie, there was a trailer and a huge new smelly dump, with grapefruit peels conspicuous. We noticed also that a gravel pit was chomping closer. What with the heavy use of DDT and other pesticides, the prairie country we cherished seemed under lethal attack from many quarters. The Hamerstoms' efforts to protect it were desperately needed.

In Plainfield, we heard no timberdoodles, but the chorus of various frogs was symphonic. Bearded biologists inhabited the ballroom; my husband and I slept in the "second guest room." Having released Nancy in Wyoming, Fran now had a new Golden Eagle, Chrys (Fig. 6) [*Aquila chrysaetos*]. We were treated to a film of Fran hunting with Nancy, who on camera caught a feral cat and crushed it with her powerful talons. The danger in handling raptors, as banders we knew from experience, was not from the beak but from being "footed."

Next day was Easter, which Chrys celebrated by laying her first egg. Since she had not been mated, it was of course infertile, and my comical husband asked Fran if she'd have an eagle-egg omelet for breakfast. It was the wrong joke. Fran indignantly replied, "Good Lord, no! She's taught me nest building. Now she can teach me how to incubate." Read the whole



Figure 7. Foggy morning on the booming ground as a cock booms for a passing hen, she alert with her neck extended, but not flirting. 10 April 1966

story in Fran's *An Eagle to the Sky* (Hamerstrom 1970b).

Easter morning we were assigned to the blind south-east of the railroad, the five-boomer plywood pavilion. Since the earliest copulation wasn't expected for a few more days, we were not surprised that the hens merely strolled through, not flirting (Fig. 7), but not unaware of the frantic booming and flutter-jumping they inspired.

The next year, on 3 May 1967, David and I were back in that capacious blind. The night was clear and cold (20°) punctuated by the electric blue of mercury vapor lights at the nearest farm and graced by a crescent moon and, astonishingly, *aurora borealis* at the first pink of dawn. I recorded nine cocks with one successful copulation. A dark Sandhill Crane stalked the field as we left at 7:10 a.m.

On 14 April 1968 we celebrated our second Easter with Fred and Fran. We heard about the hassle of artificially inseminating Chrys with semen coaxed

out of the tiercel Grendel. In the house, Ambrose now had a companion owl, Zuleika, and there was a Red-tail in the barn. Undeterred by a broken wrist strapped in canvas (a roller-skating accident; the Hamerstroms and the Peartrees got together for rollerskating), Fran was running a Woodcock census; the timberdoodles were peenting and liquidly whistling and chirping in their courting flight. Next morning, up at 3:15, David and I were in Sawyer blind, but it was a showery day, turning stormy; nine cocks walked in at 4:45 and drifted off at 6:20. No visitors. A quiet conclusion to our last season as boomers.

In all our eleven years I had never seen the front of the house. When *Sports Illustrated* ran a story cutely titled "Owls, Eagles and Prairie Chicanery," I didn't recognize the house in front of which Fred and Fran posed, Fran gazing lovingly up at the Golden Eagle Chrys on her wrist (Peterson 1967). Now I understand that, as with many

houses in rural Maine where I now live, no one enters the front door. Everyone comes in through the kitchen. Seen from the "front," the Plainfield house is beautiful—handsomely symmetrical, a house you would expect to have a ballroom—another reflection of Fred and Fran's double life.

THE UPSHOT

For a quarter of a century of springs Fred and Fran had instructed, double-breakfasted, put up, put up with, monitored, and entertained over 7,000 of us boomers—corrected our errors, tabulated our findings, published the results, all dedicated to preserving the habitat that would enable the Greater Prairie-Chicken to survive in Wisconsin.

They could celebrate success, assisted by the Prairie-Chicken Foundation and the extraordinary Society of Tympanuchus Cupido Pinnatus, Ltd. According to Paul Olson's Preface to the Hamerstoms' *The Prairie Chicken in Wisconsin* (Hamerstrom and Hamerstrom 1973), 10,806 acres of the essential grass-forb habitat had been protected. But the conclusion of the report laments the destruction of thousands of acres of what had been fine Greater Prairie-Chicken habitat—largely by agro-business's depleting ground-water storage by overhead irrigation and by saturating the countryside with pesticides and herbicides.

Old accounts refer to hundreds of millions of prairie grouse throughout the mid-west from Canada as far south as Oklahoma. When I went to teach at Beloit on the Wisconsin-Illinois line in

1954, older members of the Ned Holister Bird Club could remember booming grounds along the Rock River. Now every year brought a smaller population on bits of patchwork reservations in central Wisconsin. We wondered whether the chickens would follow their cousin the Heath Hen into extinction. I was ten years old when the last of the Heath Hens disappeared on Martha's Vineyard, a cock that had been banded by my hero of that time, Thornton W. Burgess, and the distinguished Bowdoin College ornithologist Alfred O. Gross. The extinction was big news then, and I remember hearing that we had learned our lesson—never again to allow a species to slide down that dark path.

The Prairie Chicken, newsletter of the Prairie-Chicken Foundation, quotes this from *Friends of the Chicken in Illinois*:

It is a lonely, wild sound made by a lonely, wild bird. It has the quality of an ancient wind blowing across the smoke-flap of an Indian Tepee. In all modern America there is no more old-time haunting sound than the booming of the prairie grouse. It is the last fading voice of the prairie wilderness, crying for help. When it is gone, it shall be gone forever. All our television [sic] will not bring it back, and none of our spacecraft can take us where it has vanished (Anonymous 1963).

MORE LIVES THAN ONE

Fred and Fran continued their studies in other raptors when the Prairie Chicken project was finished. Fran had been working with Harriers since the late fifties—Harriers conveniently

shared a habitat with the chickens. In *Harrier: Hawk of the Marshes* (Hamerstrom 1986) Fran tells the story of her discovery that the population of Northern Harriers depends on the vole (meadow mouse) population, not the other way around.

In 1969 Fred and Fran trekked with their VW microbus to interior Mexico, where they trapped and banded raptors. I heard something about this when I ran into Fran at the 1982 WSO convention in LaCrosse after she and Fred had presented a paper on "Desert Dwelling Ospreys." She said she'd had to miss one season in Mexico, having forgotten that she was unloading a trap from the roof of the microbus and stepped back into empty air. She had recovered, however, and last winter they had returned to Mexico.

She admitted that at seventy-five she was getting forgetful. She and Fred had trekked all the way out to the site in Mexico where they usually made camp when she remembered that she'd always brought sweets for the children of the nearest village. And here came the children, running out expectantly to greet them. What to do? She gathered them around her and asked, "Can any of you wiggle your nose?" Eventually most of them found that they could. Then: "Can you wiggle your ears?" Well, some could; some couldn't. "O.K. Can any of you wiggle one ear at a time?" The children were spell-bound as they tried and tried. "Now it gets easier. How many of you can roll your eyes?" Whoopee! Almost everyone. Big grins. "Now it gets hard. Can anyone roll just one eye at a time?" Impossible. "Oh, no. Not impossible," Fran announced. "I can do it." By now I was as enthralled as any

child. Fran rolled one eye while the other remained staring straight forward, imperturbable. Amazing! Then she poked her finger in the other eye and rolled the eyeball around with her fingertip. I gasped. She had one glass eye—a perfect match. And suddenly I remembered that sparrow hunt in the big barn, where light caused her acute pain. That eye was gone, but if she hadn't made a story about it, who would have known?

AND THEN?

After Fred died in 1990, Fran, after fifty-nine years of marriage to the man of her dreams, tells us in *My Double Life* (Hamerstrom 1994) that she realized he had always steered her north, to places like Siberia and Lapland. "I had always wanted to hunt with the Pygmies," she wrote. "My age was 83. I said to myself, 'You'd better hop to it before you get old.'" She went into training, lost twenty-seven pounds, went to Africa, stayed in a Pygmy village, and hunted with the men—subsistence hunting, not the sport hunting at which she had excelled all her life (Hamerstrom 1989).

Her next expedition, also described in *My Double Life*, was up the Amazon in a dugout canoe with two Indian guides whom she had hired to take her hunting. Having known Fran, who had hunted every season since 1920, I was not surprised to learn how she had something to teach her guides about handling prey.

What drew Fran "before she got old" to travel into these ancient cultures? She explains at the end of *My Double Life* that in her wide travels in the "civilized" world she had encountered

everywhere overpopulation and "its twin horrors: human misery and the despoilation [*her word for despoliation*] of the environment." Remember her "Lullaby" that we had published in the *BPJ* (Hamerstrom 1970a)? In her eighties Fran was drawn to the oldest surviving cultures where, unlike the white race, people had lived "since time immemorial and [had] not destroyed their habitat."

Fran died near her Plainfield home in 1998, at the age of ninety, having lived not double but multiple lives. Writing *My Double Life* at the age of eighty-six, she looked back with joy on her life with Frederick—fifty-nine years together. She proudly tallied 168 papers and countless reviews published separately and jointly, ten books, prizes for her paintings, and "innumerable committees and directorates." She wrote of cherished friends—including people whose books I had taught year-in, year-out at Beloit College, Aldo Leopold and Konrad Lorenz. Her friends throughout the world were uncountable.

The Hamerstroms were so loved and admired, Ernst Mayr writes, for the example they set: "They never forgot that field research is the naturalist's fountain of knowledge and they never stopped asking searching questions." As writers, he continues, they were an exemplary team, authoring and co-authoring between them 238 papers and uncountable reviews. "After a few years they often could not tell who had written the paper," one drafting it and the other polishing. Her husband edited all of Fran's books. He refereed most of the journal articles, except for those in French or German, in which Fran

had the linguistic expertise (Mayr 1992).

Looking back over the almost half-century since I first stepped through that shed door in Plainfield, I can now recognize that like their mentor Aldo Leopold, the Hamerstroms have come to represent a major turning point in our understanding of our role on this planet. Their lives illustrate Leopold's land ethic: they lived, not as conquerors of the land-community, but as citizens of it. As Leopold (1966) wrote, in words that resonate even more poignantly today:

In human history, we have learned (I hope) that the conqueror role is eventually self-defeating. Why? Because it is implicit in such a role that the conqueror knows, *ex cathedra*, just what makes the community clock tick, and just what and who is valuable, and what and who is worthless, in community life. It always turns out that he knows neither, and this is why his conquests eventually defeat themselves.

Like Konrad Lorenz, Fred and Fran went to school to the natural world and even at home lived with and learned from wild creatures. They watched with dismay the massive use of pesticides and the exhaustion of water resources by mechanized irrigation—agricultural imperialism. As scholars they sought to expand our understanding of the interdependence of all the members of the biotic community and to share their enthusiasm for field research. Fred and Fran Hamerstrom took seriously the implications of this world-view: they recognized the responsibilities it implied and fulfilled these responsibilities with inspiring generosity, love, and joy.

HAMERSTROM CHRONOLOGY

(exclusive of publications)

All entries are from Corneli (2002) except as noted.

1907, 17 December: Frances Flint born.

1909, 8 July: Frederick N. Hamerstrom, Jr. born.

1912, 8 July to 1914: Flint family to Germany (F. Hamerstrom 1994).

1915: Flint family settles in Milton, Massachusetts.

1915–1928: Fran, educated by a German governess, acquires languages and the social arts of dancing, dressing well, and household management. Independently acquires skills in hunting, fishing, gardening, grafting, taxidermy, and entomology.

1917: To Milton Academy from which she dropped out (F. Hamerstrom 1994).

1919: First experience with falconry (F. Hamerstrom 1994).

1928–1929: At Smith College. Meets Fred at Dartmouth. Fred transfers to Harvard.

1930, November: Having flunked out of Smith and having had a career as a fashion model in Boston and Palm Beach, Fran becomes engaged to Fred (F. Hamerstrom 1994).

1931, 18 February: Secret marriage in Florida. Both enter the Game Conservation Institute, Clinton, NJ.

10 June: Formal wedding in Milton.

1932: Both enroll in Iowa State College, working with Paul L. Errington.

1935: Fran completes her B.S., in zoology, with a minor in veterinary sci-

ence. Fred receives his M.S. (F. Hamerstrom 1994).

Fred begins work as Project Game Manager north of Necedah, Wisconsin, for the federal depression program of the Resettlement Administration, at \$2,400 a year. Fran is "ex officio" member of the team.

1937, 6 February: Fran receives her Federal Bird Marking Master Permit. Fred became licensed Sub-permittee 30 March 1939 (Lueshen 1988).

1938: Both admitted to graduate work in Aldo Leopold's new program at the University of Wisconsin: one year in Madison followed by two years on Greater Prairie-Chicken in the field.

1940: Fran the first woman to receive a graduate degree under Leopold, with a M.S. on "Dominance in Winter Flocks of Chickadees," published in the Wilson Bulletin, 1942.

1940, 9 November: Alan Hamerstrom born.

1941: Fred receives his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin on "A Study of Wisconsin Prairie Grouse: Breeding Habits, Winter Foods, Endoparasites, and Movements." Goes for nine years as curator of the Edwin S. George Reserve, associated with the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology. Fran works for the museum in osteology and studies edible fungi with Alexander Smith.

1943: Ineligible for conscientious objector status, Fred enlists in the Air Corps and serves as "Aviation Physiologist" (F. N. Hamerstrom, Jr. 1983).

In March, Elva Hamerstrom born

1943–1945: Fran and the children follow Fred to posts in Texas, Idaho, Baton Rouge, and El Paso.

1945, 21 December: The war over, Fred and Fran take off for Paracutin, Mexico.

1946–1948: Both work on the American Ornithological Union (AOU) "Action" plan, initiated by Joseph Hickey and Margaret Morse Nice, to send CARE packages and clothes to European biologists left destitute by the war (Mayr 1992).

1948, 19 April: Leopold dies. Hamerstoms help in preparing his Sand County Almanac for the press. In December Fred resigns from the George Reserve.

1949, 5 March: Hamerstoms leave for two months in Germany (F. Hamerstrom 1994). In fall the Wisconsin Conservation Department (later the Department of Natural Resources) hires both as Prairie-Chicken biologists. They find the Plainfield house, near the 50,000-acre Buena Vista Marsh, that will be their permanent home.

1950: The first boomers invited to volunteer to observe prairie-chickens (seven thousand will assist in the next twenty years).

1954: First Wisconsin Conservation League purchase of prairie-chicken territory. Fred and Fran go to Basel for International Congress of Ornithology (ICO).

1955–1956: In the "Prairie Chicken War" some local farmers protest their research. Summer of 1956 Fred and Fran to Finland.

1957–1958: Fran concentrates on studying and flying hawks and eagles, with significant research on harriers.

1958: Establishment of the Prairie

Chicken Foundation through work of Paul Olson.

Fred and Fran have three months in Europe, including Lapland and a visit to Konrad Lorenz in Austria.

1959: Hamerstoms do research on Sharp-tailed Grouse in Ohio (F. Hamerstrom 1994) and attend AOU meeting in Saskatchewan (Houston and Scott 1992).

Sport hunting of prairie-chickens terminated in Wisconsin.

1960–1961: Fran and gabbons trap Snowy Owls (F. Hamerstrom 1962).

1961: Carroll College awards Fran an honorary Doctor of Science (Rosenfeld 1998).

The Society of Tympanuchus Cupido Pinnatus established to purchase land for chickens.

1962: Fred and Fran begin winter hawk research in Texas and Mexico, working especially with Harris'[s] Hawks (F. Hamerstrom 1980; Bolen 1992).

1963: Fran bands Northern Hawk Owls in Ontario and, with Fred, Northern Sharp-tailed Grouse in Alberta (F. Hamerstrom 1984).

1964, 27 June: Elva marries Dale Paulson.

Fran acquires Nancy, Golden Eagle (F. Hamerstrom 1970).

1964–1965: Fred and Fran trap hawks in Manitoba.

1965: Prairie-chicken population critically low.

1966: Hamerstoms attend ICO in Oxford (Houston and Scott 1992)

1969: Hamerstoms join successful campaign to ban DDT in Wisconsin.

In late '60s trap raptors in Neotropical forest of Veracruz (Martínez-Gómez 1992).

1971: Hamerstoms retire from the Wisconsin Department of Natural

Resources, having since 1957 achieved protection of seventeen square miles of prairie-chicken territory in Fred's pioneer "scatter-pattern" program (Gawlik 1992).

1972: Fred and Fran appointed Faculty and Research Associates at the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point. Fran elected a Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union (Lueshen 1988).

1982: Both appointed Adjunct Professors at Stevens Point.

1989: Both to Guatemala.

1990: Fred's death.

1991: Fran to Zaire to hunt with pygmies.

1993: To Dubai for falconry. Then to the Peruvian rainforest with Indian hunters (where she broke her leg).

1996: To Italy (hospitalized for a life-threatening pneumonia).

1998, August: Fran's death.

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Marion Stocking, who taught English and interdisciplinary studies at Beloit College from 1954-1984, has been a member of

WSO for a half century and from 1970–1992 a licensed bird-bander. She currently lives on the Maine coast where she participates in Christmas counts, Cornell

Laboratory of Ornithology feeder counts, and regular regional birding expeditions. All photographs in this article are by the author.



Great Gray Owl on a foggy windy day in Wisconsin, by Nathan Carlsen.

Breeding Birds of the Marathon County Forest System in Central Wisconsin

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of extensive forest cover for breeding bird populations has been a subject of numerous investigations during recent decades (e.g. Galli et al. 1976, Robbins 1979, Whitcomb et al. 1981, Ambuel and Temple 1983, Askins et al. 1987, Villard et al. 1999). The negative effects of brood parasitism, nest predation, and habitat isolation all are believed to play a role in deterioration of habitat quality as continuous forest areas are fragmented into patchy remnants. Most studies documenting the effects of habitat fragmentation have been conducted either entirely within fragmented forest landscapes or have compared fragmented vs. non-fragmented landscapes that are widely separated geographically. Few, if any, investigations have evaluated bird distributions

in transitional landscapes between highly fragmented vs. relatively continuous forest regions.

This study describes the breeding bird fauna of the Marathon County Forest System (Fig. 1), an extensive, multi-unit system of public lands in Wisconsin's largest county (by area). Blocks of forest in the Marathon County Forest System vary in size from 7,283 acres to 1,520 acres (Table 1); together with Rib Mountain State Park (1,500 acres) and Big Eau Pleine County Park (2,050 acres), these comprise the largest contiguous forest areas remaining in Marathon County. The availability of a comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) in Marathon County provides a powerful analytical tool for integrating field data, management practices and landscape dynamics (Shaw and Atkinson 1990).

Table 1. Major units of the Marathon County Forest System.

Forest	Area (acres)
Hewitt-Harrison	7,283
Nine-Mile	4,506
Kronenwetter	5,005
Ringle Marsh	1,974
Leather Camp	4,165
Burma Road	1,520

Results from our bird survey are compared with data from the eastern portion of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest in order to provide a regional perspective and to help identify the significance of the Marathon County Forest System for Wisconsin breeding birds.

METHODS

Cleerman and volunteers conducted bird censuses at 142 points

during 1995 and 155 sites during 1996, including most of the sites visited during the previous year. Altogether 158 separate points were sampled at least twice during the 2 year study period; an additional 4 sites were sampled only once. Sample locations were selected to represent the major habitats and management regimes within the Marathon County Forest System (Tables 1 and 2). In addition to the county forest sites, reference points were sampled in the 1450 acre Big Eau Pleine County Park. Although not a county forest unit, this high quality, second-growth mixed, forest is the nearest approximation to old growth of any forest stand in the county. Much of the park is covered with closed-canopy forest dominated by maple and hemlock. Sample points were located in all major habitat types as well as at ecotones, which incorporate multiple habitat categories. Similar cover types were combined for ease of analy-

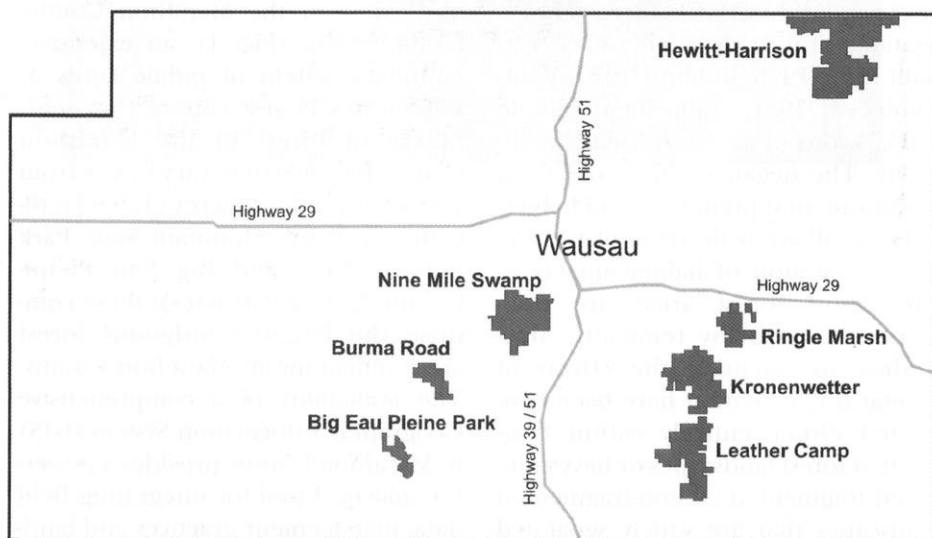


Figure 1. Map of study areas in the Marathon County Forest System.

Table 2. Distribution of 1995–96 census sites among habitat types.

Vegetation Type	Acreage	# of Sites
Aspen	14885	51
Aspen (ecotone)	610	6
White Birch	314	5
Open Grassland	268	5
Lowland Conifer	372	12
Emergent Wetland / Sedge Meadow	317	3
Alder/Willow Swamp	4603	22
Northern Hardwoods	2739	16
Oak	722	10
Jack/Red Pine	848	13
Lowland Hardwoods	127	1
Upland Brush	155	3
Unspecified	—	7
Totals	20,997	162

sis. Land cover maps were generated for each county forest unit using ARC/INFO, a computerized geographic information system (GIS). The maps delineated vegetative cover types (by color) and tree age classes (by symbol). Unit boundaries, roads, paths, trails, structures, and surface waters were also indicated on the maps. Each forest block was overlaid by a grid divided into squares 250 meters on a side, which accounted for all of the land within the unit. The center of each square of the grid was marked as a potential census point. Each county forest block was assigned a number of census points based on its area relative to the total area of the county forest system. For example, Nine-Mile Swamp contained 4,506 acres or 18.4% of the total 24,453 acres in the county forest system. Multiplying 18.4% times the 142 sites (eight sites were saved for Big Eau Pleine County Park) results in 26 census sites.

Original maps displayed 27 vegeta-

tion types. In order to increase the degrees of freedom per habitat, the total number of vegetation types was decreased to 12 (Table 2) by combining those types that were ecologically similar in terms of usage by birds. For example, alder and willow were combined as were maple and northern hardwoods. Vegetation types were assigned a number of censuses based on their acreage relative to the total acreage of all the vegetation types combined. For example, aspen was by far the dominant vegetation type and therefore had the most census points assigned to it. Some of the more uncommon vegetation types, such as white birch, had disproportionate numbers of census points assigned to them in order to facilitate statistical analysis. These extra points were subtracted from those which would have been assigned to aspen or alder/willow, the most widespread vegetation types. It was necessary to adjust the assignment of census points for some of the rare vegetation types, since they were not present in all of the forest units. Red/jack pine sites, for example, were found mainly in Kronenwetter County Forest.

Sites were selected randomly within each land unit. Compute-generated maps were divided into grids so that vertical and horizontal coordinates could be assigned to potential census points. Coordinate sets were randomly generated and matched to points in the cover types. Because of the nature of the random numbers and the irregular shape of the forest units, many spots outside of forest boundaries and repeats within the boundaries had to be discarded. Numbers were continually generated and matched to census points until all census points allotted

to that forest unit were assigned. Because of the difficulty of matching randomly-generated numbers to rare vegetation types within large forest blocks, it became necessary to alter the selection strategy. When the only sites left to be chosen represented the rare habitat types, we identified coordinates for the remaining (candidate) sites and randomly selected the study-sites from all remaining possibilities.

The sampling season extended from May 27 until July 23 in 1995 and from May 25 until July 5 in 1996, with sampling concluded as early as possible during the day. Census activities were conducted from daybreak until generally 11:00 a.m., with a goal of 10 to 12 site visits per day. The sampling season was divided into two halves and every site was visited during each half for the 1995 season. In 1996, sites that had been visited during 1995 were visited only once. Nineteen new sites were added in 1996, and each was sampled twice.

Birds were recorded during ten minute periods (Ralph et al. 1994; Howe et al. 1997). All birds seen or heard were recorded on standardized data sheets with fields noting the time when the bird was first observed (first 5 minutes vs. second 5 minutes) and distance from observer (< 50 m, 50–120 m, and > 120 m).

A description of the vegetation surrounding the census point was provided using a standard field data form. The scope and nature of this project precluded an extensive analysis of vegetation. The goal was to provide a thumbnail sketch of the census area which may be used as a ground-truth in comparison with the GIS vegetation data.

Bird data from Marathon County

were compared with results from randomly selected roadside point counts in the eastern (Nicolet) portion of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest during the annual Nicolet National Forest Bird Survey (Howe and Roberts 2005). Roadside counts were included as part of the survey between 1992 and 2001; in all, 1193 counts at 200 separate points are included in this analysis.

RESULTS

We observed 89 species of birds in the entire study area (Table 3). Common species are typical forest birds of northern and central Wisconsin (Ovenbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Veery, Blue Jay, etc.) as well as birds of wetlands or shrub habitats (Common Yellowthroat, Song Sparrow, Nashville Warbler, etc.). Notable among the most abundant species is Brown-headed Cowbird, a brood parasite that has been implicated in declines of breeding forest birds in North America (Brittingham and Temple 1983 and others).

One state threatened species, Red-shouldered Hawk, was observed in the Marathon County Forest System at the Kronenwetter Forest Unit. Five species listed as special concern also were recorded during this investigation (Black-throated Blue Warbler at Hewitt-Harrison; Great Blue Heron at Hewitt-Harrison and Nine Mile Swamp; Northern Harrier at Hewitt-Harrison; Pine Siskin at Ringle Marsh; and Yellow-billed Cuckoo at Kronenwetter), although none was observed during more than 2 counts.

Numerous (16) species designated recently as "Species of Greatest

Table 3. List of all bird species observed during 1995 and 1996. Frequency is the number of counts during which the species was observed (max. = 454). Species listed as Threatened (Red-shouldered Hawk) or Special Concern in Wisconsin are shown in bold.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Frequency
Ovenbird (OVEN)	<i>Seiurus aurocapillus</i>	367
Common Yellowthroat (COYE)	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>	256
Red-eyed Vireo (REVI)	<i>Vireo olivaceus</i>	251
Veery (VEER)	<i>Catharus fuscescens</i>	233
Blue Jay (BLJA)	<i>Cyanocitta cristata</i>	180
Eastern Wood-Pewee (EAWP)	<i>Contopus virens</i>	167
Song Sparrow (SOSP)	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	165
Rose-breasted Grosbeak (RBGR)	<i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>	162
Brown-headed Cowbird (BHCO)	<i>Molothrus ater</i>	158
Nashville Warbler (NAWA)	<i>Vermivora ruficapilla</i>	155
White-throated Sparrow (WTSP)	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>	152
American Robin (AMRO)	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	151
American Goldfinch (AMGO)	<i>Carduelis tristis</i>	128
Great Crested Flycatcher (GCFL)	<i>Myiarchus crinitus</i>	128
Scarlet Tanager (SCTA)	<i>Piranga olivacea</i>	123
Black-capped Chickadee (BCCH)	<i>Parus atricapillus</i>	123
American Crow (AMCR)	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	113
Mourning Warbler (MOWA)	<i>Oporornis philadelphia</i>	106
Hermit Thrush (HETH)	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>	95
Chestnut-sided Warbler (CSWA)	<i>Dendroica pensylvanica</i>	88
Red-winged Blackbird (RWBL)	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	86
Eastern Towhee (EATO)	<i>Pipilo erythrophthalmus</i>	75
House Wren (HOWR)	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	67
Least Flycatcher (LEFL)	<i>Empidonax minimus</i>	63
Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA)	<i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i>	61
Alder Flycatcher (ALFL)	<i>Empidonax alnorum</i>	56
Swamp Sparrow (SWSP)	<i>Melospiza georgiana</i>	55
Black-and-white Warbler (BAWW)	<i>Mniotilta varia</i>	44
Sandhill Crane (SACR)	<i>Grus canadensis</i>	43
Cedar Waxwing (CEDW)	<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>	43
Baltimore Oriole (BAOR)	<i>Icterus galbula</i>	43
Wood Thrush (WOTH)	<i>Hylocichla mustelina</i>	41
Yellow Warbler (YEWA)	<i>Dendroica petechia</i>	39
Downy Woodpecker (DOWO)	<i>Picoides pubescens</i>	36
Unidentified Woodpecker (UNWO)		36
White-breasted Nuthatch (WBNU)	<i>Sitta carolinensis</i>	35
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (YBSA)	<i>Sphyrapicus varius</i>	34
Yellow-throated Vireo (YTVI)	<i>Vireo flavifrons</i>	33
Ruffed Grouse (RUGR)	<i>Bonasa umbellus</i>	33
Indigo Bunting (INBU)	<i>Passerina cyanea</i>	31
Mourning Dove (MODO)	<i>Zenaidura macroura</i>	30
Gray Catbird (GRCA)	<i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>	29
Northern Waterthrush (NOWA)	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>	27
Sedge Wren (SEWR)	<i>Cistothorus platensis</i>	26
Canada Warbler (CAWA)	<i>Wilsonia canadensis</i>	22
Northern Flicker (NOFL)	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>	22
Red-breasted Nuthatch (RBNU)	<i>Sitta canadensis</i>	17
Winter Wren (WITR)	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	17
Pileated Woodpecker (PIWO)	<i>Dryocopus pileatus</i>	17
Hairy Woodpecker (HAWO)	<i>Picoides villosus</i>	16
Chipping Sparrow (CHSP)	<i>Spizella passerina</i>	15
American Redstart (AMRE)	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>	14
Field Sparrow (FISP)	<i>Spizella pusilla</i>	11
Broad-winged Hawk (BWHA)	<i>Buteo platypterus</i>	10

(continued)

Table 3. (continued)

Common Name	Scientific Name	Frequency
Tree Swallow (TRSW)	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	10
Common Raven (CORA)	<i>Corvus corax</i>	8
Warbling Vireo (WAVI)	<i>Vireo gilvus</i>	8
Common Grackle (COGR)	<i>Quiscalus quiscula</i>	7
Brown Creeper (BRCR)	<i>Certhia americana</i>	7
Ruby-throated Hummingbird (RTHU)	<i>Archilochus colubris</i>	6
Brown Thrasher (BRTH)	<i>Toxostoma rufum</i>	5
Wild Turkey (WITU)	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>	4
Red-bellied Woodpecker (RBWO)	<i>Melanerpes carolinus</i>	4
Black-billed Cuckoo (BBCU)	<i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i>	4
Northern Cardinal (NOCA)	<i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i>	4
Canada Goose (CAGO)	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	3
Barred Owl (BAOW)	<i>Strix varia</i>	3
Black-throated Green Warbler (BTNW)	<i>Dendroica virens</i>	3
Eastern Phoebe (EAPH)	<i>Sayornis phoebe</i>	3
Mallard (MALL)	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	3
Purple Finch (PUFI)	<i>Carpodacus purpureus</i>	3
Blue-winged Warbler (BWWA)	<i>Vermivora pinus</i>	2
Golden-crowned Kinglet (GCKI)	<i>Regulus satrapa</i>	2
Great Blue Heron (GTBH)	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	2
Unidentified Hawk (UNHA)		2
Northern Parula (NOPA)	<i>Parula americana</i>	1
Yellow-billed Cuckoo (YBCU)	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	1
Wood Duck (WODO)	<i>Aix sponsa</i>	1
Willow Flycatcher (WIFL)	<i>Empidonax traillii</i>	1
Vesper Sparrow (VESP)	<i>Poocetes gramineus</i>	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk (SSHA)	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	1
Red-shouldered Hawk (RSHA)	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>	1
Pine Warbler (PIWA)	<i>Dendroica pinus</i>	1
Marsh Wren (MAWR)	<i>Cistothorus palustris</i>	1
Pine Siskin (PISI)	<i>Carduelis pinus</i>	1
Chimney Swift (CHSW)	<i>Chaetura pelagica</i>	1
Northern Harrier (NOHA)	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	1
Black-throated Blue Warbler (BTBW)	<i>Dendroica caerulescens</i>	1
Eastern Kingbird (EAKI)	<i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i>	1
Wilson's Snipe (WISN)	<i>Gallinago delicata</i>	1
Belted Kingfisher (BEKI)	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>	1

Conservation Need” by the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative (WBCI 2004) were represented in the Marathon County Forest System. These species have exhibited declining population trends across all or most of their ranges and, in many cases, have high relative abundance in Wisconsin relative to other parts of North America. Foremost among these species is Veery, which was present in 25% or more of the points in all 6 of the

Marathon County Forest units. Veery was particularly abundant at Leather camp (70% of points), Hewitt-Harrison (65% of points) and Kronenwetter (65% of points). Another species that has been experiencing dramatic declines during recent years, the Golden-winged Warbler, is quite common in the Marathon County Forest System. During this investigation it was observed at 61 counts, with highest frequencies again at Hewitt-Harrison

Table 4. List of birds observed at 8 sample points in Big Eau Pleine County Park. Freq = number of counts during which the species was observed (max. = 24); PFreq = the proportion of counts during which the species was observed.

Common Name	Freq	PFreq
Red-eyed Vireo	24	1.000
Eastern Wood-Pewee	23	0.958
Ovenbird	22	0.917
Scarlet Tanager	14	0.583
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	10	0.417
Black-capped Chickadee	8	0.333
Brown-headed Cowbird	8	0.333
Blue Jay	7	0.292
Wood Thrush	7	0.292
American Robin	6	0.250
Baltimore Oriole	6	0.250
White-breasted Nuthatch	5	0.208
Downy Woodpecker	4	0.167
Least Flycatcher	4	0.167
Pileated Woodpecker	4	0.167
Sandhill Crane	4	0.167
Yellow-throated Vireo	4	0.167
American Redstart	3	0.125
Common Yellowthroat	3	0.125
Great Crested Flycatcher	3	0.125
Red-bellied Woodpecker	3	0.125
Warbling Vireo	3	0.125
American Crow	2	0.083
American Goldfinch	2	0.083
Brown Creeper	2	0.083
Cedar Waxwing	2	0.083
Hermit Thrush	2	0.083
Northern Flicker	2	0.083
Broad-winged Hawk	1	0.042
Eastern Phoebe	1	0.042
Hairy Woodpecker	1	0.042
Mourning Dove	1	0.042
Red-winged Blackbird	1	0.042
Song Sparrow	1	0.042
Unidentified Hawk	1	0.042
Veery	1	0.042

(20% of points), Leather Camp (18% of points), Kronenwetter (15%) and Burma Road (14% of points). Two other high priority species, Wood Thrush and Least Flycatcher, are typical of hardwood forests with a significant understory. Wood Thrush was most frequent in Big Eau Pleine County Park, where it was recorded at 29% of the points. Among the

Table 5. List of birds observed at 10 sample points in the Burma Road Forest Unit. Freq = number of counts during which the species was observed (max. = 29); PFreq = the proportion of counts during which the species was observed.

Common Name	Freq	PFreq
Ovenbird	27	0.931
Red-eyed Vireo	23	0.793
Eastern Wood-Pewee	18	0.621
American Crow	13	0.448
Blue Jay	13	0.448
Brown-headed Cowbird	13	0.448
American Goldfinch	12	0.414
Great Crested Flycatcher	12	0.414
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	12	0.414
Veery	12	0.414
Chestnut-sided Warbler	9	0.310
Hermit Thrush	9	0.310
Black-capped Chickadee	8	0.276
Scarlet Tanager	8	0.276
Common Yellowthroat	7	0.241
Least Flycatcher	6	0.207
Nashville Warbler	6	0.207
American Robin	5	0.172
Baltimore Oriole	5	0.172
Downy Woodpecker	5	0.172
Eastern Towhee	5	0.172
Gray Catbird	5	0.172
Red-winged Blackbird	5	0.172
Song Sparrow	5	0.172
White-breasted Nuthatch	5	0.172
Yellow-throated Vireo	5	0.172
Golden-winged Warbler	4	0.138
House Wren	4	0.138
Indigo Bunting	4	0.138
Mourning Warbler	4	0.138
Yellow Warbler	4	0.138
Cedar Waxwing	2	0.069
Northern Flicker	2	0.069
Northern Waterthrush	2	0.069
Pileated Woodpecker	2	0.069
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2	0.069
Ruffed Grouse	2	0.069
Swamp Sparrow	2	0.069
Warbling Vireo	2	0.069
Wood Thrush	2	0.069
American Redstart	1	0.034
Barred Owl	1	0.034
Belted Kingfisher	1	0.034
Black-and-white Warbler	1	0.034
Black-billed Cuckoo	1	0.034
Chipping Sparrow	1	0.034
Field Sparrow	1	0.034
Mourning Dove	1	0.034
Sandhill Crane	1	0.034
Tree Swallow	1	0.034
Unidentified Woodpecker	1	0.034
White-throated Sparrow	1	0.034
Wood Duck	1	0.034
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	0.034

Table 6. List of birds observed at 42 sample points in the Hewitt-Harrison Forest Unit. Freq = number of counts during which the species was observed (max. = 118); PFreq = the proportion of counts during which the species was observed.

Common Name	Freq	Pfreq	Common Name	Freq	Pfreq
Common Yellowthroat	96	0.814	Canada Warbler	7	0.059
White-throated Sparrow	90	0.763	Cedar Waxwing	7	0.059
Ovenbird	83	0.703	Northern Flicker	7	0.059
Veery	77	0.653	Winter Wren	7	0.059
Red-eyed Vireo	66	0.559	Baltimore Oriole	6	0.051
Song Sparrow	51	0.432	Downy Woodpecker	6	0.051
American Robin	49	0.415	American Redstart	5	0.042
Nashville Warbler	48	0.407	Eastern Towhee	5	0.042
Blue Jay	46	0.390	Hairy Woodpecker	5	0.042
Brown-headed Cowbird	39	0.331	Northern Waterthrush	5	0.042
Mourning Warbler	35	0.297	Gray Catbird	4	0.034
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	35	0.297	Indigo Bunting	4	0.034
Red-winged Blackbird	32	0.271	Mourning Dove	4	0.034
American Goldfinch	30	0.254	Tree Swallow	4	0.034
Alder Flycatcher	28	0.237	Broad-winged Hawk	3	0.025
Swamp Sparrow	28	0.237	Common Grackle	3	0.025
Black-capped Chickadee	26	0.220	Red-breasted Nuthatch	3	0.025
Black-and-white Warbler	24	0.203	Wood Thrush	3	0.025
Eastern Wood-Pewee	24	0.203	Yellow-throated Vireo	3	0.025
Golden-winged Warbler	23	0.195	Common Raven	2	0.017
Great Crested Flycatcher	22	0.186	Golden-crowned Kinglet	2	0.017
Hermit Thrush	22	0.186	Black-billed Cuckoo	1	0.008
House Wren	20	0.169	Black-throated Blue Warbler	1	0.008
American Crow	19	0.161	Black-throated Green Warbler	1	0.008
Least Flycatcher	16	0.136	Brown Creeper	1	0.008
Scarlet Tanager	16	0.136	Canada Goose	1	0.008
Ruffed Grouse	15	0.127	Chipping Sparrow	1	0.008
Chestnut-sided Warbler	14	0.119	Eastern Kingbird	1	0.008
Unidentified Woodpecker	13	0.110	Great Blue Heron	1	0.008
Yellow Warbler	13	0.110	Mallard	1	0.008
Sedge Wren	10	0.085	Northern Harrier	1	0.008
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	10	0.085	Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	0.008
Sandhill Crane	9	0.076	Warbling Vireo	1	0.008
White-breasted Nuthatch	8	0.068	Wilson's Snipe	1	0.008

Marathon County Forest units, Wood Thrushes were found most frequently (14% of points) at the Nine Mile Swamp Unit and at 13% of points in the Kronenwetter Unit. Least Flycatcher was most frequently reported at Burma Road (21% of points) and Kronenwetter (21% of points) Units, with relatively high densities also recorded at Big Eau Pleine County Park (17% of points) and Hewitt-Harrison (14% of points).

Other conservation priority species (WBCI 2004) include Northern Flicker, which was present though relatively uncommon (3–8% of points) at all but the Ringle Marsh Unit. Canada Warbler, a species of wet, dense forests and riparian habitats, was found at Kronenwetter (8% of points), Leather Camp (7.5% of points), Hewitt-Harrison (6% of points), and Nine Mile Swamp (3% of points). Field Sparrow, a species of open fields with scattered

Table 7. List of birds observed at 31 sample points in the Kronenwetter Forest Unit. Freq = number of counts during which the species was observed (max. = 88); PFreq = the proportion of counts during which the species was observed.

Common Name	Freq	Pfreq	Common Name	Freq	Pfreq
Ovenbird	83	0.943	Hairy Woodpecker	8	0.091
Veery	57	0.648	Indigo Bunting	8	0.091
Red-eyed Vireo	53	0.602	Baltimore Oriole	7	0.080
Common Yellowthroat	49	0.557	Canada Warbler	7	0.080
Brown-headed Cowbird	37	0.420	Downy Woodpecker	7	0.080
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	37	0.420	Gray Catbird	7	0.080
Scarlet Tanager	36	0.409	Ruffed Grouse	7	0.080
Blue Jay	34	0.386	Swamp Sparrow	7	0.080
Eastern Wood-Pewee	34	0.386	White-breasted Nuthatch	7	0.080
Song Sparrow	34	0.386	Yellow Warbler	7	0.080
Great Crested Flycatcher	33	0.375	Black-and-white Warbler	5	0.057
Hermit Thrush	32	0.364	Common Raven	5	0.057
American Robin	31	0.352	Northern Waterthrush	5	0.057
Nashville Warbler	30	0.341	American Redstart	4	0.045
American Crow	29	0.330	Red-breasted Nuthatch	4	0.045
Chestnut-sided Warbler	27	0.307	Brown Thrasher	3	0.034
Mourning Warbler	24	0.273	Northern Flicker	3	0.034
American Goldfinch	23	0.261	Pileated Woodpecker	3	0.034
Black-capped Chickadee	23	0.261	Wild Turkey	3	0.034
White-throated Sparrow	23	0.261	Broad-winged Hawk	2	0.023
Eastern Towhee	22	0.250	Field Sparrow	2	0.023
Least Flycatcher	18	0.205	Northern Cardinal	2	0.023
Red-winged Blackbird	14	0.159	Sedge Wren	2	0.023
Cedar Waxwing	13	0.148	Tree Swallow	2	0.023
Golden-winged Warbler	13	0.148	Brown Creeper	1	0.011
Mourning Dove	13	0.148	Eastern Phoebe	1	0.011
Unidentified Woodpecker	13	0.148	Purple Finch	1	0.011
Wood Thrush	11	0.125	Red-shouldered Hawk	1	0.011
Yellow-throated Vireo	11	0.125	Vesper Sparrow	1	0.011
House Wren	10	0.114	Warbling Vireo	1	0.011
Sandhill Crane	10	0.114	Winter Wren	1	0.011
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	9	0.102	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	1	0.011
Alder Flycatcher	8	0.091			

trees, was recorded at 8.3% of the sample points in Nine Mile Swamp and at several other localities in the Burma Road and Kronenwetter Units.

Although individual forest units in the Marathon County Forest System generally include a variety of habitats, bird assemblages reflect some significant differences among the units. Big Eau Pleine Forest (Table 4) is mostly forested and harbors a somewhat unusual avifauna, insofar as several birds

of early successional forest (e.g., Chestnut-sided Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Gray Catbird) and shrub wetlands (e.g., Nashville Warbler, White-throated Sparrow) are uncommon or absent. Pileated Woodpeckers are relatively more common here than in any other unit. Burma Road (Table 5), Kronenwetter (Table 7), Nine Mile Swamp Forest (Table 9), and Ringle Marsh (Table 10) also are dominated by forest bird species, but Chestnut-

Table 8. List of birds observed at 23 sample points in the Leather Camp Forest Unit. Freq = number of counts during which the species was observed (max. = 67); PFreq = the proportion of counts during which the species was observed.

Common Name	Freq	Pfreq	Common Name	Freq	Pfreq
Common Yellowthroat	55	0.821	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	9	0.134
Ovenbird	55	0.821	Least Flycatcher	8	0.119
Veery	47	0.701	Cedar Waxwing	7	0.104
Song Sparrow	42	0.627	Hermit Thrush	7	0.104
Nashville Warbler	37	0.552	Unidentified Woodpecker	7	0.104
Brown-headed Cowbird	33	0.493	Canada Warbler	5	0.075
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	32	0.478	Ruffed Grouse	5	0.075
Red-eyed Vireo	31	0.463	Swamp Sparrow	5	0.075
Great Crested Flycatcher	29	0.433	Wood Thrush	5	0.075
Mourning Warbler	27	0.403	Yellow-throated Vireo	5	0.075
Eastern Wood-Pewee	24	0.358	Gray Catbird	4	0.060
Blue Jay	23	0.343	Mourning Dove	4	0.060
House Wren	23	0.343	Northern Waterthrush	4	0.060
American Goldfinch	22	0.328	Broad-winged Hawk	3	0.045
American Crow	21	0.313	Brown Creeper	3	0.045
Chestnut-sided Warbler	21	0.313	Northern Flicker	3	0.045
Eastern Towhee	21	0.313	White-breasted Nuthatch	3	0.045
White-throated Sparrow	16	0.239	Black-billed Cuckoo	2	0.030
Baltimore Oriole	15	0.224	Pileated Woodpecker	2	0.030
Black-capped Chickadee	15	0.224	Winter Wren	2	0.030
Alder Flycatcher	14	0.209	Barred Owl	1	0.015
American Robin	14	0.209	Blue-winged Warbler	1	0.015
Red-winged Blackbird	14	0.209	Canada Goose	1	0.015
Scarlet Tanager	14	0.209	Hairy Woodpecker	1	0.015
Yellow Warbler	13	0.194	Indigo Bunting	1	0.015
Golden-winged Warbler	12	0.179	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	0.015
Sandhill Crane	12	0.179	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1	0.015
Black-and-white Warbler	9	0.134	Unidentified Hawk	1	0.015
Sedge Wren	9	0.134	Warbling Vireo	1	0.015

sided Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Gray Catbird, and other species of forest edge habitats also are relatively common. Species of shrubby wet habitats (Common Yellowthroat, Veery, Nashville Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler, and others) also are well represented in these units. Hewitt-Harrison (Table 6) and Leather Camp (Table 8) Units include the most extensive areas of wet habitat, supporting relatively large numbers of Common Yellowthroat, Veery, Song Sparrow, Nashville Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler, and other birds of wet, shrubby habitats. Interestingly,

White-throated Sparrow was the second most abundant species in Hewitt-Harrison, while it was (more typically) only moderately common at Leather Camp

DISCUSSION

The bird fauna in Marathon County's public forest system is typical of other county forests in central Wisconsin, with several features distinguishing it from bird assemblages in the more extensive state and national forest areas of northern Wisconsin

Table 9. List of birds observed at 37 sample points in the Nine Mile Swamp Forest Unit. Freq = number of counts during which the species was observed (max. = 96); PFreq = the proportion of counts during which the species was observed.

Common Name	Freq	Pfreq	Common Name	Freq	Pfreq
Ovenbird	68	0.708	Sandhill Crane	5	0.052
Blue Jay	47	0.490	Sedge Wren	5	0.052
Eastern Wood-Pewee	33	0.344	Alder Flycatcher	4	0.042
Red-eyed Vireo	33	0.344	Cedar Waxwing	4	0.042
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	32	0.333	Common Grackle	4	0.042
Common Yellowthroat	29	0.302	Winter Wren	4	0.042
American Robin	28	0.292	Yellow-throated Vireo	4	0.042
American Goldfinch	27	0.281	Baltimore Oriole	3	0.031
Great Crested Flycatcher	27	0.281	Black-and-white Warbler	3	0.031
Black-capped Chickadee	26	0.271	Canada Warbler	3	0.031
Nashville Warbler	26	0.271	Pileated Woodpecker	3	0.031
Scarlet Tanager	24	0.250	Ruffed Grouse	3	0.031
Veery	24	0.250	Tree Swallow	3	0.031
American Crow	20	0.208	Black-throated Green Warbler	2	0.021
Brown-headed Cowbird	20	0.208	Brown Thrasher	2	0.021
Eastern Towhee	19	0.198	Mallard	2	0.021
Song Sparrow	18	0.188	Purple Finch	2	0.021
White-throated Sparrow	18	0.188	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2	0.021
Chestnut-sided Warbler	17	0.177	Unidentified Woodpecker	2	0.021
Red-winged Blackbird	15	0.156	American Redstart	1	0.010
Wood Thrush	13	0.135	Barred Owl	1	0.010
Hermit Thrush	12	0.125	Blue-winged Warbler	1	0.010
Indigo Bunting	12	0.125	Broad-winged Hawk	1	0.010
Northern Waterthrush	11	0.115	Canada Goose	1	0.010
Chipping Sparrow	10	0.104	Chimney Swift	1	0.010
Least Flycatcher	10	0.104	Common Raven	1	0.010
Gray Catbird	9	0.094	Eastern Phoebe	1	0.010
Swamp Sparrow	9	0.094	Great Blue Heron	1	0.010
Downy Woodpecker	8	0.083	Hairy Woodpecker	1	0.010
Field Sparrow	8	0.083	Marsh Wren	1	0.010
Golden-winged Warbler	8	0.083	Northern Parula	1	0.010
Red-breasted Nuthatch	7	0.073	Pine Warbler	1	0.010
House Wren	6	0.063	Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	0.010
Mourning Warbler	6	0.063	Wild Turkey	1	0.010
White-breasted Nuthatch	6	0.063	Willow Flycatcher	1	0.010
Mourning Dove	5	0.052	Yellow Warbler	1	0.010
Northern Flicker	5	0.052	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	0.010

(Figs. 2 and 3). Several migratory breeding bird species that are common or abundant in northern Wisconsin, including Black-throated Green Warbler, and Yellow-rumped Warbler, are either absent or very rare in the Marathon County Forest System. Other breeding bird species that are prominent in northern Wisconsin but are absent or nearly absent in

Marathon County include Black-throated Blue Warbler, Northern Parula, Pine Warbler, Blue-headed Vireo, and Blackburnian Warbler (Fig. 4). Two attributes of the forest vegetation in Marathon County are likely responsible for these differences: the relatively young age of the forest and the relative absence of conifers. Forest bird species that are rare in Marathon

Table 10. List of birds observed at 11 sample points in the Ringle Marsh Forest Unit. Freq = number of counts during which the species was observed (max. = 32); PFreq = the proportion of counts during which the species was observed.

Common Name	Freq	Pfreq	Common Name	Freq	Pfreq
Ovenbird	29	0.906	Chipping Sparrow	3	0.094
Red-eyed Vireo	21	0.656	Eastern Towhee	3	0.094
American Robin	18	0.563	Pileated Woodpecker	3	0.094
Black-capped Chickadee	17	0.531	Winter Wren	3	0.094
Common Yellowthroat	17	0.531	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	3	0.094
Veery	15	0.469	Alder Flycatcher	2	0.063
Song Sparrow	14	0.438	Black-and-white Warbler	2	0.063
American Goldfinch	12	0.375	Great Crested Flycatcher	2	0.063
Eastern Wood-Pewee	11	0.344	Indigo Bunting	2	0.063
Hermit Thrush	11	0.344	Mourning Dove	2	0.063
Scarlet Tanager	11	0.344	Northern Cardinal	2	0.063
Blue Jay	10	0.313	Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	0.063
Mourning Warbler	10	0.313	Sandhill Crane	2	0.063
American Crow	9	0.281	Baltimore Oriole	1	0.031
Brown-headed Cowbird	8	0.250	Golden-winged Warbler	1	0.031
Cedar Waxwing	8	0.250	Least Flycatcher	1	0.031
Nashville Warbler	8	0.250	Pine Siskin	1	0.031
Downy Woodpecker	6	0.188	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1	0.031
Red-winged Blackbird	5	0.156	Ruffed Grouse	1	0.031
House Wren	4	0.125	White-breasted Nuthatch	1	0.031
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	4	0.125	Yellow Warbler	1	0.031
Swamp Sparrow	4	0.125	Yellow-throated Vireo	1	0.031
White-throated Sparrow	4	0.125			

County relative to northern Wisconsin forests tend to be characteristic of mixed hardwood-conifer forests, particularly late successional stands (Howe and Mossman 1996).

Another difference between the birds of Marathon County forests and those of northern Wisconsin is the relatively high frequency of shrub-loving species in the Marathon County forests. Two of these bird species, Veery and Golden-winged Warbler, are high-priority bird species in Wisconsin, and at least one other, Eastern Towhee, has declined significantly during the past several decades (Sauer et al. 2004). Moist shrub habitats are particularly important for Veery, Golden-winged Warbler, and other migrant bird species such as (in order of decreasing frequency in this study)

Common Yellowthroat, Nashville Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, Alder Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, and possibly Canada Warbler. Birds of drier shrub habitats also were well represented in the Marathon County Forest System, including Song Sparrow, Mourning Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, House Wren, Eastern Towhee, Indigo Bunting, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Black-billed Cuckoo, and Yellow-billed Cuckoo.

Large areas of contiguous forest interspersed with shrub wetlands, even if much of the forest is intensively managed, appear to favor species like Veery and Golden-winged Warbler, which are uncommon in more sparsely forested regions of southern and eastern Wisconsin. Moskoﬀ

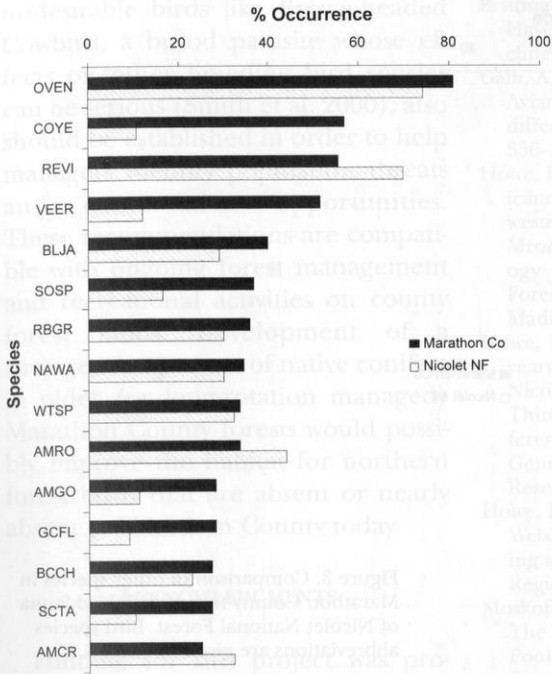


Figure 2. Comparison of abundant species in the Marathon County forests with bird fauna of Nicolet National Forest. Bird species abbreviations are given in Table 3.

(1995), for example, states that: “Veeries occur in a wide variety of forest types, but they tend to be most abundant in forest with dense deciduous shrubs or saplings within large expanses of moist hardwood or mixed conifer-hardwood forest.” We suggest that current forest management in Marathon County is compatible with, if not directly beneficial for, populations of these species in central Wisconsin. A key landscape attribute for species like Veery and Golden-winged Warbler, however, is the presence of extensive shrub wetlands. Protection of these areas from draining or degradation should be a major conservation priority in the Marathon County Forest System.

In summary, the Marathon County Forest System provides habitat for a significant diversity of breeding bird

species, including several species of regional and even global significance. The fauna is different from that of state and national forests of northern Wisconsin due to the absence of several species characteristic of conifer or mixed hardwood-conifer forests. On the other hand, birds of shrub-woodlands (e.g., Eastern Towhee) or wet shrub habitats (Veery, Golden-winged Warbler) are relatively common in the Marathon County forests, and likely represent the County’s most significant contribution to Wisconsin’s (and North America’s) bird diversity.

We suggest that protection of shrub wetlands in the relatively extensive county forest areas should be a high priority for bird conservation efforts in Marathon County. Systematic population monitoring of rare species like Golden-winged Warbler as well as

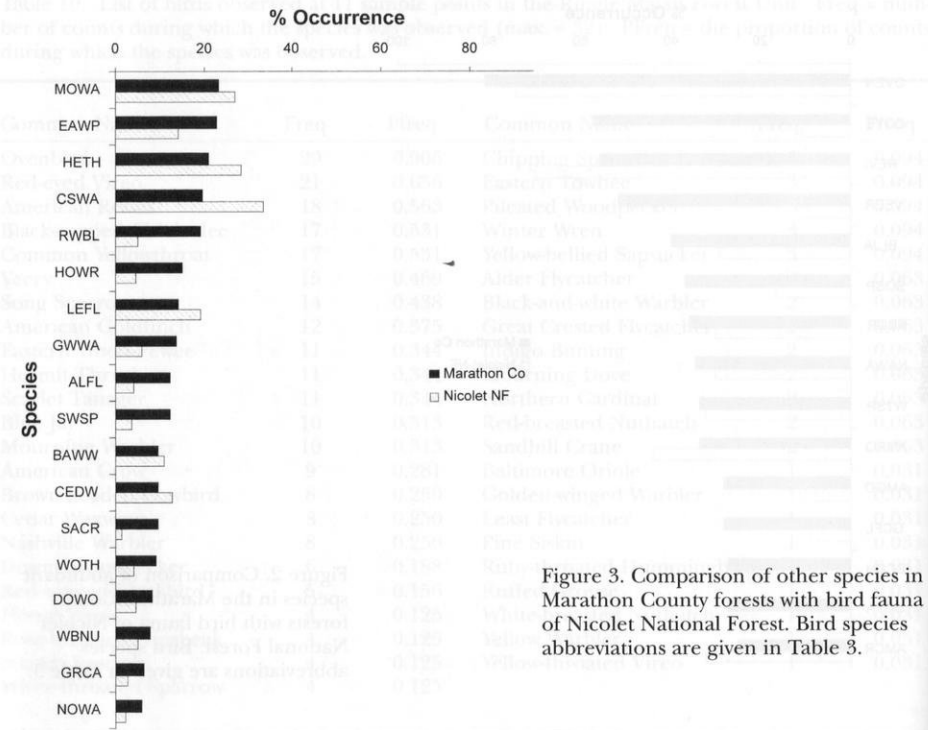


Figure 3. Comparison of other species in Marathon County forests with bird fauna of Nicolet National Forest. Bird species abbreviations are given in Table 3.

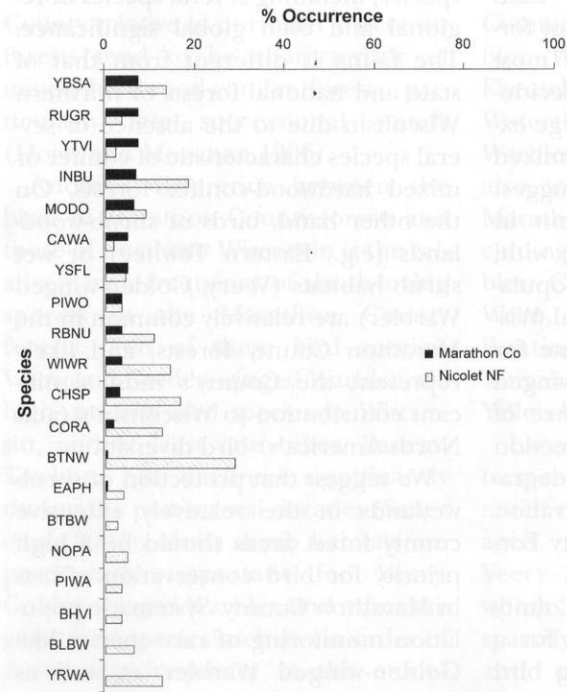


Figure 4. Comparison of selected uncommon species in Marathon County forests with bird fauna of Nicolet National Forest. Abbreviations for bird species are given in Table 3. BTBW = Black-throated Blue Warbler; NOPA = Northern Parula; PIWA = Pine Warbler; BHVI = Blue-headed Vireo; BLBW = Blackburnian Warbler; YRWA = Yellow-rumped Warbler.

undesirable birds like Brown-headed Cowbird, a brood parasite whose effects on other breeding bird species can be serious (Smith et al. 2000), also should be established in order to help managers identify population threats and conservation opportunities. These recommendations are compatible with ongoing forest management and recreational activities on county forest lands. Development of a stronger component of native conifers in older (or long-rotation managed) Marathon County forests would possibly improve the habitat for northern forest birds that are absent or nearly absent in Marathon County today.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Just like birders, Great Gray Owls visit the Superior landfill, photographed by Nan Carlsen.

Population Trends in the Black-backed Woodpecker in Wisconsin

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The Black-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides arcticus*) has a cross-continental breeding range in coniferous forests in Canada, Alaska, and small parts of the conterminous states of the northern US (Dixon and Saab 2000), including northeastern Minnesota, most of Michigan's upper peninsula, and portions of 15 counties (Robbins 1991) in northernmost Wisconsin, as also illustrated by the state's forthcoming breeding bird atlas. Principal nesting sites are remnant trees and snags in forest-interior openings created by burns, cutovers, insect infestations, or windfalls, rather than closed-canopy forests, with quick occupancy and/or higher local breeding density for about one year and perhaps up to 5 years post-fire or other disturbance (Bent 1939, Dixon and Saab 2000, Corace et al. 2001).

In autumn and winter, it occasionally makes irruptive movements beyond the breeding range into central and southern Wisconsin (Thiel 1978) and other non-breeding areas in upper midwestern and northeastern states and provinces (Yunick 1985). The temporal spacing, number of birds, dispersal distances, and possibly directions involved in such move-

ments appear to be irregular among years, although some irruptions of varying magnitude seem to be clumped in series of several consecutive winters (Yunick 1985, Dixon and Saab 2000), as was perhaps the case in Wisconsin in 1964–68 (Thiel 1978: Figure 2). Predominant winter habitats again include dead trees, especially but not exclusively conifers, as foraging sites (Yunick 1985, Corace et al. 2001).

The Black-backed Woodpecker is presently rated a species of special concern in Wisconsin (BER 2000) because of suspected but insufficiently documented decline in numbers within its limited breeding range in the state. Here I use an index of observer effort to estimate seasonal population trends of this woodpecker in northern and southern Wisconsin in 1950–85 vs. 1910–49.

METHODS

Editors of the seasonal field notes summaries in *The Passenger Pigeon* have consistently held that all submitted reports of this species in Wisconsin will merit publication. Data from reporting WSO observers are thus complete

or nearly so for seasonal summaries in 1939–85. Reports, as termed here, should be taken to mean sightings in separate localities or separate years, not repeated sightings by different observers at the same locality in the same year and not the sum of same-day or same-year individuals at a locality. For example—when more specific localities were not mentioned—two birds on a Christmas count or multiple intra-year sightings in the same county were treated as a single report.

Thiel (1978) has tallied published Wisconsin reports in *The Passenger Pigeon* Vol. 1–40 (2) plus unpublished and earlier data from museum specimens and other sources on a per year and per county basis. He also split reports into winter (October–March) and summer (April–September) birds. Because this seasonal division is consistent with the approximate starting and ending dates of winter irruptions in Wisconsin (Robbins 1991) and elsewhere (Dixon and Saab 2000), I followed it in tabulating additional reports through July 1985 in *The Passenger Pigeon* Vols. 40 (3)–48 (2) plus a few other records, not available to Thiel, in 1922–42.

However, I maintained a winter/summer division only for northern Wisconsin, defined as the 15 counties wholly or partly included in Robbins' map of summer and presumed breeding range. Kumlien and Hollister (1903) testified to personal observations in June in Lincoln and Marathon Counties in unstated years. There is otherwise no historical or recent evidence of nesting beyond Robbins' summer range aside from single nests in Waupaca and Shawano Counties (Thiel 1978: Tables 1A and 3). The latter may be a mistaken locale or cler-

ical duplication for a nest in Oconto County, within present summer range, on identical dates (8 May 1896) with identical nest contents. For present purposes, I considered southern Wisconsin to encompass all of the state's remaining 57 counties, and assigned all southern reports in all months to winter irruptions or subsequent non-breeding stragglers.

Bielefeldt and Rosenfield (2003) used reports of 80 rare avian taxa to devise an index of tangible and intangible aspects of observer effort in Wisconsin during 1950–89. With the aid of S. Matteson, we have since expanded this technique to reports of 78 of the same taxa in 1910–49. Unpublished results suggest a tenfold increase in statewide observer effort in 1950–89 vs. 1910–49. This estimate of effort can then be employed as an expectation of the number of reports in a potentially stable population of Black-backed Woodpeckers (a species independent of the original dataset) in Wisconsin in the four later vs. four earlier decades. If the number of reports does not meet expectations, results might be seen as one signal of decreasing (or increasing) populations. After adjusting for the unequal number of years in 1950–85 vs. 1910–49 tallies, I expected a ninefold increase in reports in later decades.

RESULTS

Published and other accessible reports of Black-backed Woodpeckers in Wisconsin totaled 274 during 1910–85. In irruptive winter range in southern Wisconsin, reports in 1950–85 ($n=46$, excluding one Waupaca Co. nest) were only 51% of ex-

pectation based on 1910–49 reports ($n=10$) and a ninefold increase in observer effort. In other words, a stable southern winter population would on average be expected to yield $10 \times 9 = 90$ reports instead of the 46 actually obtained in 1950–85.

In northern Wisconsin in 1950–85, excluding nine undated reports, winter ($n=62$) and summer ($n=98$) records were respectively 28% and 47% of ninefold expectation from 1910–49 reports in winter ($n=25$) and summer ($n=23$). Statewide in all seasons, total reports in 1950–85 ($n=216$) vs. 1910–49 ($n=58$) were 41% of expectation.

The result for 1950–85 reports in northern Wisconsin in winter (28% of expectation) may seem suspiciously low in comparison to other seasonal, regional, and statewide results (41–51% of expectation). It might be thought that the 16 northern reports obtained incidentally by W. S. Feeney and associates during other extensive fieldwork in 1941–47 (Thiel 1978: Table 5), including 9 winter reports not published at the time, have made my estimate of a ninefold increase in observer effort inappropriate in this particular case. However, deletion of those 9 unpublished reports by Feeney et al. (almost 20% of all northern reports in 1910–49) still leaves northern winter records at 43% and statewide all-season records at 49% of expectation in 1950–85.

DISCUSSION

I applied an empirically derived index of observer effort to a complete set of published and otherwise available reports of the Black-backed

Woodpecker in Wisconsin, 1910–85, to provide one perspective on population trends for a species of possible conservation concern. This analysis suggests that numbers were neither increasing nor stable but instead probably decreasing over that 75-year span in both northern Wisconsin summer range and in an irruptive winter range that may sometimes reach southern Wisconsin. Both summer and winter numbers in the state in 1950–85, north or south, appear to be on the order of 40–50% of those reported in 1910–49.

Before 1910, at least 20 specimens, nests, or reliable sightings of Black-backed Woodpeckers were obtained in ≥ 13 separate years ca. 1877 to 1909 in 10 counties in northern and central Wisconsin, with birds (in winter only) as far south as Outagamie, Wood, and Dunn Counties (Kumlien and Hollister 1903, Thiel 1978). Eleven specimens (6) or nests (5) involved summer reports in 7 separate years (1893–1909) in 5 northern counties (Oconto, Vilas, Price, Iron, Douglas) within current summer range. Unidentified collectors may have contributed some of these reports, but I can find reference to only 9 named ornithologists who resided (A. J. Schoenebeck) or visited (A. L. Kumlien, N. Hollister, F. H. King, H. Nehrling, B. F. Goss, H. V. Ogden, E. Copeland, H. L. Ward) in the present summer range in northern Wisconsin between ca. 1870 to 1909. These 11 summer reports gathered by a small corps of observers in 1893–1909 may suggest that this woodpecker was still relatively numerous within its northern Wisconsin breeding range at that time.

For comparison, an increasing num-

ber of observers (≥ 21) accumulated 23 northern summer reports in 1910–49. Versus 1870–1909, both the number of observers and the number of reports had doubled. Schorger (1951), who was not given to incautious language, called Black-backed Woodpeckers “quite common” in some Sawyer County swamps in June 1947. Number of known observers is an imprecise measure of effort in pre-1910 vs. 1910–49 years, but available evidence may allow the possibility that there was little or no decline in breeding season numbers in northern Wisconsin ca. 1890–1949.

Pre-1910 data on winter numbers in northern counties are nearly lacking aside from a brief comment by Schoenebeck (1902, see *Passenger Pigeon* 1:96), who said this woodpecker was a “common” winter visitant in Oconto County about 1885–1900. Other descriptions of winter numbers in Wisconsin before 1910, also qualitative, are limited to southeastern counties within irruptive range.

Hoy (1853), using the plural, took an unknown number of “specimens . . . in the month of November” during his first seven years of work in and near Racine County. Bruhin (1875) reported this woodpecker from Milwaukee ca. 1869–75 (McAtee 1943), but it is unclear whether Hoy (1874) still found it in winter near Racine at that time or instead recalled earlier records. Kumlien and Hollister (1903) wrote that “before the growth of heavy tamarack was cut in . . . portions of southern Wisconsin,” wintering birds were “abundant in such localities as far south” as Jefferson County. “Of late years,” they said, “it seldom visits southern Wisconsin” where “thirty to forty years ago [ca. 1860–70] . . . large

numbers were found in a very small area of dead tamarack.”

Using those sources, Robbins (1991) and Dixon and Saab (2000) have postulated that Black-backed Woodpeckers were common in winter in southeastern Wisconsin in the mid 1800s, but “scarce” (Robbins 1991) by 1900. These perceptions appear to rest heavily on the remarks of Kumlien and Hollister. (Robbins also cited the four winter specimens taken in Dunn County in west-central Wisconsin by J. N. Clark in 1889–99—and the lack of subsequent reports there—as another instance of winter range recession. This example is ambiguous because Clark ceased work about 1902.)

Cutting and drainage of southeastern tamarack swamps began in earnest in the 1890s, culminated in the 1920s, and lasted through the 1930s; insect outbreaks in 1900–10 killed many trees and presumably provided temporarily favorable winter habitat for this woodpecker (Curtis 1959). It thus seems curious that irruptions would diminish and birds become scarce by 1900 or before when much winter habitat was still available in southeastern counties and when numbers in northern Wisconsin breeding range, as discussed above, may have been relatively stable.

Seventy-five years of increasing observer effort during 1910–1985 have yielded only 19 reports of this woodpecker in the 8 southeastern counties—Milwaukee to Dane and Rock to Kenosha—familiar to Hoy, T. and L. Kumlien, and Hollister in the preceding 70 years. There appear to be no southeastern reports between 1973 in Dane County (*Passenger Pigeon* 36: 27) and 1987 on the Waukesha Christmas count (pers. obs.) for these 8 counties,

where Robbins (1991) has now rated it "accidental" in winter.

There are alternatives to habitat loss, none mutually exclusive, in examining the timing and magnitude of this purportedly dramatic decline in winter numbers in southern Wisconsin:

- T. and L. Kumlien may have encountered an exceptionally large irruption, or one or more serial irruptions over several consecutive years (Yunick 1985), in Jefferson County during 1860–70. If so, the "abundant" winter birds of that decade might be seen as a short-run phenomenon overlaid on lower long-run numbers, perhaps not dissimilar (in most years) in the mid- to late 1800s vs. 1910–49 in southern Wisconsin. A coincident irruption of the congeneric American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides tridactylus*) in Jefferson County in 1860–70, with few or no other local winter records (Kumlien and Hollister 1903), may lend support to the premise that Black-backed Woodpeckers occurred in supra-normal winter numbers in some of these same years.
- The early stages of logging and the subsequent slash fires in the pineries of northern Wisconsin, beginning in the 1840s in Black-backed breeding range (Curtis 1959), might have increased the amount of favored habitat in cutovers and burns, which can be rapidly occupied by nesting birds (Dixon and Saab 2000). A population spike on breeding grounds in the mid 1800s may have contributed to the extraordinary winter numbers in southern Wisconsin in the 1860s.
- The geographic origins of past or

present winter irruptions reaching southern Wisconsin are unknown, and not necessarily confined to sources within breeding range in the state's northern counties or upper Michigan. It is possible that some irruptions—or the lack of them—in southern Wisconsin over the past 150 years are linked to habitat changes or other circumstances within nesting areas in Minnesota, western Ontario, or elsewhere.

Analysis of 1910–85 reports, as corrected for increasing observer effort (unlike Thiel 1978: Figure 2), appear to show a plain but perhaps not catastrophic decrease in both winter and summer populations of the Black-backed Woodpecker in Wisconsin during the past 50 years or more. Continuing status as a species of special concern (BER 2000) seems warranted. Despite perceptions of major declines—at least in winter in southern Wisconsin—between the mid 1800s and the present, it remains unclear whether numbers did in fact diminish in northern summer range or southern winter irruptions in the late 1800s vs. 1910–49.

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Vicki Hollenberg 2005

A Great Gray Owl up close with Vicki Hollenberg.

A Probable Acadian Flycatcher × Least Flycatcher Hybrid

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Songs of flycatchers are well-known for being highly stereotyped. It was the consistent differences in song, for example, that allowed the two populations of the Traill's Flycatcher to be originally separated into the Alder and Willow flycatchers (*Empidonax alnorum* and *E. traillii*) (Stein 1963). Since then, stereotyped flycatcher songs have routinely been used to identify species or "population" limits in a number of genera, such as *Myiarchus* (Lanyon 1969), *Suiriri* (Zimmer et al. 2001), and *Empidonax* and *Contopus* (Johnson 1980, Zink and Johnson 1984, Sedgwick 2001); these stereotyped songs are increasingly used to identify species limits among other suboscines, too, such as in the Neotropical antbirds (Isler et al. 1998). Songs of flycatchers and related suboscines so reliably reveal species limits largely because the songs are not learned, but instead are somehow encoded directly in the DNA (Kroodsma 1984, Kroodsma and Konishi 1991).

Given how reliably flycatchers sing the proper song for their species, the songs of an *Empidonax* flycatcher heard on 26 June 2001, near Poncho Creek, Portage County, Wisconsin, was highly unusual (Fig. 1). One song, given up to 12 times per minute, was a fast, rising *spi-di-dik*, consisting of four to five notes. The sound and the quality were similar to the rising rattled call notes (*prididit*) of the Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*), but reminiscent of the pace and tone of an Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*). About one in every six songs was *spi-di-dik-bek*, the lower-pitched *bek* sounding much like the *bek* note in the Least Flycatcher (*Empidonax minimus*), which is commonly transcribed as *che-bek*. Later inspection of sonograms revealed that the *spi-di-dik* notes were somewhat similar to the *che* note at the beginning of a Least Flycatcher song.

The soft twittering vocalization (hereafter the "flutter" call) that this bird used when it alighted after a flight

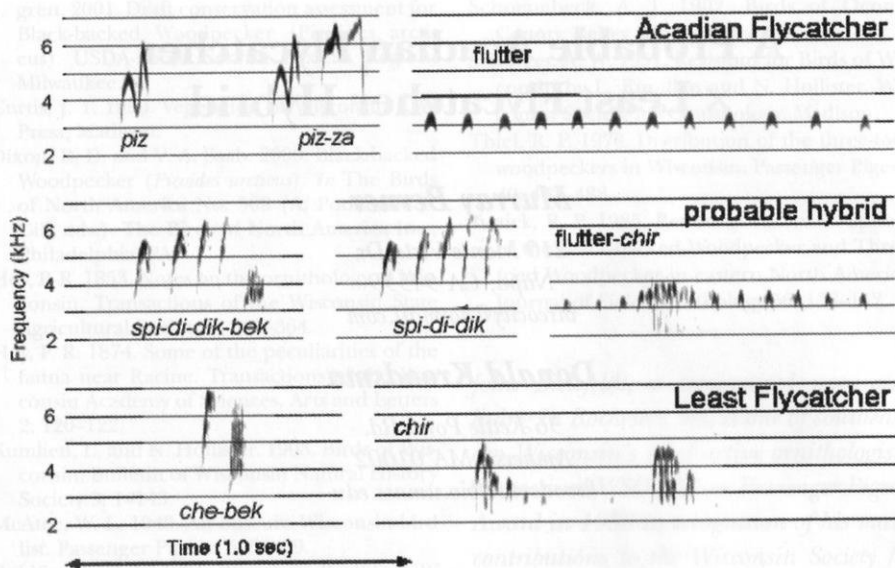


Fig. 1. Vocalizations of the Acadian and Least flycatchers, together with those of a presumed hybrid. **Top row.** The dawn song of the Acadian consists of a rapidly repeated series of *piz* notes (only one shown here) typically followed by a single *pizza* (or, depending on one's ear, a series of *seet* sounds followed by a single *tee-chup*; Whitehead and Taylor 2002). On the right is roughly the last 1.3 seconds of a three-second flutter call given by an Acadian Flycatcher. **Middle row.** Vocalizations of the presumed hybrid, as described in the text. **Bottom row.** The *che-bek* song of the Least together with two forms of the *chir* call. The songs of the Least and Acadian flycatchers were recorded in Leverett, Massachusetts.

had characteristics of both the Acadian Flycatcher and the Least Flycatcher (Fig. 1). This call began and ended like a typical Acadian flutter call, with about 10–11 chevron-shaped notes per second (as measured from sound spectrograms). Imbedded in this sequence, beginning at about 0.25 sec and lasting about 0.1 sec, was an explosive *chir*, a burst of five to seven notes given at a rate of 50/second. A similar *chir* note is given by an alighting Least Flycatcher, also with about 50 notes/sec, and is also used aggressively toward conspecifics. The Least Flycatcher does not seem to give a flutter call in any context.

Two other call notes were heard

once and twice, respectively: a sneezed *fft* and a loud, whistled *speek*, both calls that have been heard from the other Acadians in the area.

This bird was visited on two more dates during 2001. On 11 July, he continued to sing vigorously, the song type with the *bek* ending now about 40 percent of the songs. On 24 July, he sang far slower, about two songs per minute, and none of the songs contained the *bek* ending. On both dates, he always gave the "flutter-*chir*" call when alighting.

This bird returned the following year, when it was observed on 6, 12, and 24 June and 2, 16, and 30 July, between 0700 and 1130 hours. Record-

ings were made on 12 June. He continued to sing both song forms, with the *spi-di-dik-bek* about two out of five songs. The "flutter-chir" was also unchanged. No other vocalizations were heard during 2002. As in 2001, this bird foraged and sang exclusively within the lower and middle part of the tree canopy, and sang persistently up to 1130 hours during each morning that it was found.

Overall, the vocalizations of this bird seem to be those of a hybrid. Two vocalizations, the *bek* and the *chir*, are unmistakably those of the Least Flycatcher; three others, the flutter, the sneezed *fft*, and the *speek*, are unmistakably Acadian. The *spi-di-dik* notes on a sonogram look like the initial note in the song of the Least, but the tone of the song feels more like that of an Acadian, though far less explosive. Also intermediate was the singing rate: the probable hybrid sang 10–12 songs/min, slower than the 20–30 songs/min for the Least and faster than the 3–6 songs/min of Acadians heard in the area.

Neighboring males of both species responded aggressively to playback of these odd songs. After playback to a male Least Flycatcher about 100 m distant, he immediately became agitated, taking a perch in the canopy directly above the playback speaker, where he was joined by a second bird (presumably a Least). The two engaged in ritualized body-elongation with fanned tails, holding their bodies rigidly horizontal across a perch while swaying side to side. This behavior, similar to the "threat posture" described by Briskie (1994), continued for a minute before both birds flew off. The tape was then played to a territorial male Acadian 300m to the north. Both the

Acadian and a Least that had been singing about 50m away approached the tape, the two chasing and disappearing in the canopy.

The plumage of this bird was typical *Empidonax* (observations reported here from notes made by MB on 24 June 2002 during best views of the probable hybrid, an adult male Acadian, and several adult male Least). Blackish wings with high contrast between the overall wing and the two white wing bars and white margins of the tertials and secondaries. Bright olive green crown, nape, back, and rump. No contrast between head, back, and rump. Dorsal surface of tail gray, darker than back or rump. Weak contrast between dimly greenish malar and whitish throat. Distinct, complete pale eye-ring. Lower mandible entirely pale orange. Pale "vest" of blurry grey streaks at sides of breast. Ground color of breast whitish. Soft, clear, clean, very pale, yellow-washed belly. Proportions of wing and tail length unremarkable (or simply very difficult to judge).

Other aspects of the plumage suggested that this bird was a hybrid. It was like a Least in that the head of the hybrid appeared small and rounded without any hint of a crest or peak at the rear of the crown; the Acadian Flycatcher shows a distinctive, long sloping crown-forehead profile that is accentuated by the longer bill, with the peak of the rear crown high and pronounced, giving the head a somewhat triangular appearance. The hybrid's eye-ring was more distinct than that of the Acadian Flycatcher, tending toward Least Flycatcher. The hybrid was more like an Acadian in its yellow-washed belly and the brighter green back and head.

In three ways, the behavior of this

hybrid seemed to be more like that of a Least than an Acadian flycatcher. Overall, this individual was perhaps more nervous and active than an Acadian, its behavior more closely approaching the flightier nature of Least. Its posture while perched silently or singing was more upright than the usual Acadian, always perching with its tail held vertical, or beyond vertical forward of the body; this posture is typical of Least, as an Acadian consistently assumes a more horizontal posture across a perch. The wings of the hybrid were always held drooped at the sides of the tail, much like a Least; in contrast, an Acadian usually keeps its wings closed tightly over the rump (an Acadian may droop its wings on occasion when it sings, but they are more frequently kept closed over the rump).

This bird was apparently unpaired during 2001, but seemed to have paired with a female Acadian during 2002. At 0730 on 12 June 2002, an Acadian Flycatcher was heard giving typical *weece* call notes within 30m of the singing hybrid. The hybrid immediately left his preferred singing area and perched and sang in the canopy above the foraging female. She was observed for about 5 minutes as she foraged in the lower canopy, and frequently in the shrub layer. She then went to a completed nest 2.3m high in a witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), where she assumed incubation posture. He then returned to his preferred area upslope. The same sequence of events occurred when the female was off the nest at 0900 hours.

The nest eventually failed. The female sat on the nest through 24 June, after which no female was seen in the area. On 2 July the nest was found

abandoned, empty and intact. On 11 July, the nest had vanished, no trace in either the witch hazel or on the ground below. No attempt was made to determine its contents before it was abandoned.

The female and the nest seemed to be typical Acadian. Female Acadians in this population frequently give repeated *weece* calls when off the nest during incubation, and her call was typical. Both the nest and structure of the nest were consistent with the nine Acadian nests found in the area before 2002. They were all in a terminal fork of a witch hazel branch, 2–3m high; all were a loose, somewhat fragile shallow cup with strands of plant fiber and spider/insect silk hanging below the nest, an overall unkempt appearing nest (Fig. 2).

Six kilometer long Poncho Creek lies within Wisconsin's "Tension Zone," where southern and northern flora and fauna reach their greatest combined diversity. The stream is a microcosm of the phenomenon, primarily in terms of southern birds expanding their range north. Since 1988, Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora pinus*) has completely displaced the Golden-winged Warbler (*V. chrysoptera*) population; there are a combined 13 records of the two resulting hybrid forms, Brewster's and Lawrence's warblers. Concurrent with the appearance of Acadian Flycatcher, Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*) and Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*) have established similarly small populations, with first county breeding records obtained since 1999.

The relative rarity of the Acadian Flycatcher at this site has undoubtedly played a role in this mixed mating (Randler 2002). The first Acadian Flycatcher was found at this site in 1995,

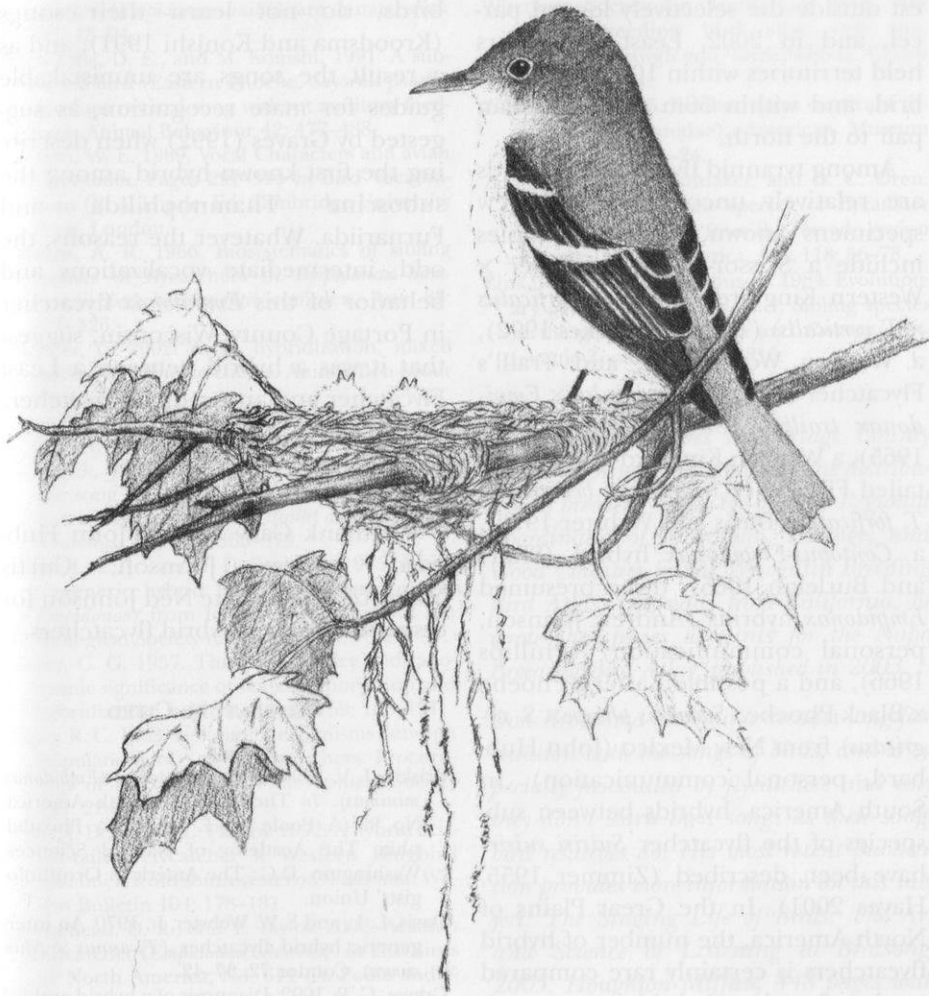


Fig. 2. Acadian Flycatcher nest with young near Poncho Creek, July 2003 (Berner).

just a single singing male on the periphery of a small Least Flycatcher colony (4-5 pairs). Since 1996, only one or two Acadian pairs have been present in this forest, which consists of upland northern red oak (*Quercus borealis*), sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), and aspen (*Populus*), with a shrub layer dominated by witch hazel and beaked hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta*). This site is at the extreme northwest-

ern range edge for Acadians, the nearest sustained population of them approximately 100 km south-southeast in Green Lake Co. (Wisconsin Society for Ornithology 2004). In 1997, the number of Least Flycatchers increased dramatically, as they colonized a nearby 16 ha forest parcel that had been selectively logged over the winter. During 2001, Least Flycatchers appeared for the first time at younger stands of for-

est outside the selectively logged parcel, and in 2002, Least Flycatchers held territories within 100m of the hybrid, and within 50m of an Acadian pair to the north.

Among tyrannid flycatchers, hybrids are relatively uncommon, with few specimens known. Several examples include a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher \times Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus forficatus* \times *T. verticalis*) (Tyler and Parkes 1992), a Western Wood-Pewee and Traill's Flycatcher (*Contopus sordidulus* \times *Empidonax traillii*) (Short and Burleigh 1965), a Western Kingbird and Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus verticalis* \times *T. forficatus*) (Davis and Webster 1970), a *Contopus*-*Empidonax* hybrid (Short and Burleigh 1965), three presumed *Empidonax* hybrids (Andrew Johnson, personal communication) (Phillips 1966), and a possible Eastern Phoebe \times Black Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe* \times *S. nigricans*) from New Mexico (John Hubbard, personal communication). In South America, hybrids between subspecies of the flycatcher *Suiriri suiriri* have been described (Zimmer 1955, Hayes 2001). In the Great Plains of North America, the number of hybrid flycatchers is certainly rare compared to the abundant hybrids among orioles, towhees, meadowlarks, buntings, and grosbeaks, all songbirds with eastern and western taxa that have distributional limits in the Great Plains (Rising 1983).

Why flycatcher hybrids are rare is uncertain. Perhaps it is because most flycatchers are sexually monomorphic and monogamous, whereas hybrids among birds occur most frequently among dimorphic or polygynous species (Sibley 1957). Or perhaps it is because flycatchers, probably like most other suboscines and unlike song-

birds, do not learn their songs (Kroodsma and Konishi 1991), and as a result the songs are unmistakable guides for mate recognition, as suggested by Graves (1992) when describing the first known hybrid among the suboscine *Thamnophilidae* and *Furnariidae*. Whatever the reasons, the odd, intermediate vocalizations and behavior of this *Empidonax* flycatcher in Portage County, Wisconsin, suggest that it was a hybrid between a Least Flycatcher and an Acadian Flycatcher.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank Gary Graves, John Hubbard, Andrew Johnson, Curtis Marantz, and the late Ned Johnson for discussions about hybrid flycatchers.

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Murray Berner lives in Portage County where his primary interest is in the distribution of breeding birds. He was the Regional Coordinator of Marathon, Portage, and Wood Counties for the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas. Originally from California, he wrote the species accounts for the Napa Breeding Bird Atlas, published in 2003.

Don Kroodsma has had a decades-long fascination with the songs of birds, and is especially fascinated by flycatchers and why they don't learn their songs as their songbird relatives do. His most recent publication provides more information on this subject: The Singing Life of Birds: The Art and Science of Listening to Birdsong, 2005, Houghton Mifflin, 448 pages with CD of songs, \$28.00 for hardcover.



One of the many Great Gray Owls seen by Aaron Stutz in Wisconsin during the winter of 2004–2005.

50 Years Ago in *The Passenger Pigeon*

A request 50 years ago by the editor (Sam Robbins) of *The Passenger Pigeon* is similar to that of *Pigeon* editors Bettie and Neil Harriman today—"The editor is always in the market for worthy manuscripts that can be published. Articles may deal with a wide variety of subjects that may be interesting and informative to Wisconsin ornithologists: bird behavior studies, nesting studies, changes in distribution of certain species over a period of time, population studies of limited areas, interesting experiences on trips, etc. Articles may be long or short. Manuscripts should be sent to the editor, preferably typed double-space on 8.5×11 " paper. Send illustrations whenever possible." Of course, it was impossible for Sam to envision a day when editors would be surrounded by an electronic and digital world. Through the years, the *Pigeon* has established itself as one of the premiere state bird journals. Your contributions continue to be vital to the journal's success.

WSO President John T. Emlen appointed Robert McCabe and James Hale to WSO's first Research Committee.

(Excerpts from Vol. 17 (3), 1955)

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Northern Hawk Owl at Harrington Beach State Park by Delia Unson.

The Winter Season: 2004–2005

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It seems to be customary to begin a seasonal report with a discussion of the weather, but I keep thinking of all those owls. Superior resident Robbye Johnson expressed it simply and aptly: "There is only one word to describe this winter. OWLS. And more owls." I'll follow tradition and first summarize the weather, but I'm really thinking of owls. Don't go away.

The period began with a snow cover in the Lake Superior snow belt and the extreme southeastern corner of the state, but mild weather. Open water was widespread and waterfowl still common, especially in the Mississippi River's Pool 8 in Vernon County, Wisconsin and Houston County, Minnesota; in this waterway on 30 November Fred Leshner noted a total of 18 species of waterfowl, including 8000–10,000 Tundra Swans, numerous Canada Geese, and "uncountable rafts of ducks."

In the first week and a half of December, temperatures were normal to above normal, with rain and snow. Colder air entered the state on the 12th and 13th, with heavy snow—up to two feet—in far northwestern Wisconsin. The low temperatures, which included sub-zero readings and daily highs in just the single digits, persisted

until Christmas. Temperatures then moderated. In southern Wisconsin, for example, the highs at the end of the month were in the 40s and 50s, some 40 degrees warmer than the highs a week earlier. The warming trend, accompanied by rain, essentially melted the snow cover—the ground again bare at the end of the year over much of Wisconsin.

This quickly changed in early January, as widespread storms again whitened the state. Much of this month was dominated by storms and cold weather, including sub-zero readings. Temperatures moderated with widespread thaw in the last week of January.

The moderate weather continued into February, which overall was mild.

Here are a few county weather summaries for the period. Alta Goff in Barron County reported a moderate snow cover and variable temperatures, with a March-like February. Murray Berner in Portage County regarded the period as essentially wintry throughout; the snow cover was constant after 20 December, although it never exceeded 10 inches. In Outagamie County the most severe weather was in mid-January when sub-zero temperatures were followed by a snowstorm of 6–12



inches; but a week later, as reported by Daryl Tessen, the temperature was in the 50s. For Door County, as reported in the *Ridges Sanctuary Newsletter*, a number of snowstorms in January were followed by a thaw in early February which formed an icy crust over the snow. Karen Etter Hale in Jefferson County noted generally above normal temperatures, with snow **and** rain in every month.

And now those owls. Great Gray Owl, Northern Hawk Owl, and Boreal Owl appeared in unprecedented num-

bers. Johnson again expressed it so well: "My mind is still unable to wrap itself around this incursion of owls. Perhaps, when it is all over, I will be able to summarize." Newspapers and magazines such as *Newsweek* all reported on this once-in-a-lifetime happening. In Douglas County the invasion of Great Gray Owls was especially noticeable. It was found here throughout the period, with a major movement along the St. Louis River into Superior from 7–12 January; on 10 January, Johnson found a total of 38

birds within the city limits, and up to 20 and more were being seen at the same time on Wisconsin Point, the sandspit that extends for several miles into Lake Superior near Superior. By the end of the period, this owl was being reported in south-central Wisconsin, for example Sauk, Columbia, Dane, and Rock Counties. Estimates of Great Gray Owl and Northern Hawk Owl numbers for Minnesota and Wisconsin combined for this irruption ranged between 4000–5000 and 500–1000, respectively. Boreal Owl is more nocturnal than Great Gray Owl or Northern Hawk Owl, so estimating its numbers is more uncertain; banding records indicate that this owl was represented by at least 400 individuals.

But, like a major grounding of migrants in the spring, such an invasion may not be good news for the birds. Great Gray Owl and Northern Hawk Owl prey heavily on microtine rodents, especially the meadow vole, and this invasion of owls coincided with a crash in the numbers of this rodent in at least part of the breeding range of the owls. Starving owls and owls killed in vehicle collisions were widespread. Boreal Owl, in contrast, feeds heavily on the red-backed vole, and some of these owls may have been dispersing naturally, rather than in response to a dwindling food supply.

For background on previous owl invasion, specifically Great Gray Owl, see *Wisconsin Birdlife* by S. D. Robbins, Jr., 1991, pages 344–345, and *The Passenger Pigeon* for April–June 1969 and Winter 1989.

The winter of 2004–2005 also was notable for a new species for the state, in fact for the entire mid-continent for winter—Hooded Oriole, an adult male at a feeder in La Crosse, La

Crosse County, from 15–19 December. It was documented by Tim Collins and photographed by Fred Leshar [See photo on page 355]. The only other mid-continent records for this south-western species are from Ontario in May 1992 and Iowa in May 2003.

Also noteworthy was an Ash-throated Flycatcher, Wisconsin's second record and first for winter; it was found on 13 December in Racine County. Documentation was provided by Dennis Gustafson [See photo on page 361]. The only other record for the state was one in Kewaunee County from 30 October–2 November 2000.

The state's second winter record of a Lark Sparrow was reported from Waupaca County and documented with photos by the Minkebiges when it visited their feeders off and on between 19 January and 4 March [See photo on page 361].

The following species also could be highlighted: Carolina Wren was found throughout the period in at least 4 counties—Racine, Dane, Sauk, and Eau Claire; with the exception of the bird in Racine County, all were associated with feeders. Two species of warblers were reported: a Yellow-rumped throughout the period at a feeder in Sauk County, and an Orange-crowned on the Columbus Christmas Bird Count. Golden-crowned Kinglet, after the Christmas Bird Counts, was noted in 10 counties, including Marathon and Douglas. Three finches—American Goldfinch, Pine Siskin, and Common Redpoll—were numerous: the goldfinch was actually in record numbers on the CBCs.

Northern Harrier was found throughout the period in approximately 7 counties, including Dunn, Chippewa, Winnebago, and Mani-



It was a silent, windless morning, with huge snowflakes drifting slowly down through soft, diffused sunlight. A Great Gray Owl sat on a lichen covered pine branch. It only looked at me briefly as I got out of the car to get a better angle. It was concentrating on rodent noises on the ground. I took a few photos. Then it floated silently to the ground, disappeared for a moment in the grass, rustled around a bit, hopped up out of the plunge hole, ran a few steps, and lifted to another pine branch, a mouse dangling from its beak. It let me take more photos of it sitting with its prize, then drifted softly away into thicker woods. On this day I found 15 more Great Grays, all in mid-afternoon. They sit along the edges of fields, bending down the small branches they cling to like grapes dangling from leafless vines. Fruit from the far north, come to visit us for a while.—Robbye Johnson, 8 January 2005 in Superior, Douglas County, Wisconsin.

towoc; this was the 4th consecutive winter that this raptor was relatively common and widespread after the CBCs. In contrast, Barrow's Goldeneye was not reported after 10 consecutive winters of at least one record.

Late fall migration was noted for Canada Goose, Cackling Goose, Tundra Swan, and Sandhill Crane, and inferred for various waterfowl and gulls.

Spring migration was reported for these species: Greater White-fronted Goose, Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Northern Pintail, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Northern Harrier, Red-shouldered Hawk, American Kestrel, Sandhill Crane, Killdeer, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Horned Lark, Eastern Bluebird, Red-winged Blackbird, Rusty Blackbird, Common Grackle, and Brown-headed Cowbird. See the species accounts for details.

These signs of spring also were noted. In January a Northern Saw-whet Owl was calling in Madison on the 19th (Aaron Stutz), House Finch was singing in Oshkosh on the 21st (Bettie Harriman), Northern Cardinal was singing in Dane County on the 23rd (Martin Evanson), a Red-tailed Hawk pair was copulating in Milwaukee County on the 28th (Karen Johnson), and Horned Lark was singing in Dodge County on the 29th (Royan Webb). In February a chipmunk was noted in Barron County on the 13th (Alta Goff), a nest with three eggs, most likely House Finch, in Lake Mills, Jefferson County, was inadvertently destroyed on the 15th (Ruth E. Topel via Karen Etter Hale), Northern Cardinal was singing in Door County on the 24th (*Ridges Sanctuary Newsletter*), and

Great Horned Owl was on nest in Rock County on the 27th (Andy Paulios).

A total of 79 people contributed reports or photos for 60 of Wisconsin's 72 counties. The counties with the most coverage (five or more contributors per county) were the following: Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Douglas, Iowa, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Portage, Sheboygan, and Waukesha. Sixteen counties were covered by just one contributor per county: Adams, Bayfield, Buffalo, Dunn, Florence, Grant, Green, Lafayette, Langlade, Pepin, Rusk, Sawyer, Trempealeau, Washburn, Waupaca, and Waushara. These 12 counties were not covered: Polk, Pierce, Vernon, and Crawford along the state's western border; Iron and Marinette in northern Wisconsin; Kewaunee and Calumet in eastern Wisconsin; Green Lake and Marquette in central Wisconsin; and Monroe and Richland in the southwestern corner.

The following statewide species are not included in the species accounts: Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, American Crow, Blue Jay, and Black-capped Chickadee.

These abbreviations are included with the species accounts: BOP—beginning of period; EOP—End of period; TTP—throughout the period; m. obs.—many observers; and CBC(s)—Christmas Bird Count(s).

There were 96 Christmas Bird Counts in Wisconsin this winter. My thanks once again to Bob Domagalski for sending a copy of the Christmas Bird Count report in time for me to include the highlights in this seasonal summary.



Wings of Light © 2005 Mark H. Ehlers

This Northern Hawk Owl was seen by hundreds of birders and members of the general public at Harrington Beach State Park from 26 December 2004 well into 2005. This picture was taken by Mark Ehlers.

REPORTS

(1 DECEMBER 2004—
28 FEBRUARY 2005)

Greater White-fronted Goose—Found on one CBC—Randolph in Dodge County, total 5 on 2 January (documented by Michael). Later reports: 20 January and 26–27 February in Dane County (Maximum 10 on 27 February, Ashman), and 19 and 27 February in Rock County (Yoerger; Paulios).

Snow Goose—Total 24 on 7 CBCs. Later reports: 25 January in Walworth County, 24 February in Milwaukee County, and 26 February in Dane County (m. obs.).

Ross's Goose—One in Port Washington harbor, Ozaukee County, 4–5 January (Uttech).

Canada Goose—TTP in some 21 counties along Lake Michigan and inland, including Barron County in northwestern Wisconsin; thru 5 February in Bayfield/Ashland Counties. Polk reported hundreds along the Chippewa River in Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties. Spring migrants by EOP, for example, in Trempealeau County (m. obs.).

Cackling Goose—Total 372 on 11 CBCs, including 136 on the Beloit Count. TTP in Dane County, and one in Ozaukee County 8 January (m. obs.).

Mute Swan—After the CBCs, reports for 10 counties: St. Croix, Oconto, Shawano, Door, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, Milwaukee, Racine, Waukesha, and Dane. Maximum 15, Dane County, where TTP (m. obs.).

Trumpeter Swan—Total 307 on 9 CBCs, including 260 on the Hudson Count. Later reports for these counties: Barron, TTP; St. Croix, TTP; Chippewa, 8 on 26 February; Shawano, 10 January; and Dane, 23 February to EOP, maximum 8 (m. obs.).

Tundra Swan—Still numerous (2000+) on 15 December in La Crosse County (Leshner). Migrants over southern Wisconsin 21 and 24 December, for example a total of 300 on 24 December in Dane County (Ashman). Latest date: 12 January, 4 in Dane County (Tessen).

Wood Duck—Total 8 on 7 CBCs. Later reports: one 12 February in Ozaukee County (Frank), and two 21 February in Rock County (Klubertanz).

Gadwall—TTP in these counties: St. Croix, Chippewa (maximum 6), Dane, Rock, and Winnebago (2). Also Sauk County, 4 February, and Milwaukee County, thru 8 January, maximum 25 (m. obs.).

American Wigeon—A male TTP in Chippewa County (Polk), one TTP in Portage County (Berner), one TTP in Dane County (Thiessen), and Milwaukee County thru 2 January (m. obs.).

American Black Duck—TTP in some 20 counties in eastern, southern, and western Wisconsin, north to Marathon and Barron Counties and the Ashland area; after December, maximum 8 (m. obs.).

Mallard—TTP in much of the state; not in the southwestern corner. Northernmost reports from Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, Oconto, and Door Counties (m. obs.). Risch in Taylor County found this species TTP in open water below the dam at Medford.

Northern Shoveler—TTP in Dane County, maximum 150 (m. obs.).

Northern Pintail—Migrants in February: 27th in Rock County (Paulios), and 27th–28th in Manitowoc County (Sontag).

Green-winged Teal—Holschbach found this species in Sauk County 7 February.

Canvasback—Apparently TTP in Dane and Ozaukee Counties, also a 27 February record for Rock County (m. obs.).

Redhead—TTP in Lake Michigan, north to Door County, also TTP in Dane County. Maximum 1000+ in Milwaukee County. Migrants in Winnebago County 25 February–EOP, and Rock County 27 February (m. obs.).

Ring-necked Duck—TTP in Milwaukee County, and a 27 February record for Rock County (m. obs.).

Greater Scaup—TTP in Lake Michigan, north to Door County. Mueller estimated from 5000–10,000 in Milwaukee harbor 3 January, and Sontag estimated 10,000+ in Manitowoc County 13 February.

Lesser Scaup—TTP in these localities: Lake Michigan, north to Manitowoc County; Winnebago County; Dane County; and Rock

County. Maximum 10 on 26 February in Milwaukee County (m. obs.).

Harlequin Duck—A pair in Milwaukee County 8 December–17 February (m. obs., documented by Bontly, Gustafson, Mueller), and a male in Sheboygan County 17 December–9 January (m. obs., documented by Cutright, Wood).

Surf Scoter—TTP in Ozaukee County, maximum 8 on 15 February, and apparently TTP in Milwaukee County, maximum 2 (m. obs.).

White-winged Scoter—Ziebell noted this species in Winnebago County from 8–16 December, maximum 6. After the CBCs, these records for Milwaukee County: 1 January, two (Thiessen), and 26 February, one (Tessen).

Black Scoter—Two reports after the CBCs: one 1 January in Milwaukee County (Thiessen), and one 14 January in the Wisconsin River by the Prairie du Sac dam in Sauk County (Holschbach).

Long-tailed Duck—TTP in Lake Michigan, south to Milwaukee County; Tessen for Ozaukee County reported approximately 1000 on 8 January and 100 on 26 February.

Bufflehead—TTP in Lake Michigan from Racine to Door Counties (m. obs.).

Common Goldeneye—TTP in these localities: St. Croix, Dunn, Chippewa, and Eau Claire Counties; the Wisconsin River from at least Iowa County north to Marathon County; Winnebago, Outagamie, and Oconto Counties; Lake Michigan from Racine to Door Counties; and Rock County (m. obs.).

Barrow's Goldeneye—No reports after 10 consecutive winters of at least one record. See *The Passenger Pigeon*, Volume 62, Number 2, page 190, for the likely source of these birds.

Hooded Merganser—TTP in these localities: Lake Michigan from Racine to Manitowoc Counties (maximum 7); Winnebago County; Portage County (one bird); Dane County; and Rock County. Likely migrants in Lafayette County 26 February and Sauk County 28 February (m. obs.).

Common Merganser—TTP in these localities: St. Croix County; the Wisconsin River from at least Iowa County north to Marathon County (maximum 650 on 14 January in Sauk County, Holschbach); Outagamie and Winnebago Counties; Lake Michigan from Racine to

Oconto and Door Counties; and Rock County (m. obs.).

Red-breasted Merganser—TTP in these localities: Lake Michigan from Racine to Door Counties; Winnebago County; and Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties (m. obs.).

Ruddy Duck—After the CBCs, reports for Milwaukee and Ozaukee Counties, also Dane County, maximum 3; likely migrants in Winnebago County 12 February–EOP, and Rock County 27 February (m. obs.).

Gray Partridge—Total 19 on 4 CBCs: Bridgeport, Kenosha, Horicon Marsh, and Shawano. Later reports for Lafayette, Ozaukee, Manitowoc, and Brown Counties, maximum 4 except for a count of 13 in Manitowoc County (m. obs.).

Ring-necked Pheasant—Northward to these counties, where TTP: Barron, Taylor, Marathon, Oconto, and Door (m. obs.).

Ruffed Grouse—Numbers continue to be relatively low.

Spruce Grouse—No reports, including the CBCs.

Sharp-tailed Grouse—No reports, including the CBCs.

Greater Prairie-Chicken—Total 28 on the Adams and Spencer CBCs. Other reports: Marathon County, maximum 26 on 11 December (Belter), and Portage County, TTP (Berner), maximum 250+ on 29 January (Prestby, Stutz).

Wild Turkey—After the CBCs, reports for 33 counties, north to Barron, Taylor, Marathon, Florence, and Door Counties (m. obs.); Risch saw 50 in a cornfield in Taylor County, a big flock for this county.

Northern Bobwhite—On the Richland Center, Pardeeville, and Kenosha CBCs. Later reports: Dunn and Eau Claire Counties (Polk), and Columbia County 3 February (Burcar).

Red-throated Loon—One in Racine County 13 December (Tessen).

Common Loon—4 December, one in Dane County (Yoerger), and 5 December, one in Oconto County (Smiths). One report after the



Male Hooded Oriole at a feeder in La Crosse, La Crosse County, Wisconsin, 15–19 December 2004. This first state record of the species was documented by Tim Collins, and photographed by Fred Leshner.

CBCs: several flying along Lake Michigan in Ozaukee County 2 January (Wood).

Pied-billed Grebe—One TTP in Dane County (m. obs.), and one in Walworth County 9 January (Jacyna).

Horned Grebe—One in Racine County 7 December (Pugh), one in Milwaukee County 18 December (documented by Korducki), and 6 February (documented by Wood), and a total of 10 on 1 December (Tessen) and 5 on 10 February (Frank) in Ozaukee County.

Double-crested Cormorant—Total 43 on 8 CBCs. One later report: two on 21 January in Shawano County (Tessen).

Great Blue Heron—Single birds TTP in Sauk, Iowa, Dane, and Rock Counties (m. obs.).

Turkey Vulture—At least 3 and perhaps up to approximately a dozen TTP in Sauk County, roosting on a south-facing sandstone outcrop (Lange). One in Dane County 12 and 13 February (Prestby, Stutz); an early migrant or an overwintering bird?

Bald Eagle—TTP in some dozen northern counties, including Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, Vilas, and Forest Counties, also TTP in a number of central and southern counties (m. obs.).

Northern Harrier—A number of December records before the CBCs, for example Clark, Marathon, and Portage Counties. TTP in these counties: Dunn, Chippewa, Eau Claire, Iowa?, Dane?, Dodge?, Winnebago, Manitowoc, and Ozaukee. Migrants 26–27 February in Lafayette, Green, and Rock Counties (m. obs.).

Sharp-shinned Hawk—After the CBCs, noted in 17 counties scattered throughout the state except for the southwest and the extreme north. Northernmost reports for Barron County (TTP), Sawyer County (4 January), Oconto County (TTP), and Door County (TTP).

Cooper's Hawk—after the CBCs, reports for 22 counties, north to Dunn, Chippewa, Marathon, Oconto, and Door Counties (m. obs.).

Northern Goshawk—After the CBCs, reports for eight counties: Douglas, Washburn, St. Croix, Marathon, Portage, Winnebago, Door, and (2 February, Jacyna) Walworth (m. obs.).

Red-shouldered Hawk—Total 19 on 12 CBCs. TTP or presumably so in Dunn-

Chippewa-Eau Claire Counties, and Iowa, Sauk, Dane, and Manitowoc Counties. One in Lafayette County 26 February apparently a migrant.

Red-tailed Hawk—Northward to these counties, where TTP: Douglas, Taylor, Marathon, Florence, and Door. Noted in Bayfield/Ashland Counties 9 February (m. obs.).

Rough-legged Hawk—TTP or nearly so in much of Wisconsin. Still in Ozaukee County 26 February.

Golden Eagle—Exclusive of the CBCs, these reports: Pepin County 8 January (Polk), a pair in Eau Claire County 28 February (Polk), Jackson County 8 February (Tessen), Juneau County 29 January (Prestby, Stutz), Iowa County 4 February (Burcar), and immature in Dane County 26 December (Ashman), and Oconto County BOP and 27 January (Smiths).

American Kestrel—Northward to these counties, where TTP unless indicated otherwise: Barron, Taylor, Marathon (18 January), Oconto (?), and Door. Migrants by EOP in southern Wisconsin, for example Rock County (m. obs.).

Merlin—Excluding the CBCs, these reports: Douglas County, TTP (LaValleys), Bayfield/Ashland Counties, 1–2 TTP (Brady), and Dane County, apparently TTP (m. obs.).

Gyr Falcon—An adult gray phase male TTP in Ashland County (Brady).

Peregrine Falcon—After the CBCs, reports from Douglas, La Crosse, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, and Milwaukee Counties (m. obs.).

Virginia Rail—One on the Poynette CBC 1 January (documented by Shea).

American Coot—TTP in these counties: Dane, Ozaukee, Milwaukee, and Racine (m. obs.).

Sandhill Crane—Total 1771 on 6 CBCs, including 698 on the Baraboo Count 20 December; still in Sauk County 25 January (Holschbach). Hale reported a total of 304 migrating south between 12:10 and 12:30 on 21 December in Jefferson County. Spring migrants in southern Wisconsin 24–27 February (m. obs.).

Killdeer—Single birds on 27 February in Dane, Jefferson, Walworth, and Manitowoc Counties (m. obs.). In Rock County, Klubertanz



Spotted Towhee that enjoyed visiting the feeders of David Kuecherer, Neenah, Winnebago County from 15 December 2004 until early May 2005.



Brown Thrasher that stayed about two weeks in February 2005 in the yard of Paul Roberts, Sheboygan, Sheboygan County.

found this species 25 February, and Yoerger found it 6 and 27 February.

Wilson's Snipe—One TTP in Portage County (Berner), and one 11 January in Oconto County (Smiths).

Bonaparte's Gull—1 December, 1–2 in Ozaukee County (Tessen), 2 December, Milwaukee County (Gustafson), 5 December, 10 in Oconto County (Smiths), and one on the Appleton CBC.

Mew Gull—Milwaukee County continues to be a winter locality for this species: one 2 December (documented by Gustafson) and one 18 December (documented by Abert).

Ring-billed Gull—In Lake Michigan, TTP north to Sheboygan County, thru 31 December and again 4 February in Manitowoc County, thru 28 December in Door County, and thru 5 December in Oconto County. In Lake Superior, TTP in Douglas County, and 4 December in Bayfield/Ashland Counties. For the Wisconsin River area, thru 8 January in Sauk County, and thru 2 January and again 1 February in Dane County. Thru 12 February in Winnebago County; BOP and 13 February in Jefferson County; and one in Rock County 21 February (m. obs.)

Herring Gull—TTP in Lake Michigan, north to Door County, also TTP in Waukesha County. BOP and 6 February in Oconto County (Smiths). TTP in Winnebago County, maximum 933 on 5 February (Knispel). Also TTP in Douglas County, and thru 21 February in Bayfield/Ashland Counties. Thru 4 December in Portage County, and 20 January in Sauk County. An increase in Dane County 29 January; 5–6 February in Iowa County; and 27 February in Rock County (m. obs.).

Thayer's Gull—Excluding the CBCs, reports for Lake Michigan from Racine to Manitowoc Counties, also Sauk County 2 January, and Douglas County 14 December–EOP, 1–2 maximum (m. obs.).

Iceland Gull—Excluding the CBCs, reports for Racine, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Manitowoc Counties, maximum 3 (m. obs., documented by Bontly, Gustafson, Mueller, Sontag, Thiessen, and Wood), Waukesha County 25 December (documented by Frank), and Winnebago County 4 February–EOP (documented by Bruce).

Lesser Black-backed Gull—Lake Michigan from Racine to Manitowoc Counties, 4 December–27 February, maximum 2 (m. obs., documented by Sontag and Stutz), Waukesha County, an adult 29 January (documented by Gustafson), and Dane County, one on the Madison CBC 15 December.

Glaucous Gull—Excluding the CBCs, these reports: Lake Michigan from Racine to Manitowoc and Oconto Counties, mainly in January and February (TTP in Manitowoc County), maximum 6; Waukesha County 29 January–11 February; Winnebago County 23 January–EOP; Dane and Sauk Counties 26–27 December, 1–2; Douglas County, TTP, maximum 14; and Bayfield/Ashland Counties, one on 4 December (m. obs.).

Great Black-backed Gull—Excluding the CBCs, all reports come from Lake Michigan, Milwaukee to Door Counties, TTP, maximum 9 on 19 December in Manitowoc County, except for Douglas County, one on 28 December (m. obs.).

Black-legged Kittiwake—11 December, one in the Port Washington harbor, Ozaukee County (Uttech), the first winter report since February 1999.

Rock Pigeon—North to the following counties, where TTP: Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, Vilas, and Door (m. obs.).

Eurasian Collared-Dove—Noted on the Durand CBC (5 birds), the Bridgeport CBC (14 birds), and the Hales Corners CBC (7 birds). Apparently TTP in Milwaukee County (m. obs., documented by Bontly).

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

Eastern Screech-Owl—TTP in these counties: Marathon, Sauk, Dane, Rock, Walworth, Ozaukee, Manitowoc, and Door (m. obs.).

Snowy Owl—After the CBCs, reports for these counties: Douglas, Clark, Marathon, Portage, Manitowoc, Outagamie, Winnebago, Dodge, and Dane (m. obs.). Still in Winnebago County EOP (Ziebell).

Northern Hawk Owl—A massive invasion. Records for Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, Burnett, St. Croix, Oneida, and (Harrington Beach State Park) Ozaukee Counties. TTP in northwestern Wisconsin, for example Bayfield

and Ashland Counties; from 21 December–26 February in Ozaukee County. Documentation by Bontly, Brady, Gustafson, Johnson, McInroy, Mueller, Prestby, Tessen, and Wood.

Great Gray Owl—A massive incursion, noted 5 December–EOP. First reports mainly from northwestern Wisconsin, for example Douglas, Burnett, Washburn, and Barron Counties, also (5–12 December) Marathon County. In southern Wisconsin by the latter part of February, for example 22 February in Dane County, 25 February in Rock County, 27 February in Columbia County, and 28 February in Sauk County. Documentation by Brady, Burcar, Gustafson, Holschbach, Johnson, McInroy, Petersen, Prestby, Stutz, Wood, and Yoerger.

Long-eared Owl—Excluding the CBCs, these reports: Iowa County 17 February; Dane County, BOP-15 January, maximum 4; Waushara County, one in Vernon Marsh on 8 January (documented by Wood); and Ozaukee County, several in each of three roosts TTP (Uttech).

Short-eared Owl—Excluding the CBCs, these reports: Dane County, 2 January and 12 February (Stutz and Martin), Walworth County 4 January (Jacyna), Kenosha County, one 8 January at Bong State Recreational Area (documented by Wood), and Ozaukee County 16 January–EOP, maximum 12 on 3 February (Frank, Uttech).

Boreal Owl—Just two reports—Douglas County 9 January (documented by Johnson), and a sound record for the Ladysmith area in Rusk County 27 December (Stutz)—but many more doubtless were present. See the introduction of this seasonal summary for a discussion of this irruption of northern owls into Wisconsin, the greatest on record.

Northern Saw-whet Owl—Total 30 on 14 CBCs. Exclusive of the Counts, these reports: one in Bayfield/Ashland Counties 11 December (Brady), maximum 2 TTP in Portage County (Berner), one in Oconto County 11 December (Smiths), one in Ozaukee County 15–18 December (Uttech), and apparently TTP in Dane County (m. obs.).

Belted Kingfisher—TTP or presumably so in these southern counties: Sauk, Columbia, Iowa, Dane, Jefferson, and Rock; 1–14 January in St. Croix County (m. obs.).

Red-headed Woodpecker—Total 22 on 10 CBCs. Later reports: one in Sawyer County 4 December–5 February (Gagliardi), one TTP in

Portage County (Berner), and one in Doctor's Park in Milwaukee County 6 February (documented by Wood).

Red-bellied Woodpecker—Northernmost reports as follows: one TTP in Douglas County (LaValleys), 21 December–1 January in Bayfield/Ashland Counties (Brady), 29 December in Vilas County (Baughman), maximum 4 TTP in Oconto County (Smiths), and one at a feeder TTP in Door County (Lukeses).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker—Total 16 on 10 CBCs. One report after the Counts: an immature at a feeder thru 19 January in Jefferson County (Hale).

Black-backed Woodpecker—Found on the Meadow Valley CBC and in Vilas County.

Northern Flicker—TTP or likely so in these counties (1–2 birds): St. Croix, Dunn, Sauk, Dane, Green, Rock, Walworth, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, and Door. Also these reports: one thru 31 January in Portage County, and two on 18 February in Oconto County (m. obs.).

Ash-throated Flycatcher—Wisconsin's second record and first for winter, a bird at Wind Point in Racine County 13 December (documented by Gustafson).

Northern Shrike—After the CBCs, reports for 33 counties scattered throughout the state, except for the southwest quarter; highest number of counties since the winter of 1999–2000. Brady noted at least 15 with territories within 5 miles of Ashland, Ashland County, where this species was found TTP. Still in southern counties, for example Dane, EOP (m. obs.).

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

Common Raven—Southernmost reports for Jackson County, where Stutz found a total of 30 on 29 January, and Sauk County, where Holschbach found two on 29 December.

Horned Lark—TTP in scattered counties, for example Barron, Clark, Door, Manitowoc, Winnebago, Ozaukee, and Dane. Peak numbers (indicating migration) from 22 January–26 February (m. obs.).

Boreal Chickadee—Including the CBCs, reports for Ashland, Vilas, Oneida, and Forest Counties (m. obs.).

Tufted Titmouse—Excluding the CBCs, reports for these counties: Dunn, Chippewa, Eau Claire, Sauk (a total of 7 on 15 January, Holschbach), Columbia, Grant, Iowa, Dane, Jefferson, Milwaukee, Lafayette, Green, Rock, and Walworth (m. obs.).

Red-breasted Nuthatch—Scattered throughout the state, except for the southwest quarter; relatively low numbers (m. obs.).

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

Brown Creeper—Excluding the CBCs, northernmost reports for Douglas County, 8 February (Johnson), Bayfield/Ashland Counties, 7–18 December (Brady), and Vilas County, 9–29 December (Baughman).

Carolina Wren—Excluding the CBCs, these reports: one thru at least 4 February at a feeder in Door County (Lukeses), one TTP at a feeder in Eau Claire County (Polk), a pair TTP at a feeder in Sauk County (Lange), a pair TTP at a feeder in Dane County (Martin), one in Milwaukee County 20 December–6 February (O'Connor, documented by Wood), and apparently one TTP in Racine County (Gustafson, Prestby, Pugh).

Winter Wren—Total 28 on 12 CBCs. One later report: TTP at five locations in Dane County (Ashman, Thiessen).

Marsh Wren—One on the Fond du Lac CBC 18 December (documented by Schultz).

Golden-crowned Kinglet—After the CBCs, found in 10 counties: Douglas, Marathon, Sauk, Iowa, Dane, Rock, Winnebago, Waukesha, Milwaukee, and Racine. TTP in at least one county—Winnebago (m. obs.).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet—One on the Madison CBC, and two on the Meadow Valley CBC.

Eastern Bluebird—TTP in Sauk County, maximum 5 on 4 February (Holschbach). Records for Iowa County 31 January, and Ozaukee County 3 February (m. obs.). Migration by EOP, for example 28 February in Dane County (Burcar).

Townsend's Solitaire—Devil's Lake State Park continues to be a winter locality for this species, for example 2 thru 4 February (docu-

mented by Holschbach). Also these reports: single birds on the Madison and Woodland Dunes NE CBCs, thru 27 December in Dane County (documented by Thiessen), 11 December-EOP in St. Croix County, maximum 3 (documented by Persico), and 15 January, one in Douglas County (documented by Bruhnke and by Stutz).

Hermit Thrush—Total 10 on 6 CBCs, and one in Dane County 10 December and 8–25 January (m. obs.).

American Robin—Widespread for the 7th consecutive winter; after the CBCs, reports for 26 counties. TTP north to St. Croix, Taylor, Marathon, Winnebago, and Door Counties. Highest numbers in December; maximum number after December—18 on 26 January in Buffalo County. No definite records of spring migration.

Varied Thrush—Single birds on the Bayfield and Willard CBCs. Later reports: EOP in Ashland/Bayfield Counties (Brady), a male at a feeder in Lincoln County 23 December-EOP (Belter), a male by a feeder in Outagamie County 21 January-EOP (documented by Hoover), and a male at a feeder in Dane County 3 December–4 February (documented by Bond).

Gray Catbird—Total 4 on 3 CBCs: Stevens Point, Appleton, and Milwaukee. No later reports.

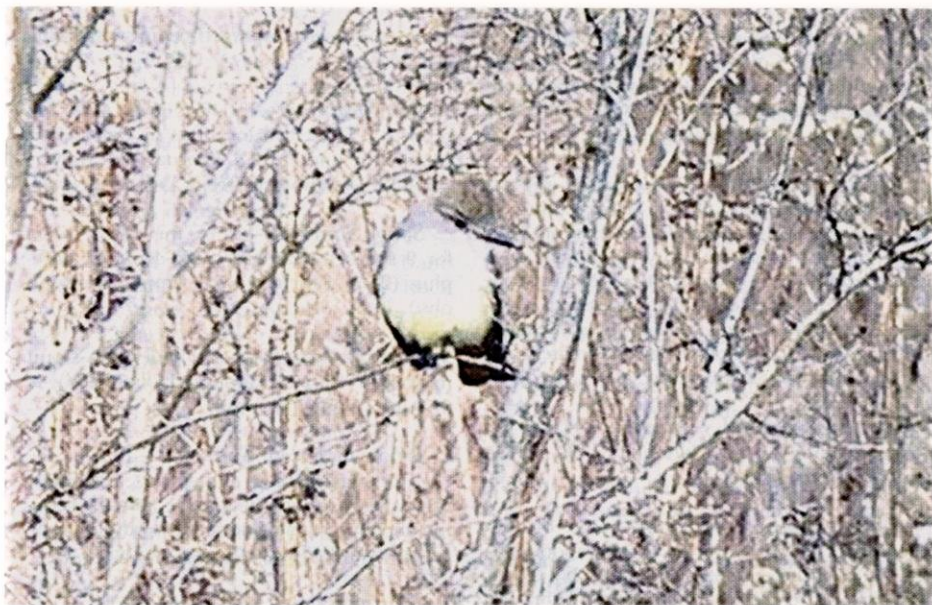
Northern Mockingbird—One in Columbia County on the Poynette CBC and (Dischler) 26 January. Also one in Dane County 6 February-EOP, eating buckthorn berries (documented by Burcar, Martin, Stutz).

Brown Thrasher—Single birds on 5 CBCs. Two later reports, a bird in Taylor County 3 January (Risch) and one reported to the Great Backyard Bird Count from Sheboygan County (Roberts). It had been present for about 14 days in February. [See photo on page 357.]

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

American Pipit—Found for the 4th consecutive winter, a total of 4 on the Madison CBC.

Bohemian Waxwing—Total 862 on 11 mainly northern CBCs, including 435 on the Florence Count. Later reports for 14 counties, mainly northern Wisconsin, south to Portage County (26 December-EOP, maximum 20 on 19



This Ash-throated Flycatcher was found in Racine County on 13 December and documented by Dennis Gustafson. It is the second record for Wisconsin.



A Lark Sparrow at the feeders of Dan and Paula Minkelbige south of Waupaca (Waupaca County) became the state's second winter record of this species, 19 January–4 March 2005.

February), Winnebago County (7–11 January, maximum 6), Columbia County (4 January, one), and Dane County (30 January). Maximum for a northern county after the CBCs was 28 in Door County on 10 February.

Cedar Waxwing—Northernmost reports from St. Croix County (TTP), Taylor County (2 January), Portage County (TTP, maximum 7 on 29 January), Florence County (2 January on a CBC), and Oconto County (thru 22 January). TTP in a number of central and southern counties: maximum counts of 50 or so, except (Holschbach) for a flock of approximately 250 on 24 January in Sauk County.

Orange-crowned Warbler—One in Dodge County on the Columbus CBC 14 December (Domagalski).

Yellow-rumped Warbler—One on the Sauk City CBC, and one on the Baraboo CBC; the latter bird frequented Holschbach's feeder TTP. Two other reports, both for 19 February: one in Kenosha County (Jacyna), and one in Milwaukee County (Bontly); migrants?

Spotted Towhee—One on the Appleton CBC, that remained TTP at Kuecherer's feeder in Neenah, Winnebago County (documented by Kuecherer, Tessen, Bruce), one TTP by a feeder in Muskego County Park, Waukesha County (documented by Gustafson, Mueller, Stutz, Wood), and one at a feeder in Iowa County 12 January–17 February (documented by Romano and Burcar).

Eastern Towhee—One on the Blanchardville CBC, and two on the Shawano CBC. One later report, a bird TTP at a feeder in Eau Claire, Eau Claire County (Polk).

American Tree Sparrow—TTP in Barron, Marathon (?), Oconto, and Door Counties (m. obs.). For Douglas County, 9 January–EOP, maximum 6 (LaValleys), and for Bayfield/Ashland Counties, one on 13 December (Brady).

Field Sparrow—Three on the Bridgeport CBC.

Lark Sparrow—The state's second winter record for this species was reported from Waupaca County, 19 January–4 March by Dan and Paula Minkebig. [See photo on page 361.]

Savannah Sparrow—Three on the Madison CBC; still in Dane County 4 February (Thiessen). Also these reports: one (a sick bird?) in Ozaukee County 11–13 January (Ut-

tech), and one in Walworth County 23 January (Jacyna).

Fox Sparrow—Total 11 on 6 CBCs. Later reports: TTP at two locations in Dane County (Ashman), and thru 4 February in Walworth County (Gustafson).

Song Sparrow—After the CBCs, reports for 9 southeastern and south-central counties, plus (2–12 February) St. Croix County (m. obs.).

Swamp Sparrow—TTP in Sauk County, maximum 4 on 11 January (Holschbach), and in Dane County (m. obs.).

White-throated Sparrow—TTP in Dane County, maximum 6 (Thiessen), also TTP in Milwaukee County (m. obs.). January records for Sheboygan and Walworth Counties, and 17 February in Lafayette County (m. obs.).

White-crowned Sparrow—Total 9 on 4 CBCs. Later reports: Dane County, maximum 6 on 4 February (Thiessen), with a juvenile TTP at a feeder (documented by Burcar); Rock County, one 28–29 January; Waukesha County 14 February; and Ozaukee County 24 December–30 January (m. obs.).

Dark-eyed Junco—Northward to these counties: Douglas, one from 9 January–EOP; Bayfield and Ashland, three on 18 December; and TTP in Barron, Marathon, Oconto, and Door (m. obs.).

Lapland Longspur—Exclusive of the CBCs, reports for 13 counties, mainly in southern and eastern Wisconsin, but also Barron County (21 January, one), Taylor County (30 December, 75), and Clark County (12 December, 6). Tessen saw the largest flock—approximately 3000 on 4 January in Columbia County. Latest dates in southern Wisconsin: 25 February (Dane County) and 26 February (Lafayette County). TTP in Winnebago County.

Snow Bunting—Exclusive of the CBCs, reports for 20 counties from the Ashland area (30 January) and Florence County (BOP), south to Iowa County (17 February), Rock County (1–28 January), and Ozaukee County (12 December–23 February). Flocks of 200–300, for example Taylor and Marathon Counties, in December; largest flocks after December approximately 50, for example Columbia, Dane, and Sheboygan Counties. Latest date for southern Wisconsin—23 February in Ozaukee County (m. obs.).

Northern Cardinal—Northward to these counties, where TTP: Douglas, Barron, Taylor, Marathon, and Door. Found in the Ashland area 3 February, and in Florence County 2 January (m. obs.).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak—Single birds on the Brussels and Riveredge CBCs.

Red-winged Blackbird—TTP in Dane County ("small flocks"—Thiessen), Rock County, and Waukesha County. One in the Ashland area 9 January, and one in Dodge County 8 February. Migrants in Dane County 24 February (total 8, Evanson) and 26 February (total 200, Stutz), and on 26 February in Lafayette County (Peterson), and Racine County (Gustafson).

Eastern Meadowlark—After the CBCs, these reports: 9 January, Rock County (Yoerger), 16 January, flock of 10, Green County (Yoerger), and 21 January, 10 in Grant County (Stutz).

Western Meadowlark—One on the Bridgeport CBC the only report.

Yellow-headed Blackbird—One in Dane County 1 February (Burcar), the first winter report since December 2001.

Rusty Blackbird—Total 34 on the Ft. Atkinson CBC. Later reports: thru 15 January, maximum 3, St. Croix County (Persico), 6 February Iowa County (Burcar), and 13 February Waukesha County (Mueller). Thiessen in Dane County saw this species (a group of 17) on 20 January, and then again 28 February.

Brewer's Blackbird—Total 8 on 3 CBCs: Hustisford, Palmyra, and Pardeeville.

Common Grackle—The Smiths saw one in Oconto County 9 January, and Mueller saw this species in Dodge County 29 January. TTP in Dane County, with a group of 10 on 26 February most likely migrants (m. obs.).

Brown-headed Cowbird—TTP in Rock County, 16 January in Green County, and 4 January and 8 February (total 25–30) in Dodge County. Likely migrants 16 February in Waukesha County, and 17 February in Lafayette and Iowa Counties (m. obs.). Maximum 120 on 17 February in Lafayette County (Romano).

Baltimore Oriole—One in Chippewa County 21–22 December (documented by Kemper).

Hooded Oriole—A new bird for Wisconsin, and the first winter record for the mid-continent: an adult male at a feeder in La Crosse, La Crosse County, 15–19 December. (documented by Collins, photographed by Leshner).

Pine Grosbeak—Excluding the CBCs, reports for these counties: Douglas (TTP, maximum 28 on 1 February), Bayfield and Ashland (4 December–24 January, maximum 29 on 7 December), Vilas (1 December–22 February), Forest (8 and 10 January, maximum 10), Florence (12 February), and Langlade (10 January, 6).

Purple Finch—Excluding the CBCs, reports for 20 counties from Douglas and Florence Counties in the north to Lafayette and Walworth Counties in the south. Generally just one or a few at a locality; the highest count was 25 on 21 January in Grant County (Stutz).

House Finch—North to these counties, where TTP: Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, and Door. Baughman found it thru 1 January in Vilas County.

Red Crossbill—Total 34 on 5 northern CBCs. Two later reports: Douglas County (7–24 January, maximum 8), and Portage County (4 on 2 January).

White-winged Crossbill—Total 58 on 9 CBCs scattered throughout the state, including 21 on the Solon Springs Count. Two later reports: Douglas County (8 February–EOP), and Vilas County (9 and 22 February).

Common Redpoll—For the second consecutive winter, throughout the state except for the southwest quarter. High counts (40+) in a number of northern counties, including Portage County; Brady in the Ashland area reported the largest count—approximately 220 on 20 February. Still in southern Wisconsin for example Dane and Jefferson Counties, 27 February (m. obs.).

Hoary Redpoll—Including the CBCs, single birds in Douglas, Ashland, Oneida, Forest, Florence, and Marinette Counties; generally at feeders with the Common Redpoll (documented by Burcar, Cutright, Johnson, Prestby).

Pine Siskin—After the CBCs, reports for 31 counties throughout the state. Generally just one or a few at a given locality; high counts of 15 on 21 January in Grant County, and 40 on 20 February in Dane County. TTP in both northern counties, for example Douglas and Vilas,

and southern counties, for example Rock and Milwaukee (m. obs.).

American Goldfinch—Record high numbers on the CBCs. Northernmost reports for these counties, where TTP: Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, Vilas, Oconto, and Door (m. obs.).

Evening Grosbeak—Exclusive of the CBCs, reports for four counties: Vilas, 29 December-EOP (Baughman), Forest, 8 January, 60+ (Prestby), Menominee, 10 January, 30 (Tessen), and Ozaucsee, 27 January (Mueller).

House Sparrow—Northward to these counties, where TTP: Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, Vilas, Oconto, and Door; 2 January in Florence County (m. obs.).

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One of many Great Gray Owl photos taken by Erik Bruhnke this past winter. Is this owl thinking, "Where am I?"

“By the Wayside”—Winter 2004–2005

Species documentation for this season included Harlequin Duck, Mew Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Northern Hawk Owl, Great Gray Owl, Boreal Owl, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Townsend's Solitaire, Varied Thrush, Northern Mockingbird, Spotted Towhee, and Hoary Redpoll.

HARLEQUIN DUCK (*Histrionicus histrionicus*)

8 January 2005, South of North Point along the lakeshore in Sheboygan, Sheboygan County—This winter plumaged bird was dark brown with a slight bluish shade or tone to the head and body. It had a rounder and kind of pointed head with a dark bill. There was a stripe down the front portion of the face between the bill and eye, and a second white rounded mark behind the eye. Both white marks were bright white, not dull. There was a slight white line down the back of the neck to where the neck meets the body. Body was shaped like a Bufflehead but longer and slimmer looking. The tail was pointed. The bird was seen on a WSO field trip by about a dozen participants.—*Seth Cutright, West Bend, WI.*

MEW GULL (*Larus camus*)

2 December 2004, South Metro Pier in South Milwaukee, Milwaukee County—After slowly scoping through

the large gull flock on the beach, I noted one gull towards the back edge of the group which had a smaller, pale bill. The bill was noticeably thinner and shorter than adjacent Ring-billed Gull bills, but larger than nearby Bonaparte's Gull bills. It was pale yellowish in color, with no hint of dark markings or ring. The head was slightly smaller than those of Ring-billed Gulls, with a rounder shape, not as flat-headed. As the gulls were facing mostly south, it was difficult to be sure of upper body color or eye color, but no light color could be detected at this distance on the eye. The wing was extended out (to stretch) at one point and looked slightly darker than the gray on Ring-billed Gull wings. Also, there was less black and more white on the primary tips. Because the back half of the gull was hidden by gulls in front, I could not see the legs, tail, or mantle color. However, the bill size and color, wing pattern, and head shape are distinctive.—*Dennis Gustafson, Muskego, WI.*

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL
(*Larus fuscus*)

8 January 2005, South Metro Pier, Milwaukee County—This bird was in flight heading north as Nick Walton and I observed it through our scopes as it flew past the overlook. It was a second winter bird showing a darker gray mantle than the Herring Gulls in the area. Mantle coloration was closer to that shown for the *graellsii* race. We also noted the bird's thick, black terminal tail band. Size is difficult to tell on a lone flying bird, but a bird's proportions are not. This bird seemed sleeker and thinner-winged in flight than the Herring Gulls. A Great Black-backed Gull could have similar mantle coloration, but is very thick and bulky looking on the ground and in flight. This bird was too sleek and thin-winged to be a Great Black-backed Gull.—*Aaron Stutz, Madison, WI.*

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE
(*Streptopelia decaocto*)

23 February 2005, South Milwaukee, Milwaukee County—Karen Johnson and I decided to look for Eurasian Collared-Doves where they were being seen regularly in South Milwaukee because it was a county bird for me. We stayed in the car and observed Betsy Abert's yard and feeders for a while and then we heard a collared-dove cooing. We finally observed it in same tree as a Mourning Dove; it was larger, more stocky and an overall light gray color. The black half-collar on the neck was seen as the bird moved around in the tree. The tail was white on the underside and square at the tip, not pointed like the Mourning Dove's

tail. However, we could not observe the black outer web on the tail. The undertail coverts were gray and the primaries darker than the light gray of the bird. We didn't see the bird fly or come in to the feeders. We heard the *coo-COO-coo* of this bird before we saw it.—*Marilyn Bontly, Bayside, WI.*

NORTHERN HAWK OWL (*Surnia ulula*)

26 December 2004, Harrington Beach State Park, Ozaukee County—While checking the area of Harrington Beach State Park in Ozaukee County for Short-eared Owls, I found a perched owl just inside the southern boundary of the park, immediately at and shortly after sunset, on the afternoon of 26 December 2004. Instead of a Short-eared Owl, I was amazed to discover that this individual was indeed a Northern Hawk Owl. Where Cedar Beach Road forms the park's southern boundary, the vegetation inside the park is low shrubs and oldfield, with a few scattered trees. The bird was perched at the top of what looked to be a 6-meter (20-ft) tall boxelder. I was no more than 10 meters (approximately 30 ft) from this bird at one point. The bird had a brownish-slate-colored mantle with large white spots, a dark forehead with tiny light spots, light-colored breast with brown horizontal barring, long tail, and yellow eyes and yellow bill. The face was "framed" with black vertical bars. The bird was approx. 35 cm (14") in length. [See photos on pages 346 and 352.]

After returning home, I spent a bit of time looking for records of this species, and then called approximately

30 active southeastern Wisconsin birders to inform them of the presence of this bird. The following morning, this individual was relocated, and it was seen in the park or nearby by approximately 800–1000 persons over the course of the subsequent 8 weeks (as of the date of this writing, in late February of 2005), with frequent updates reported on WisBirdNet and Illinois' similar e-mail list, IBET.

There have been very few previous records of this species from this far south in Wisconsin. As described in Sam Robbins' *Wisconsin Birdlife* (1991), one was seen in Milwaukee in February of 1951 by Dixie Larkin, with a previous record from Milwaukee County dating from 1892. A Racine County record dates from 1869. Harold A. Mathiak found one in Dodge County in 1944. A bit to the west, one was seen in Rock County by Edith Brakefield in 1970. There are even a few from northern Illinois (September of 1869, December of 1922, November of 1928, a "probable" one from the Morton Arboretum outside of Chicago in 1953) and northern Indiana (February of 1965).

The time and attention paid to this individual was truly remarkable—due to its southern location, it provided many southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois birders with an opportunity to observe a species usually only seen in the far northern areas of our state. Since this was an "invasion" year for this and other northern owl species, other individuals were found in the northern counties—but no others (none that I am aware of) were confirmed—although a report was posted of a second bird from just north of the park in early January—anywhere near this far south. I relo-

cated this individual myself on 5 other occasions during January of 2005, (including a filmed observation with the crew of the Wisconsin Public Television program "Outdoor Wisconsin," on 10 January).—*William P. Mueller, Milwaukee, WI.*

27 December 2004, Median of Highway 53, a few miles south of intersection with Highway 2, Douglas County—I was on the way back from birding southern Douglas County with Bob and Margaret Friz, when Bob spotted a Northern Hawk Owl on top of a young spruce in the median of highway 53. He turned around and pulled up in a cross road so I could document the bird with a photo. The bird was looking at the snow. It was about crow sized with a tail twice as long as any other owl. The facial discs were edged in black, eyes were yellow, and the breast and belly were covered with fine rust-brown barring. The bird had a light "collar" about an inch wide. The only other owl that looks anything like a hawk owl is the Boreal Owl. A Boreal Owl has a proportionally larger head, shorter looking body, and shorter tail.—*Robbye Johnson, Superior, WI.*

3 January 2005, Intersection of Westline Road and Highway 2, Douglas County—This owl was crow-sized with a blocky head, robust body, and long tail. Its overall color was gray-brown and it perched at the highest point of each tree we saw it in (aspen and spruce). There were no ear tufts, but it did have bold black vertical markings on each side of the head. The eyes were bright yellow. The breast was pale gray and barred with rufous-brown. The tail was brown and thin with white bands. The back was brown with white spotting on the

scapulars and wing coverts. In flight, the bird appeared very accipiter-like.—*Ryan Brady, Ashland, WI.*

14 January 2005, Southwest of Ashland, Ashland County—Another Northern Hawk Owl, matching the description given above, was seen perched on a telephone pole eating a rodent.—*Ryan Brady, Ashland, WI.*

27 January 2005, Along County Highway A one mile east of Devils Lake, Burnett County—This crow-sized bird had a very noticeable white bib, a finely barred chest and belly. It had a "mean look" due to the black eyebrows that made the bird appear to be frowning. The eyes and bill were yellow. The forehead was speckled black and white with the face white. The tail was long, well below its perch.—*Bob McInroy, Spooner, WI.*

GREAT GRAY OWL (*Strix nebulosa*)

11 December 2004, near Dorchester, Marathon County (see photo); **28 December 2004, Highway 53 near Rice Lake, Barron County**; **28 December 2004, Wisconsin Point, Douglas County**; and **27 February 2005, near Goose Pond, Columbia County**—These large owls were all observed in or near open areas. These birds were actively searching for small mammals. These large, generally gray owls had large facial discs, yellow eyes, and white "bow ties." It was a fantastic treat to see this species on multiple occasions.—*Aaron Stutz, Madison, WI.*

8 January 2005, Douglas County—Between 3:30 and 5:15 PM, my wife and I drove a quick loop southwest of Superior in Douglas County and found 19 Great Gray Owls. All of these birds stood taller than a Great Horned

Owl, were charcoal gray in color, had lemon-yellow eyes, lacked ear tufts, and had white chin markings. The large facial disc had thin dark concentric rings and the wings were very broad during the birds' slow, lofty flight.—*Ryan Brady, Ashland, WI.*

26 January 2005, Near junction of County Highways A and H, Burnett County—This owl was gray, more than 2' tall, with a round head without ear tufts. At first I thought Barred Owl, but then saw white markings on the facial disc and on each side of the beak and chin. With binoculars I could see yellow eyes very clearly. It was first seen sitting in the snow in a ditch, then it flew to some tress and sat, watching me as I watched it. It seemed to enjoy looking at me, too.—*Bob McInroy, Spooner, WI.*

22 February 2005, Near Stoughton, Dane County—At 4:15 PM, I turned north onto Door Creek Road from Fairview (rural Stoughton) and was shocked to see the same silhouette I had seen 17 times on the previous Thursday and Friday morning in the Superior area. An owl, slim and tall (about 1.5 ft), with rounded head was standing/sitting on a wooden utility pole on the east side of the road. It looked very skinny as its gray plumage was being blown about in the wind.

I did not really believe my eyes as I slowly approached and tried to make it into a Barred Owl. While sitting in the car in front of it, I got a clear look at the yellow eyes within the parallel-lined facial discs. It kept moving its head all around, never looked at me but mostly at the field on the west side of the road. I did not want to interfere with the possibility of it having a successful hunt so I started to move down the road then turned around to go

past again and home to send my post to WisBirdn because I knew someone might want to see the owl. A local person drove by rather fast and did not appear to notice the owl thought it looked larger than life to me.

A half hour later I drove by again and the owl was gone. I went to the south end of Door Creek Road and looked all around the area but could not find it. I did notice a Red-tailed Hawk sitting about 0.25 mile east of the owl perch. Just before I spotted the owl, I had seen a Red-tailed Hawk perched about 0.25–0.5 mile west of the owl perch. Could there be two hawks? Would they drive the owl out?

On 23 February at 7 AM, the Great Gray Owl was sitting in a large tree east of Door Creek Road. Three people were observing it and I got a good view of the yellow eyes through the scope. At 7:25, when I come by again, the owl is on the ground and several crows are mobbing it. I can see the big round head clearly from the road, sort of brown and gray.—*Ursula Petersen, Stoughton, WI.*

25 February 2005, Near Janesville, Rock County—A friend and I were driving to Black Hawk for a basketball game when I spotted a very large owl perched on a railroad electric pole on the south side of Janesville. I had my friend stop and I watched the owl through binoculars for several minutes before moving on. I noted its very large size, proportionally long tail, and large head. The bird appeared all dark in the fading light, but I was able to see two white areas at the base of the very large facial disc. A small line of black ran vertically in between the two white borders of the facial disc. I also was able to see that the bird had a pale/light colored beak and eyes

(couldn't tell whether it was yellow or not in the fading light). The bird's head was round and it was much larger than a Great Horned Owl—appearing closer in size to an eagle!—*Sean Fitzgerald, Burlington, WI.*

BOREAL OWL (*Aegolius funereus*)

27 December 2004, Northwest of Ladysmith, Rusk County—My in-laws just built a cabin on 40 acres of land near Ladysmith. The land is mostly aspen, but the neighbor's properties contain an 80 acre spruce/tamarack bog. Shortly after arriving at the cabin, I went for a hike through the woods. The hike started at about 5:00 PM. Almost immediately I began hearing a Long-eared Owl calling, "hoooooo," pause, "hoooooo," pause, "hoooooo," and so on. After hiking for about 10 minutes I came to a clearing and stopped to hear the Long-eared Owl more clearly. I heard the Long-eared "hoooooo" several times when I heard a call I had never heard before in the field. This call was a rapid series of high-pitched "coos." The call was at a level pitch initially then rose slightly in pitch at the end. The owl called only twice (unfortunately) and each call lasted approximately 4–6 seconds. The call sounded more like a noise you would hear emanating from a South American rain forest than a forest in Ladysmith, Wisconsin.

The only species with a call that might be confused with a Boreal Owl is a Saw-whet Owl. I was quickly able to eliminate this species as a possibility because their call is a toot, then a pause, a toot, a pause, etc. The Boreal Owl call is a rapid series of coos with a pause between each series of calls not each indi-

vidual call—"coococococococoo. . ." I had never seen or heard this species before, but I am familiar with their call from tapes/CDs. My wife heard this bird as well and instantly recognized it as "something different." She also is familiar with the call of Saw-whet Owls and agreed we were hearing "something else."—*Aaron Stutz, Madison, WI.*

9 January 2005, Dwight's Point in the Superior Municipal Forest, Douglas County—Josh Horky and I walked out on Dwight's Point to look for a Spruce Grouse and Boreal Chickadee that he said he had found earlier in the day. After about 40 minutes, we had walked beyond the point where he had seen the birds in mixed conifer woods. It was dark for mid-afternoon and snowing hard. Just as we left the conifer woods and were back in popple/alder/ash I spotted a small owl sitting about 6 feet off the ground on a small branch over the trail. I knew instantly that it was a Boreal Owl. It was hunting and ignored us as we walked closer, taking photos. The bird looked half again the size of a Saw-whet Owl with a large-headed silhouette. All of the field marks were noted through a 135 mm lens after an initial quick look through binoculars. The bird had heavy black edges around facial discs, yellow eyes, and a pale yellowish bill. The breast was heavily streaked with brown. Light patches could be seen on the sides of the head behind the facial discs. The forehead was dark and peppered with white spots.

We got within about 25 feet of the bird while it continued to hunt. After a few minutes it flew across the trail and out of sight. We were no longer disappointed about not finding the species we went in for.—*Robbie Johnson, Superior, WI.*

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER

(*Myiarchus cinerascens*)

13 December 2004, Wind Point off Shoop Park, Racine County—After missing this flycatcher by about 5 minutes yesterday, I returned today and within 15 minutes located a "puff" of gray sitting in the underbrush. I had seen a bird of the right size and shape dart from the water's edge into this brushy spot a few minutes earlier. In my binoculars I noted a cardinal-sized bird sitting motionless in a bush. The gray front, ending in a pale lemon-yellow belly and undertail coverts, was very obvious. The throat area was almost white. The medium size bill was black, just about all the way to the base. The crown was a little darker gray-brown than the nape and back. There were two light wing bars, with a bright rufous section on the outer primaries at the lower edge of the folded wing. The tail from underneath was also quite rufous, except for thin darker edges along the sides and a dark terminal tip, which appeared to cross the entire width. Eyes and legs were black. The "soft" colors on this bird were very different than the much brighter colors of the similar Great Crested Flycatcher, which has a greener tone on the top, no dark terminal tail band, a grayer throat, longer primary extension, and a heavier bill, with a pale base. [See photo on page 361.] The more rare Dusky-capped Flycatcher has inconspicuous wing bars, little rufous, more brownish on top, darker throat, and is smaller. Also rare, the Brown-crested Flycatcher has a much larger bill, darker throat, and no dark terminal tail band. All yellowish kingbirds have no rufous, have

gray heads, and no wing bars.—*Dennis Gustafson, Muskego, WI.*

TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE
(*Myadestes townsendi*)

15 January 2005, near County Highways A and C, Douglas County—This bird had a very clear and distinct white eye ring. It had a very dark, long tail. The head and back were dark gray, and blended in with the lighter gray on chest and belly. The bill was black. The bird was jittery and fluttered its wing when preparing to land on a new perching spot.—*Erik Bruhnke, Ashland, WI.*

15 January 2005, near County Highways A and C, Douglas County—The bird had an overall even gray body, slightly smaller than a Northern Shrike, with a bold, white eyering that was very noticeable, as was the white-outlined tail that it flailed when landing. Intricate white on wing feathers was seen when it perched, also buffy color on wings was noted when it was flying. It had a small, thin, dark bill and dark legs.—*Andrew Thornton, Ashland, WI.*

VARIED THRUSH (*Ixoreus naevius*)

3 December 2004–4 February 2005, Albion Township, Dane County—We first sighted and identified this bird on 3 December and saw him every week-end when we were home from work until 4 February 2005. We have several feeding stations and fresh heated water on our deck, and saw him eating both on the ground and in a feeder, as well as drinking water. Pictures were taken for documentation.—*Julie Bond, Edgerton, WI.*

21 January–28 February 2005, Kananan Road, 4 miles south of New London, Outagamie County—This male Varied Thrush raked in the seed litter for fallen seeds under the feeder and was seen off and on for about a month. Photos were submitted for documentation.—*Terry Hoover, New London, WI.*

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD
(*Mimus polyglottos*)

6–13 February 2005, Along Pheasant Branch Road near Middleton, Dane County—This bird was relatively gray, with darker wings and white/light gray underparts. The bird had a medium length, black bill that was slightly down-curved. A dark eye-line extended from the base of the bird's bill to the front edge of its eye. The bird had two wingbars although one was very faded. It spent much of its time feeding on buckthorn near a marsh that has open water year-round.—*Aaron Stutz, Madison, WI.*

SPOTTED TOWHEE (*Pipilo maculatus*)

15 December 2004–end of February 2005, Neenah, Winnebago County—On 15 December 2004 I observed a male Spotted Towhee under a black oil sunflower feeder at the back edge of my property. It was feeding with several Northern Cardinals. Naturally, at first I thought it was an Eastern Towhee. I used my binoculars (Bausch & Lomb Elite, 8 × 42) and saw the spots on its back. I set up my spotting scope (Kowa TSN 822, 20–60 zoom) and confirmed it as a Spotted Towhee. I had seen this species in the western United States as recently as September

of 2004. The Spotted Towhee came to this feeder and other feeders several times daily. On 21 December, the bird flew into a crab apple tree a few feet from my window. I photographed it several times with a digital camera [See photo on page 357]. I posted the sighting on WisBirdNet. Several expert birders also confirmed its identity over the next few weeks. The bird stayed all winter. However, it was not seen for a 10 day period in February, but it did reappear. [My last sighting of the Spotted Towhee was 5 May 2005.]—*David Kuecherer, Neenah, WI.*

8 January 2005, Muskego Park, Waukesha County—Nick Walton and I observed this bird for approximately 15 minutes at about 8 AM from a distance of 10–30 yards. This male Spotted Towhee was seen in a row of brush surrounded by hiking trails near one of the park's parking lots. The bird showed features seen in both Eastern and Spotted Towhees—rufous sides, thick black bill, black head, red eyes, white belly, and black tail. It was distinguished from the Eastern Towhee by the spotting on its scapulars, coverts, tertials, and mantle.—*Aaron Stutz, Madison, WI.*

15 January 2005, Muskego Park Waukesha County—The bird came to seed put out for it near the picnic area and in brush and trees. It was about 8" in length, black upper surface of wings, rufous sides, white belly, black head and throat, and red eyes, but had white spots on the scapulars.—*William P. Mueller, Milwaukee, WI.*

12 January 2005, Southeast Iowa County—My friend Jim McCoy called me and said he had a Rufous-sided Towhee coming to his feeder. I said, "You better check and see if it has spots on its back."

The bird was approximately the size of a cardinal or slightly smaller. It had black head, throat, and nape, a red eye, a black seed-crushing type bill, and flesh colored legs. There were three rows of beige-colored stripes behind the nape on the mantle, and white on the scapulars. It had two white wing bars and rufous-colored flanks and sides. There appeared to be white on edges of the primary and outer tail feathers were white when the tail was fanned. In short, the bird looked like a male Eastern Towhee with spots on the back. The spots on the mantle were actually beige-colored streaks as shown in the "great plains" race of this species in Sibley.—*John Romano, Madison, WI.*

HOARY REDPOLL (*Carduelis hornemanni*)

1 January 2005, Aurora, Florence County—I noticed an extremely white individual among a flock of some 40 Common Redpolls coming to my platform feeder. I saw very little streaking along the breast and flanks. The breast was tinged pale pink. There was very little streaking on the undertail coverts, just close to the tail. Scapulars, secondaries, and [wing] coverts were more white than in Common Redpolls nearby. Head had a red cap, with black around the eye and chin and a stubby yellow bill. Sides of face and nape were white with small amount of black lines.—*Kay Burcar, Niagara, WI.*

26 January 2005, Superior, Douglas County—The redpolls coming to my thistle stockings had been increasing in number for the last few days. I kept checking all of them to see if I could find a Hoary. I finally spotted a lighter

bird with only 2–3 narrow dark streaks down the sides. It had a paler brownish wash on the face, a slightly smaller bill, and snow white, unmarked belly and undertail coverts. As it tipped away from me on the feeder I could see under the wing tips to an unmarked rump. The bird only stayed a few minutes and as there was heavy competition for the feeders and constant coming and going of individuals, I gave up trying to relocate the bird. Feeder checking on subsequent days failed to turn up more hoaries.—*Robbie Johnson, Superior, WI.*

8 February 2005, Town of Alvin, Forest County—I saw a small finch up in a tree and could tell it was a redpoll. Then noted that it was really white on the back and rump. It turned and showed its side had very light streaks.

The sides and front also were very white. There was a small dark area under the bill which was small and pointed. It had white wing bars with the rest of the wing dark. There was a very small red cap on top of the head. It had a dark pointed-looking tail. The undertail coverts looked very white and unstreaked. Since it was sitting in the tree a small branch was in the way of the undertail coverts almost all of the time I watched it and I could not really see the undertail coverts well. However, sometimes it would move slightly or change position, and I got some quick looks of the undertail coverts. They did not seem to have any streaking on them. Size was close to the Common Redpoll.—*Seth Cutright, West Bend, WI.*



Rodewald.

The two drake Barrow's Goldeneyes were observed to have dark heads with a chestnut-shaped white facial spot, a deeper 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). This black extended down even farther at the shoulder area than

of Ring-bill.

#2004-089 Milwaukee Co., 2 December 2004, Gustafson.

This bird was seen in comparison to Ring-billed Gulls. This individual was slightly smaller, but otherwise similar in color. Its head was slightly smaller and rounder than the Ring-bills' as well. The primary wing tips had larger white spots than the surrounding

The snow owl I spotted on 12 January 2005 was very different from the one I spotted on 26 January 2005. This owl had a pale yellowish-buff head and neck, and a small dark area under the chin which was small and pointed. It had white wing bars with a small dark spot on the wing. The rest of the wing dark. There was a very small red cap on top of the head. It had a dark pointed-looking tail. The underparts were very white and unmarked. Since it was sitting in the tree, a small dark spot was visible on the underparts, which was a small dark spot.

The snow owl I spotted on 26 January 2005 was very different from the one I spotted on 12 January 2005. This owl had a pale yellowish-buff head and neck, and a small dark area under the chin which was small and pointed. It had white wing bars with a small dark spot on the wing. The rest of the wing dark. There was a very small red cap on top of the head. It had a dark pointed-looking tail. The underparts were very white and unmarked. Since it was sitting in the tree, a small dark spot was visible on the underparts, which was a small dark spot.



Snowy Owl by Gary Krogman

in length, black upper surface of wings, rufous sides, white below, head and throat, and red eyes, but had white spots on the scapulars.—*William P. Muller, Milwaukee, WI*

12 January 2005, Southeast Iowa County—My friend Jim McCoy called me and said he had a Rufous-sided Towhee coming to his feeder. I said, "You better check and see if it has spots on its back."

nearby bleed had a red cap, with a pale yellowish-buff head and neck, and a small dark area under the chin which was small and pointed. It had white wing bars with a small dark spot on the wing. The rest of the wing dark. There was a very small red cap on top of the head. It had a dark pointed-looking tail. The underparts were very white and unmarked. Since it was sitting in the tree, a small dark spot was visible on the underparts, which was a small dark spot.—*Kay Berra, Niagara, WI*

26 January 2005, Superior, Douglas County—The redpolls coming in this time had been very few in number for the last few days. I was checking all of them to see if I could find a Hoary. I finally spotted a

WSO Records Committee Report Winter 2004–2005

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The WSO Records Committee reviewed 68 records of 26 species for the winter 2004–2005 season. Fifty-three of the records were accepted. Of note were Wisconsin's first record of a Hooded Oriole, the second of an Ash-throated Flycatcher, the state's second winter record of a Lark Sparrow, and of course the unprecedented invasion of northern owls.

The addition of Hooded Oriole to the state list brings it to 425 species.

ACCEPTED

Barrow's Goldeneye—

#2005-001 Pierce Co., 1 January 2005,
Rodewald.

The two drake Barrow's Goldeneyes were observed to have dark heads 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). This black extended down even farther at the shoulder area than

along the flanks. In flight, the white on the wing was less extensive than on the Common Goldeneyes.

Gyr Falcon—

#2004-059 Ashland Co., 18 December
2004, Brady.

This large raven-sized hawk was gray-blue overall, with whitish underparts spotted with gray, and narrow banding on the relatively long tail. The legs were yellow. Perched, the tail extended beyond the wingtips several inches. In flight, the wings were long, slightly pointed, but broad at the base. The nape was noted to have two patches of lighter feathering.

Mew Gull—

#2004-089 Milwaukee Co., 2 December
2004, Gustafson.

This bird was seen in comparison to Ring-billed Gulls. This individual was slightly smaller, but otherwise similar in color. Its head was slightly smaller and rounder than the Ring-bills' as well. The primary wing tips had larger white spots than the surrounding

birds. The bill was decidedly smaller than the Ring-billed Gulls' bills, narrow and all yellow.

Black-legged Kittiwake—

#2004-090 Ozaukee Co., 11 December 2004, Uttech.

This gull had a narrower wing and more buoyant flight than the Herring and Ring-billed Gulls. It seemed a bit larger than expected for a Bonaparte's Gull. A black "M" was noted across the front of the wings with a white area across the inner primaries and secondaries, somewhat reminiscent of a Sabine's Gull. The black neck collar and slightly notched tail were also reported.

Eurasian Collared-Dove—

#2005-005 Milwaukee Co., 23 February 2005, Bontly.

This dove was closer to a Rock Dove than a Mourning Dove in size. The tail was longer than a Mourning Dove's and 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. The distal 2/3 of the underside of the tail was white in contrast to the dark gray undertail coverts.

Attention was drawn to the bird because of its three note "coo" call, the emphasis being on the second note.

Northern Hawk Owl—

#2004-094 Ozaukee Co., 26 December 2004, Mueller; 27 December 2004, Bontly; 28 December 2004, Gustafson; 2 January 2005, T. Wood; 18 January 2005, Tessen.

#2004-093 Douglas Co., 27 December 2004, R. Johnson; 3 January

2005, Brady; 3 February 2005, Tessen.

#2004-073 Ashland Co., 14 January 2005, Brady.

#2005-006 Burnett Co., 27 January 2005; McInroy.

These long-tailed, crow-sized owls were brown with white spotting, barred breasts, black vertical borders to the facial disks, yellow eyes, and they lacked ear tufts.

Great Gray Owl—

#2004-095 Marathon Co., 11 December 2004, Stutz.

#2004-096 Barron Co., 28 December 2004, Stutz.

#2004-097 Douglas Co., 27 December 2004–23 January 2005, R. Johnson (photo); 28 December 2004, Stutz; 8 January 2005, Brady; 29 January 2005, T. Wood; 23 February 2005, Gustafson.

#2005-010 Burnett Co., 26 January 2005, McInroy; 23 February 2005, Gustafson.

#2005-011 Dane Co., 22, 23 February 2005, U. Peterson (photo); 23 February 2005, Martin.

#2005-009 Columbia Co., 27 February 2005, Stutz.

#2005-012 Sauk Co., 28 February 2005, Stutz.

This unprecedented list of reports was of a grayish owl, larger than a Great Horned, but lacking ear tufts. The yellow eyes were set off by concentric rings of gray on the facial disks and a white chin patch.

Boreal Owl—

#2005-007 Douglas Co., 9 January 2005, R. Johnson (photo).

This small owl, seen at 25 feet, was a little larger than a Saw-whet, with a

larger than expected head. Yellow eyes, a yellow bill, and distinct dark edges to the facial disks were reported. The forehead was dark with white spotting. Heavy streaking was seen on the breast.

Ash-throated Flycatcher—

#2004-098 Racine Co., 13 December 2004, Gustafson, Keyel (photo).

This Cardinal-sized flycatcher had a gray breast grading up into a white throat. The lower breast and belly were a pale yellow. The folded primaries were rufous as was the tail. The lateral edges of the tail and the terminal edge as well were darker in color than the rufous portion of the tail. Two pale wingbars were noted, as was an entirely black bill, and a gray-brown crown.

Characteristics that eliminate the Great Crested Flycatcher include the lack of a pale proximal portion to the beak, the overall paleness to the gray of the upper breast, the paleness to the yellow of the lower breast, and the dark terminal edge to the rufous tail.

This is Wisconsin's second record of an Ash-throated Flycatcher.

Marsh Wren—

#2004-084 Fond du Lac Co., 18 December 2004, T. Schultz.

This wren had a dark back with longitudinal light streaks, a buff colored breast, white throat, white supercilium, dark post-ocular stripe, and dark crown. The tail was often cocked, the bill relatively long and slightly decurved.

American Pipit—

#2004-086 Dane Co., 18 December 2004, Temple.

Four small, "5 inch long" brownish birds were observed on the ground, actively wagging their tails. The bills were thin and faint wingbars were seen. In flight, the outer tail feathers were white.

Orange-crowned Warbler—

#2004-087 Dodge Co., 14 December 2004, Domagalski.

This thin-billed warbler was overall a yellow-gray color. The undersides were paler than the upperparts. The undertail coverts were yellowish. The underside of the tail itself was a solid gray color. A light superciliary line was also noted.

This is Wisconsin's tenth winter record.

Spotted Towhee—

#2004-081 Waukesha Co., 15 January 2005, Mueller, T. Wood.

#2005-014 Winnebago Co., 15 December 2004–28 February 2005, Kuecherer (photo), 3 January 2005, Tessen.

#2005-015 Iowa Co., 12 January–17 February 2005, Romano; 12 January 2005, Burcar.

Other than the white spotting on the mantle, this bird appeared to be the same size and color as an Eastern Towhee.

The Waukesha Co. bird appears to be the same bird reported for the second consecutive winter at this site.

Lark Sparrow—

#2005-019 Waupaca Co., 19 Jan.–4 March 2005, Minkebig (photo).

This sparrow was larger than the accompanying Tree Sparrows. The white breast had a central black spot, the face had black sideburns, the chestnut

cheek patch was outlined in black, and the crown was striped.

This is Wisconsin's second winter record.

Baltimore Oriole—

#2004-088 Chippewa Co., 21 December 2004, Kemper (photo).

The photograph showed an pale yellowish oriole with an orange-yellow head, and gray back. The wings were black with two white wingbars and white edging on the folded wing feathers. Of importance is the shape of the bill; a light gray, slightly elongated and pointed bill as opposed to the shorter, chunkier, blunter tipped bill of a tanager. A faint eyeline and yellowish supercilary line were not evident, traits expected in an immature Bullock's Oriole.

Hooded Oriole—

#2004-101 La Crosse Co., 15–19 December 2004, Collins, Leshner (photo).

Photos of this striking oriole showed an orange bird, almost orange-red on the head, with black wings, face, back, and tail. There were two white wingbars, the upper broader than the lower. The folded black flight feathers were edged in white. The black upper back exhibited slight orange edging to the feathers, rather than the limited black streaks of a Streak-backed Oriole or the solid black of an Altamira or Spot-breasted Oriole. The upper bill appeared black in contrast to the gray lower portion. In addition, the bill seemed to decurve slightly.

This is Wisconsin's first record of a Hooded Oriole. The only other mid-continental records for this species are 19–20 May 1992 in Ontario and 25 May 2003 in Iowa. The reddish color

to the head suggests Texas or north-eastern Mexico as the origin of this bird.

Hoary Redpoll—

#2005-016 Florence Co., 1 January 2005, Burcar.

#2005-017 Douglas Co., 26 January 2005, R. Johnson.

#2005-018 Forest Co., 8 February 2005, S. Cutright.

These birds were distinguished from Common Redpolls by an overall whiter appearance. Closer inspection revealed minimal flank streaking, an unmarked rump, one or no undertail covert streaks, and a noticeably smaller, stubbier bill than the Commons.

NOT ACCEPTED

Red-throated Loon—

#2005-003 Ozaukee Co., 2 January 2005, 12 February 2005 (2 reports).

The January sighting stated the bird had pale gray plumage, a white throat and face, and a bill held in an upturned position. No other plumage characteristics or size reference were supplied.

One February report was at considerable distance from 3 individuals. They were described as a "good deal larger" than adjacent scaup and goldeneyes, but smaller than Ring-billed Gulls. Since the ducks and gull mentioned are similar in length this size reference isn't consistent. The fore-necks and faces were white, the side and back of the neck as well as the back were dark. The bill was only listed as sharply pointed and held slightly upturned in one case and "shortish" in

the other. No color or size was mentioned.

With the confusing size reference, the lack of a bill size and color, the lack of indication of speckling in the back, the position of the eye in the dark and light areas of the face, cases could be made for other loons, Western Grebe, Red-necked Grebe, and Horned Grebe in addition to Red-throated Loon.

The second documentation for February was of two individuals with white necks and throats and a "shortish" bill. Initially it was felt that these were Horned Grebes because of the bill size. The size reference for these birds was Herring Gull-sized. The bill was held slightly uptilted, but color was not reported. The back was scaly gray and white. No indication was made of the extent of white in the face, nor whether the eye was encompassed by the white.

The "shortish" bill size and the incomplete description of the facial white area leave just enough doubt as to the identification of these birds.

Pacific Loon—

#2004-099 Racine Co., 13 December 2004.

This "fly-by" report did not indicate distance, but the conditions were extremely windy. The loon was dark above and white below, with a sharp demarcation between dark and light on the neck. The bill was felt to be small, straight, and thin. The bird seemed too small for a Common Loon.

The unknown distance and blustery viewing conditions for a fly-by report make assessment difficult. The identification appears to be made on the dark and light demarcation on the

neck, but in flight a Red-throated Loon can appear to have the same delineation of dark and white on the neck.

Broad-winged Hawk—

#2005-004 Outagamie Co., 2 February 2005.

A small, perched buteo exhibited a rusty breast. The back was brown, but no rust was noted in the shoulder area. Four alternating dark and white tail bands were evident from the underside, but relative width of the dark and light bands wasn't indicated. When the bird took flight, the upper side of the tail had a "finely barred" appearance.

The amount of barring evident would seem more consistent with a Red-shouldered Hawk. The "red" shoulder is notoriously difficult to see at many angles.

Swainson's Hawk—

#2004-100 Sheboygan Co., 25 December 2004.

This full glide fly-by was of a Red-tailed-sized hawk with a noticeably slimmer body and wings than a Red-tail. The underside was described as red-brown on the neck and breast, with a white belly and wing linings. The tail was lightly striped with a noticeable dark terminal stripe. The secondaries and inner primaries were indicated to have been gray, the outer primaries entirely black.

The description leaves some uncertainty as to the identification. The suggestion that the breast was orangish down to the white belly doesn't match the Swainson's pattern of a white breast, but brown neck and extreme upper breast. The black outer primaries seem too distinct for a Swainson's,

more in line with a Harrier. In addition, the overall striking slenderness to the wings and body seem too strong a distinction for a Swainson's, again more in line with a Harrier. The dihe-dral position also seemed more emphatic in the description than what might be expected for a Swainson's, again bringing to mind a Harrier. The overall plumage description seems to be part male as well as female/imma-ture Harrier so it is difficult to make a solid case for a Harrier out of the in-formation supplied.

Gyr Falcon—

#2004-059 Ashland Co., 2 February 2005.

Although this report is undoubtedly of the bird present all winter, the de-scription was limited to a bird with large pointed wings, gray back, ta-pered tail, and streaked breast. No in-dication was made as to the family of the bird, the relative size, nor was com-parison made to other hawks with which it could be confused.

Common Ground Dove—

#2004-091 Ozaukee Co., 31 December 2004.

Seen in a brief "fly-by" from a dis-tance of 20–30 feet, this appeared to be a dove noticeably smaller than a Mourning Dove, with a dark, rounded tail, rather than a pointed one. The head was tan-gray, lighter than the wing color.

Unexpectedly, there was no men-tion of what should have been the readily apparent rufous wings. Al-though the observer is certain this was not a "tailless" Mourning Dove, it is difficult to accept the identification without the wing color exhibiting the appropriate character.

Barn Owl—

#2004-092 Dodge Co., 9 December 2004.

This report is felt to be an appropri-ate identification, but it lacks enough detail to provide written confirmation of the sighting. The description was limited to an 18" tall bird, cream brown in color with a "monkey face." Seen sitting on a roadside eating a vole, from a truck at 15 feet distance — the identification should have been accurate, but without more complete information a case could be made for a number of owls or a harrier.

Northern Hawk Owl—

#2004-093 Douglas Co., 10 January 2005.

Although this too was most likely correctly identified, it was a descrip-tion limited by being seen at 100 yards, perched on a treetop as the observer drove by at 55 mph. Thus all that could be noted was a bird slightly larger than a crow, with a longer than expected tail. The observer admitted no other features were discernible.

Boreal Owl—

#2005-008 Ashland Co., 26 February 2005.

The observation was limited by poor lighting before dawn; this small owl was reported to have orange-brown vertical bars on the breast. From the side the brown wings had white spots, but notation of white spotting on the scapulars as expected for a Boreal Owl was not noted. The anticipated fore-head spotting was also not referenced. The facial disks were white and they were set off by a ring of dark feathers. Bill color was also not evident from the

report. The overall size seemed larger than expected for a Saw-whet.

Although the size and facial disk description are consistent with a Boreal Owl, the apparent lack of scapular spotting and forehead spotting in addition to the emphasis on orange-brown vertical breast streaks are suggestive of a Saw-whet Owl. Given these inconsistencies and poor light conditions, this identification is slightly uncertain.

Ash-throated Flycatcher—

#2004-098 Racine Co., 13 December 2004.

This brief description's only reference to distance from the bird was "varied," but in viewing conditions of a 15–35 mph wind. This leaves the actual quality of the look unknown. The one sentence description of the bird indicated a light gray and faint yellow breast without specificity as to the locations of these colors. The tail was rufous with a dark edging on the tips. The overall bird was indicated to be a dull Crested Flycatcher, but smaller.

Undoubtedly the observer saw the indicated species, but the actual description leaves too much for the reader to assume. The specific location of colors relative to each other and the ways these characteristics differentiate this species from similar species need to be mentioned to indicate all possibilities of identification were considered. Each documentation is considered independent of other submitted documentations before they are accepted.

Great Tit—

#2004-085 Ozaukee Co., 17 December 2004.

Again the description is extremely

brief. The bird was a bit larger than chickadee with a yellow breast and black streak down the center of the breast. No other plumage characteristics were reported.

In the event the description was a bit more complete, the Great Tit would have been considered to be an escaped cage bird rather than of wild origin.

Cape May Warbler—

#2005-013 Walworth Co., 23 January 2005.

This small bird had a yellow breast, yellow sides, yellow face, and a white belly. Heavy dark streaking was seen on the breast and sides.

Missing from this description is any hint of whitish wingbars and any hint of a yellowish patch up the side of the neck behind the auricular area. These field marks might have clinched this identification.

European Goldfinch—

#2005-002 Iowa Co., 14–29 January 2005.

This goldfinch-sized, tannish gold bird had bright yellow and black wings, red on the head and chin, a white collar, and black around the white collar area.

At issue here is the origin of the bird. In recent years, numerous European Goldfinches have been reported from feeders at various sites in southeastern Wisconsin. They are considered to be released, formerly captive birds, rather than of wild origin.



Eastern Screech-Owl by Jack Bartholmai

Wisconsin May Counts: 2005

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The 16 May Counts in 2005 represent the highest level of participation of the past 6 years, a big improvement over last year's four counts, but still about two-thirds of what was normal 15 years ago. Leading the way in participation as usual was Winnebago with 54 participants, Ashland/Bayfield following with 20 observers. Winnebago remained on the top of the species list with an always amazing total of 196 species, Milwaukee/Ozaukee found 176 species, and Ashland/Bayfield tied Oconto for the

third highest total with 163 species (Table 1).

The total species list of 261 compares with an average of 244 over the previous 16 years. This total of 261 is the highest ever recorded on May Counts. Previous highs belong to the 254 species recorded on the 1996 May Counts and the 252 on the 2002 counts. The only species new to this list were a Cackling Goose in Ashland/Bayfield and a Little Blue Heron in Kenosha. The 17 year total for species is now 296. Making appear-

Table 1. The 2005 Wisconsin May Counts.

Count	Date	Time	Sky	Wind	Temp	Observ.	Species
Ashland/Bayfield	5/20	04:00-16:00	Clear	E 7	42-67	20	163
Barron	5/22		Cloudy	? 10	50-63	1	107
Burnett	5/16	04:15-21:30	Clear	? 5	29-63	3	130
Florence	5/14	04:30-19:30	Cloudy	SW 8	40-46	6	121
Kenosha	5/07	04:00-18:00		NE 10	48-60	2	138
Marathon	5/14						146
Milwaukee/Ozaukee	5/14	03:00-16:00	Pt.Clo.	W 12	48-58	12	176
Mosquito Hill	5/14	07:00-16:30	Clo.	NW 5	43-50	5	74
Oconomowoc	5/14		Pt.Clo.	? 15	40-65	17	139
Oconto	5/25	02:00-20:00	Pt.Clo.	S 5	44-71	8	163
Portage	5/21	02:00-20:30	Pt.Clo.	S 8	52-70	7	151
Rock	5/14						144
Sheboygan	5/14	03:30-22:00	Clo.	? 15		15	135
Vilas	5/28		Pt.Clo.	W 8	37-63	3	126
Waupaca	5/15	05:00-21:30	Pt.Clo.	Calm	42-65	7	149
Winnebago	5/14	03:00-20:30	Rain	W 10	44-56	54	196

ances for only the second time in the past 17 years were Red-throated Loon, White-winged Scoter, Spruce Grouse, Whimbrel, Lesser Black-backed Gull (on 2 counts), Western Tanager (on 2 counts), and Lark Sparrow. Harlequin Duck, Carolina Wren, and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow were listed for the third time. It is also noteworthy that Thayer's Gull and Eurasian Collared-Dove have appeared for four consecutive years now. Also of interest was a report of a Lawrence's Warbler on the Barron County Count.

One general statement that can be made is that beyond the common waterfowl (Mallard, Wood Duck, Blue-

winged Teal), there were diminished numbers of the rest of the waterfowl species. Perhaps the dry spring factored into pushing many of the ducks on. The four counts with White Pelicans set a record high number for the species on May Counts in Wisconsin as did the two Snowy Egret tallies. On the other end of the spectrum, Common Moorhens found their way on to only one count and Black-crowned Night-Herons made a showing on only two counts. These are record lows for these two species.

See Table 2 for species of particular interest.

Table 2. Species of note on Wisconsin May Counts in 2005:

Species	Count(s) recorded
Cackling Goose	Ashland/Bayfield
Tundra Swan	Winnebago
Harlequin Duck	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Black Scoter	Ashland/Bayfield
White-winged Scoter	Ashland/Bayfield, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Surf Scoter	Ashland/Bayfield, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Long-tailed Duck	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Spruce Grouse	Vilas
Sharp-tailed Grouse	Burnett
Greater Prairie-Chicken	Portage
Northern Bobwhite	Rock, Portage, Marathon, Kenosha
Red-throated Loon	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Horned Grebe	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Snowy Egret	Waupaca, Rock
Little Blue Heron	Kenosha
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Winnebago
Northern Goshawk	Vilas, Marathon
Red-shouldered Hawk	Portage, Kenosha
Rough-legged Hawk	Ashland/Bayfield, Florence, Marathon
Peregrine Falcon	Winnebago, Marathon, Kenosha, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Yellow Rail	Burnett
King Rail	Winnebago
Common Moorhen	Winnebago
Black-bellied Plover	Winnebago
Willet	Ashland/Bayfield
Upland Sandpiper	Ashland/Bayfield, Burnett, Kenosha, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Whimbrel	Oconto
Hudsonian Godwit	Burnett
Marbled Godwit	Winnebago
Ruddy Turnstone	Winnebago

(continued)

Table 2. (*continued*)

Species	Count(s) recorded
White-rumped Sandpiper	Rock
Franklin's Gull	Oconto
Thayer's Gull	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Iceland Gull	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Glaucous Gull	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Kenosha
Short-eared Owl	Vilas
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Vilas, Portage
Black-backed Woodpecker	Winnebago
Acadian Flycatcher	Portage
Tufted Titmouse	Barron, Portage, Rock
Carolina Wren	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Northern Mockingbird	Ashland/Bayfield
American Pipit	Winnebago, Ashland/Bayfield, Waupaca
Orange-crowned Warbler	Winnebago, Sheboygan, Waupaca, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Prothonotary Warbler	Mosquito Hill, Kenosha
Louisiana Waterthrush	Burnett
Connecticut Warbler	Portage, Winnebago, Rock, Kenosha, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Hooded Warbler	Portage, Sheboygan, Rock
Yellow-breasted Chat	Rock, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Summer Tanager	Ashland/Bayfield
Western Tanager	Winnebago, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Lark Sparrow	Rock
Henslow's Sparrow	Oconto, Portage, Winnebago
Le Conte's Sparrow	Vilas, Burnett, Ashland/Bayfield
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	Oconomowoc
Fox Sparrow	Marathon
Harris's Sparrow	Rock
Lapland Longspur	Winnebago
Western Meadowlark	Barron, Marathon, Portage
Rusty Blackbird	Ashland/Bayfield, Sheboygan
Red Crossbill	Ashland/Bayfield



Long-eared Owl by Dennis Malueg



Barred Owl by Jack Bartholmai

WSO Awards—2005

The Board of Directors for the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology was pleased to present three awards during the annual convention in Sheboygan on 21 May 2005: one Bronze Passenger Pigeon Award and two of the newly created Green Passenger Pigeon Award.

2005 BRONZE PASSENGER PIGEON AWARD

The Bronze Passenger Pigeon Award is presented to individuals who have made important contributions to the study and appreciation of birds outside of service to WSO, particularly at the state or local level. The 2005

Bronze Passenger Pigeon award was presented to Jack Bartholmai, in recognition of his many years of bird photography and nature education (Fig. 1). Presenting the award for WSO was Thomas Schultz.

When Tom met Jack Bartholmai and his wife Holly in 1981, Jack was working as a radiologist at the hospital in Beaver Dam, but in his spare time he was photographing birds and other subjects in the natural world, as well as creating beautiful bird woodcarvings. Especially since his retirement a number of years ago, Jack has been pursuing his photography with great enthusiasm and he has devoted countless hours to these efforts. The thousands



Fig. 1. Jack Bartholmai receiving the 2005 WSO Bronze Passenger Pigeon Award from Tom Schultz.

of outstanding bird photos he has obtained are a testament to the dedication he has given to his “hobby”—combining great patience, perseverance, and skill in the pursuit of photographic excellence. He is truly a perfectionist, and he often goes to extreme measures (including erecting tall blinds) to capture the life and activities of birds.

In addition to these fine attributes, Jack has been exceedingly generous with his time and his beautiful photographic images. Over the years, he and Holly have given hundreds of educational slide shows and multimedia presentations, covering a wide variety of topics and subjects from the natural world. Jack has also donated the use of many hundreds of his photos to various organizations and projects, including the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, and he was the leading contributor of images for the forthcoming Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas book.

Jack and Holly have also been dedicated to the development of quality bird habitat on their properties, and for years they have maintained an extensive trail of bluebird houses, as well as nest boxes for a variety of species. Jack has even placed closed-circuit video camera inside some of these boxes to observe and record the breeding activities of cavity nesters.

It is an honor to recognize the work and influence of Jack Bartholmai with the 2005 Bronze Passenger Pigeon Award.—*Thomas Schultz*

2005 GREEN PASSENGER PIGEON AWARDS

As WSO Conservation Chair, Bill Mueller had the distinct privilege of

presenting the first of a new Wisconsin Society for Ornithology award, the Green Passenger Pigeon. This award is given to organizations or individuals who have made substantial contributions to the field of avian conservation, sustained over a period of years. The award, planned and designed by our board of directors, was named the Green Passenger Pigeon Award in keeping with the color names of our other awards.

Our first recipient was an organization with an amazing history of accomplishments. In the early 1970s, two Cornell University graduate students—George Archibald and Ron Sauey—were studying crane behavior and ecology. They decided to create an organization dedicated to the study and preservation of cranes. In 1973, they founded the International Crane Foundation (ICF) on the horse farm owned by Sauey’s parents, just north of Baraboo, Wisconsin.

Throughout the years that have elapsed since that beginning, ICF has marked many firsts in avian conservation, including the creation of the annual Midwest Sandhill Crane Count in 1976. In 1999, ICF joined the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership in efforts to reintroduce a migratory flock of Whooping Cranes into their historic range in the Eastern United States. In 2001, the first flock of Whooping Cranes was led to Florida behind an ultralight aircraft operated by pilots from Operation Migration. We have continued to watch with great excitement as whoopers have progressed on the road to their successful reintroduction in Wisconsin.

As any observer can plainly see, the International Crane Foundation is clearly at the pinnacle of avian conser-



Fig. 2. Jim Harris accepting the first WSO Green Passenger Pigeon Award (2005) on behalf of the International Crane Foundation from Bill Mueller.

vation, and we are fortunate that they are in Wisconsin, where they began. WSO is pleased to present this first Green Passenger Pigeon Award, to the International Crane Foundation. Accepting the award for ICF is Jim Harris, President of the Foundation (Fig. 2).

Our next recipient has worked tirelessly on many aspects of land and natural resource conservation, since he moved to Wisconsin nearly 30 years ago. He is Senior Ecologist with We Energies. His many job-related efforts in that regard include the Peregrine recovery program using WE power plants for nest box sites, bluebird trails on We Energies properties, Osprey platforms, the effort to get the Spread Eagle Barrens named a state natural area (included some We Energies property), and work in Belize.

He has spent years conducting a variety of breeding bird surveys, including BBS routes in New York, Texas,

Florida, Michigan and Wisconsin since he was in graduate school, but also many other surveys, including some for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, along with some he started and continues to do on We Energies properties. All these gather the data that support conservation efforts in the form of land management.

He has spent years teaching about the conservation needs of birds through the programs that he gives to bird clubs and numerous other nature and civic organizations. He has produced conservation "white papers" on numerous subjects. He has been involved in the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative (WBCI) from the very beginning to the present, serving as the WSO representative on the WBCI Coordinating Council and as Chair of the Important Bird Areas Committee.

He was Conservation Chair of WSO for years, and set in motion many

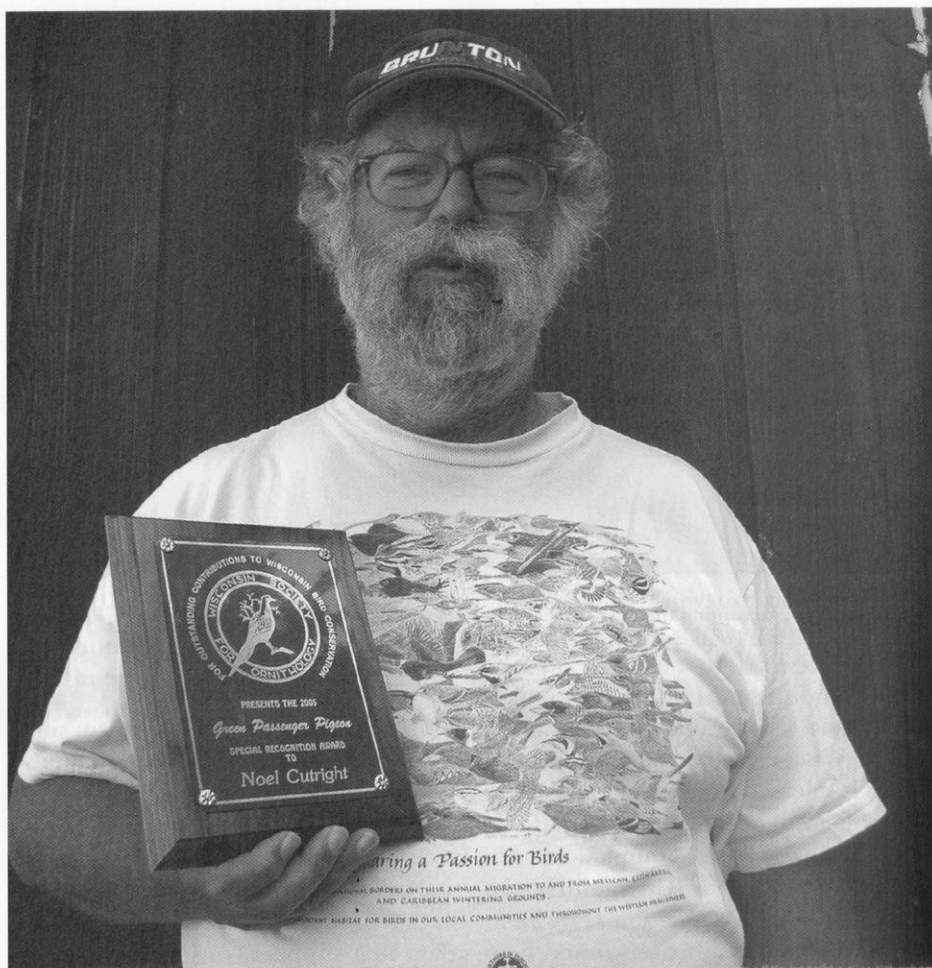


Fig. 3. Noel J. Cutright with his 2005 Green Passenger Pigeon Award given by WSO for his many conservation contributions and activities.

WSO conservation activities that continue to the present. He is one of the editors for the forthcoming volume on the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas. He serves on the boards of WSO, the Riveredge Nature Center and Tirimbina in Costa Rica.

In 2004, he broke a number of records by doing 33 Breeding Bird Surveys in an unbroken stretch, and raising nearly \$50,000 for the Impor-

tant Bird Areas program in Wisconsin, with his Quad 30 Campaign.

He is twice a past president of WSO, and is currently Historian for the Society.

Based on this long list of efforts and accomplishments, and with our gratitude, WSO is pleased to present this Green Passenger Pigeon Award to Noel J. Cutright (Fig. 3).—*Bill Mueller, WSO Conservation Chair*

Report of the Annual Meeting

21 May 2005

MINUTES OF THE 2005 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING OF THE WISCONSIN SOCIETY FOR ORNITHOLOGY

President Jeff Baughman called the annual business meeting of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology to order at 12:20 p.m. on Saturday, 21 May 2005 in the Bradley Building of Lakeland College, Sheboygan County, at the 66th Annual Convention of WSO.

The minutes of the 2004 meeting had been approved by a reading committee (Walter Hahn and Cecelia Kurtzweil) appointed at the convention in Chippewa Falls. A motion from the floor to approve the minutes as presented was accepted. Bill Brooks and Eric Howe agreed to review the minutes of the present business meeting.

Introducing the Financial Report (see *WSO Annual Report, May 2004–May 2005*), WSO Treasurer Christine Reel said that she had organized the presentation as a summary of actual WSO revenue and expenses and a listing of grants and other non-budget projects administered by WSO.

At the Treasurer's initiative, the WSO Board of Directors had officially adopted (April 2005) Society policies and procedures, which state that annual dues payments shall cover the cost of membership services. With a review of WSO costs and payments during 2004, Reel explained how this

was done. Expenses for the *Passenger Pigeon* had been exceptional because of a publication catch-up (1 double issue and 6 single issues), so actual costs of nearly \$28,000 had been prorated at \$16,000 for the usual 4 issues. Expenses for 11 issues of the *Badger Birder* were approximately \$7,000. When supplemented by membership expenses of \$1,000, membership services cost \$24,000 in total. Membership dues and other membership-related income totaled \$35,000. Thus WSO dues covered expenses during this past year. The Society also benefited especially by "unrestricted" donations of WSO members. The positive result: No dues increase in the near future.

Reel said that Honey Creek represents restricted income, earmarked only for Honey Creek Nature Center. Birdathon/Bandathon organizer Carl Schwartz added that this year we had earned more than \$4,000, not counting matching funds. About 35 persons had walked a "new" (thanks to efforts of Mike Mossman, Barb Duerksen, et al.) trail to the waterfall. They counted 94 bird species for the day, which is the second most recorded in 24 years. The Birdathon/Bandathon ended this year with the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative (WBCI) dedication of the Baraboo Hills as an Important Bird Area (IBA) in the State of Wisconsin. The presentation was honored with the presence—and commitment—of



Board members: L to R, Jeff Baughman, Christine Reel, Tom Schultz, Bill Mueller, Bettie Harriman, Noel Cutright, Jane Dennis, Joan Sommer, Barbara Duerksen, Mariette Nowak, and David Sample.

Harold Kruse, who had initiated WSO's preserve at Honey Creek.

WSO assets as of 31 December 2004 totaled almost \$417,000, about \$47,000 of which is available for general operating expenses. The remainder is restricted to select projects, which come and go, and includes WSO's funneling money for certain grants, where others do the field work and write the reports. On balance, WSO assets have seen some increase in the past 5 years mostly because of holding this grant money for others. WSO property includes Honey Creek landholdings, unsold *Haunts*, and other inventory.

In addition to managing WSO finances, Treasurer Reel called attention to other activities she had accomplished, all with the helpful input of other WSO members (see *Annual Report*).

Responding to inquiry, Reel ex-

plained that *Haunts* (*Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts*), *Checklist* (*Wisconsin Birds Field Checklist*), and *Bluebook* (*Wisconsin Birds Checklist with Migration Graphs*) are WSO published and distributed. Updates and other useful tools are available on the WSO website <http://www.uwgb.edu/birds/wso>, [Conservation Chair Bill Mueller prepared most of the submittals for updating these items].

It was moved and seconded to accept the WSO Financial Report. The motion carried.

Baughman said that WSO Treasurer Reel had been a good teacher, wanting WSO Board and members to understand what's going on with finances. "These [Board] people make the job of being WSO President really easy," he said, "and I appreciate the work they do." [Fig. 1] Jeff would later talk with Vice President Dave Sample

about planning and contacts for WSO conventions.

Co-Editor Bettie Harriman said that since her written report (see *Annual Report*), WSO members had received the most recent *Passenger Pigeon* issue. Among other submittals of the WBCI/WSO Neotropical Migrants Symposium issue, she called attention to the article by Terry Rich, "Advances in Bird Conservation in Mexico, 1990-2005." Rich had wanted his maps of breeding and wintering territory to be in color to show how important Mexico is for the continent's species richness, so he and the US Fish and Wildlife Service picked up the cost of color for this single issue. "But now," Harriman said, "if you like it, we can set up a fund for color." The five color pages had cost less than \$600. If enough generous donations were received, the *Passenger Pigeon* could occasionally print color reproductions of state records. If we can continue this, it would be because WSO members contribute the funds.

Opening discussion of the annual reports of committee chairs, Baughman said that Awards Committee Chair Daryl Tessen was in Alaska—looking at birds. The *Badger Birder* report, however, is available in the *Addendum* to "Annual Reports of Committee Chairs." Editor Mary Utech has been doing an excellent job on the *Birder*, said Baughman. "Don't be afraid to submit to the *Birder* and the *Pigeon*—they're your publications."

Bird Reports Coordinator Wayne Rohde added two comments to his report (see *Annual Report*). First, he thanked WSO members for allowing him to serve in the Reports Coordinator position, for he has learned "a tremendous amount about Wisconsin

birds—and about Wisconsin birders." Second, Rohde called for help because he has found the Bird Reports Coordinator position to be simply too time-consuming. He is seeking either a person or a team of persons to step in soon, for he steps down after completing the summer 2005 seasonal report for *North American Birds*. Rohde has been not only pulling information from seasonal report forms and documentation forms, but also gathering additional information from Wisbirdn reports and personal follow-ups. WSO may now need multiple people to continue with what he's started. Rohde thanked WSO for the opportunity, and WSO thanked Rohde for his contribution.

WSO Bookstore Chair Joan Sommer had nothing to add to her written report (see *Annual Report*), simply asking that WSO members "keep supporting us." She asked members readily to suggest any title for Bookstore retention. Responding to inquiry, Sommer said that 900 copies of *Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts* were left, so it will be several years until WSO breaks even on the *Haunts* investment. WSO members were warned, however, that Daryl Tessen doesn't have another *Haunts* to come.

WSO Conservation Chair Bill Mueller emphasized the information available (see *Annual Report*). There's a great set of links on the website (<http://www.uwgb.edu/birds/wso/>), he said, and you could spend hours just reading through the information. Mueller is also active as a WSO representative to Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative (<http://www.wisconsinbirds.org/>). As chair of the WBCI Issues Committee, he has been involved with submitting a formal letter to the

Horicon National Wildlife Refuge, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Wisconsin Department of Transportation about reducing highway mortality of birds and other wildlife along State Highway 49 at the north end of Horicon. See Bill for a copy of this letter.

WSO Field Trips Co-Chair Tom Schultz announced that WSO plans a March 2006 birding trip to Costa Rica. People have already expressed interest and signed up, he said, and the trip is limited to 12 participants. "This is a fabulous chance to see the Neotropics."

See the *WSO Annual Report* for a list of activities of WSO Historian, Noel Cutright.

Membership Chair Jesse Peterson called attention to the graph of WSO membership trends (*Annual Report*), saying that membership overall has ceased its decline. In fact, WSO showed a little bit of growth last year—it grew by 8.

Peterson then wrapped up the WSO Tell-a-Friend contest by giving away prizes, all of which had been donated by Eagle Optics. He randomly selected names of WSO members who had referred new members, having 3 packages of T-shirt, lens cap, and binoculars strap to give away in addition to 1 pair of binoculars. Peterson drew from a hat for the prizes. Daryl Christensen, Paul Schwalbe, and Joan Sommer got T-shirt packages, and Marilyn Winter won the Eagle Optics 8x42 Platinum Rangers. "Thanks for referring birders to WSO," Peterson said.

See *Addendum* to the Annual Report for the WSO Publicity report, submitted by Committee Chair Ursula Petersen. Petersen, who arrived later, had no additional comments on committee work.

The 2004 evaluations of the WSO Records Committee, chaired by Jim Frank, are presented in the *Annual Report*. The committee is made up of Frank, Bob Domagalski, Scott Baughman, Dan Belter, and Mark Korducki.

The Research Committee activities during 2004/05 are available in the *Annual Report*. "With this report I submit my resignation as Research Chair and WSO Board member," wrote Committee Chair Bob Howe. So the WSO Board is again in the process of looking for a Board replacement, said President Baughman. If anyone has suggestions for the position of WSO Research Chair, please let him or another Board member know.

WSO Scholarships and Grants Committee Chair Janine Polk provided a summary of the WSO Grants, which supply support to ongoing work, and Steenbock Awards, which fund other bird-related projects, given in 2004/05 (see *Annual Report*).

Website Chair Jennifer Davis has continued to maintain the WSO website <http://www.uwgb.edu/birds/wso/>. She has been able to get information posted really quickly this year, said Baughman. (see *Annual Report*)

Youth Education Chair Barbara Duerksen said that the Bird Conservation Mentor Program had received enough in donations to provide another "kit" of audiovisual and educational materials for kids. This new kit (sponsored by the Oshkosh Bird Club) will be going to Heckrodt Nature Center. Birders are welcome to help with donations, Duerksen said, or to volunteer for the mentoring program. People can really get involved teaching kids about birds, Baughman commented, adding that Duerksen does a good job with these kits. (For Youth

Education Coordinator activities of the past year, see *Annual Report*).

At the conclusion of committee reports, Scott Baughman moved that the 5 serving officers of WSO—Jeff Baughman, President; Dave Sample, Vice President; Christine Reel, Treasurer; Jane Dennis, Secretary; and Bettie and Neil Harriman, Editors—continue in their respective capacities for the next year. The motion was seconded and subsequently carried.

President Baughman announced that the 2006 WSO Annual Convention will be held in Rhinelander, based at Nicolet College, on the Memorial Day weekend. We may have additional options with a longer weekend and have not talked about the preconvention yet.

It was moved to accept this Rhinelander designation, and so voted.

The group continued talking about the northern location. The Memorial Day weekend, specifically, is 26-28 May 2006 (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday). Concern was raised about room reservations on Memorial Day in a resort area, with a suggestion that special benefit could/would come to the hosts for setting aside blocks of rooms for convention goers on a holiday weekend. Baughman assured members that a local group would handle the problem. This sort of difficulty, he said, brings to our attention the Board's attempt to set up a regular WSO Convention Committee, that is, to get someone who can take the lead and take pressure off of local groups in such a situation. Convention Committee volunteers so far are Scott Baughman and Marilyn Bontly (and, just after the meeting, Charlie Geiger).

This year, Baughman said, the WSO Annual Convention had 117 persons registered for preconvention/convention. Next year, we expect a lot—for the Oneida/Vilas/Forest County area.

The business meeting of the 66th WSO Annual Convention adjourned at 1:10 pm.

[A complete copy of these minutes may be obtained from Jane Dennis, Secretary, 138 S. Franklin Avenue, Madison, WI 53705-5248; 608. 231. 1741; jadennis@facstaff.wisc.edu.]

ANNUAL REPORTS OF OFFICERS

President—Jeff Baughman—My first year as president has quickly passed, since we met in Chippewa Falls, and I'm still amazed at how enthusiastically and energetically WSO members contribute to this organization. This past year has been very rewarding, especially working with people who have been patient, supportive and so helpful. We have a fine board of directors, committee chairs, and members that do an exemplary job keeping our organization on the cutting edge of birding related topics.

Financially the WSO is in good shape, although supportive organization like ours will naturally walk that fence between red and black. Christine Reel's report will, I'm sure, shed more light on the subject. Christine's leadership proved valuable, as the board worked to adopt WSO's "Policy and Procedures" manual.

Individual WSO members and people from other organizations or groups have contributed immeasurably to Wisconsin's conservation needs over the years. The WSO will now formally recognize those involved

with a new award the "Green Passenger Pigeon Award." This award recognizes those individuals or organizations that have contributed positively to Wisconsin conservation issues.

One of the most exciting activities this year, for Wisconsin ornithology, has been the dedication of its first Important Bird Area (IBA) at Horicon Marsh on October 16th, 2004. There have been over 100 of these identified this year and on May 15th our own Honey Creek property was the site of another dedication for the Baraboo Hills IBA. Many more IBA dedications will be following in the coming months and years throughout Wisconsin.

At last year's convention, I introduced the idea of creating an "Annual Convention Committee" and then early this year I sent a request for volunteers to man this committee in *The Passenger Pigeon*. I've received several positive comments about the committee idea and I've had a few people volunteer to participate. We are, therefore, nearing completion of this committee and hoping they will be instrumental in next year's convention.

I worked closely with this past year's Annual Convention committee as pre-convention trip coordinator. This group of volunteers worked well together and put on a very successful convention. Congratulations Sheboygan and Lakeland College.

Every year it seems life throws a few of us a curve-ball and we need to change our priorities and commitments for a while. This year is no exception. Bob Howe has indicated that he can no longer serve as Research Chairman, and Wayne Rohde will be stepping down as Bird Reports Coordinator. I would like to thank both, for their commitment to the jobs they've

done for this organization. You both will be sorely missed. Thanks Bob and Wayne. At this point replacements for Bob and Wayne have not been identified, but I'm sure someone will step forward to fill their respective positions and live up to the high standards they have set.

Vice President—Dave Sample—No written report.

Secretary—Jane Dennis—As WSO Secretary in 2004–2005, I focused on internal administrative issues. First, in October 2004, following terms of a draft revised by Treasurer Christine Reel, I helped decide that the WSO Board of Directors adopt restated, amended Bylaws for The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology to update a 1992 version (and, with the Board, expressed a hearty "thank you" for the hard work of Treasurer Reel). Then, in April 2005, I voted with the Board to approve (again compiled/composed by Treasurer Reel) "Policies and Procedures of The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Inc." In addition, I performed intermittent clerical tasks such as sending informational attachments (e.g., history of WSO award recipients) and compiling online votes (for Green Passenger Pigeon Award) as well as posting "member action items" with each quarterly Minutes of the last meeting.

In Fall 2004, I helped compose a letter informing the Executive Director of Wisconsin Outdoors Alliance that the WSO Board had voted to disassociate itself from the Alliance and resume an approach to public land, wildlife, and habitat management that promoted both development of alternative funding sources and support of facilities and programs of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

During this past year I participated in action-oriented subcommittees. Introduced to the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative (WBCI) Issues Committee, I was awestruck—as usual among these birder gatherings—at the competency of the people involved, who produced a gull management workshop, wrote papers, and started window-collision work in Milwaukee. I began work with a WSO Publicity subcommittee to revise and update educational/informational materials available at WSO display presentations. For a fact-sheet on “green industry,” I discovered that our own Wisconsin producer, SJ Johnson, Inc., “is dedicated to sustaining and protecting the environment [with vision] to be a world leader in delivering innovative solutions to meet human needs through sustainability principles.” The company, that is, has reached specific, measurable goals to reduce pollution and waste in its products and processes, growing from eco-efficiency (creating less waste, risk, and cost), to eco-effectiveness (using more preferred or renewable materials), to sustainability (creating long-term social value while decreasing its producer “footprint”).

Treasurer—Christine Reel—In addition to managing the organization’s finances, I accomplished the following for WSO during the past year:

- Attended all quarterly meetings of the Board of Directors.
- Filed reports as required with federal and state agencies.
- Received and distributed funds for eight non-WSO projects.
- Worked with Legal Counsel Dave Kinnamon to present amended by-laws that the Board of Directors dis-

cussed in depth and adopted as changed.

- Created “Policies and Procedures for The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Inc.,” which was discussed, changed, and adopted by the Board, marking the first time the WSO Board has had official policies in place (the policies were based on a file that had been created by Alex Kailing but not adopted); work continues on appendices, which offer more details.
- Served as treasurer and registrar for WSO/WBCI Symposium, which was held in Wisconsin Rapids, February 2005.
- Began serving as registrar for Golden-winged Warbler Conservation Workshop, which will be held in Siren, 10–12 August 2005.
- Worked with the Publicity committee to research, write and format several Publicity fact sheets (as many as eight new Publicity handouts will be created).
- Created and distributed flyer publicizing *Haunts* and other WSO publications for potential resale buyers.
- Worked with Bill Mueller to update WSO speakers bureau.
- Worked with Bill Mueller to update WSO birder contacts.
- Formatted “Annual Report to Convention.”
- Submitted monthly calendar of WSO events to *The Badger Birder*.

FINANCIAL REPORT

WSO’s Policies (adopted April 2005) state that annual dues payments shall cover the cost of membership services—that is, all costs in providing *The Badger Birder*, *The Passenger Pigeon*

and other direct membership benefits, and the costs associated with maintaining membership and soliciting renewals and new members. The breakdown of those costs and payments during 2004 is as follows:

Pigeon—

Expenses for 2004 (1 double issue and 6 single issues) totaled	\$27,696;
pro-rated expenses (if the usual 4 issues had been paid for)	\$15,826

Birder—

Expenses for 2004 (the usual 11 issues)	\$7,163
Total usual publication costs	\$22,989.00
Membership expenses	\$1,034.00
Total cost of membership services	\$24,023.00

Membership dues received	\$34,320.00
Library subscriptions/back issues	\$930.00
Total membership-related income	\$35,250.00

Another way to compare membership costs with income:

Publication cost per recipient (based on 1,100 copies per issue)	\$20.90
Membership cost per membership (based on 1,175 membership/subscription/exchange addresses)	\$0.88
Total cost per membership/subscription	\$21.78
Current single membership rate	\$30.00

Both comparisons show that the costs of our membership services are covered by our membership income,

leaving an amount left to cover our programs.

The 2004 Honey Creek Birdathon/Bandathon brought in \$3,140 from 71 donors. Added to direct Honey Creek contributions of \$1,751, total support came to \$4,891. Compare that amount to Honey Creek expenses of \$4,913. For another year, your generous donations came close to supporting our Baraboo Hills nature preserve.

Of the total assets as of 31 December 2004 (\$416,938—see **III. WSO Balance Sheet as of 31 December**), the amount available to cover general operating expenses is \$47,340; the remainder is restricted. All of the amounts listed as received in **Restricted Revenue** in Part I, as well as in **II. Grants Administered by WSO and Other Non-budget Projects** must be saved for their intended uses.

*Editors, The Passenger Pigeon—Neil and Bettie Harriman—*Since our last annual report to the membership of WSO, five issues of *The Passenger Pigeon* have been delivered to members. As this report is being written 67(1)—the Neotropical Migrants Symposium issue—is being printed at Allen Press and should be in the mail by about 11 May.

The *Pigeon* is currently on schedule, meaning that each issue reaches the membership on or before the start of that Seasonal Report period: 1 March (Spring season), 1 June (Summer season), 1 August (Fall season), 1 December (Winter season). The Editors wish to continue to express their thanks to Wayne Rohde and the four Seasonal Editors, Karl David, Tom Soulen, Mark Peterson, and Ken Lange, for making these reports happen.

We also appreciate the terrific

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

I. WSO Statement of Revenue and Expenses, 2000-2004

Unrestricted Revenue	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Birder Adv/Back Iss	741.00	837.00	799.00	437.50	580.00
Convention	5,259.00	0	2,522.88	1,470.92	1,951.94
Donations					
Unrestricted	8,611.00	8,311.00	0	0	0
Other	0	1,665.46	2,012.00	926.00	1,181.22
Interest/Dividends	634.34	438.64	1,357.69	293.06	442.41
Investment Income	0	0	0	0	62,127.00
Membership Dues	34,320.00	37,058.00	31,088.25	25,366.00	28,097.79
Pigeon Subscr/Back Iss	930.00	813.00	879.92	456.00	296.98
WSO Pubs/Bookstore	3,559.93	6,486.74	8,950.50	2,968.67	1,137.08
Miscellaneous	5,563.92	0	0	11.40	163.30
Total Unrestricted Revenue	59,619.19	55,609.84	47,610.24	31,929.55	95,977.72
Expenses (Unrestr Rev)	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Administration	172.91	297.92	477.50	63.75	478.71
Awards	160.00	289.00	114.60	218.49	0
Bird Reports Coord	433.99	156.77	51.16	118.52	772.80
Birder Mailing	2,374.96	1,994.30	1,425.51	2,477.51	2,730.62
Birder Printing	4,787.60	4,467.01	8,550.74	5,894.82	10,716.46
Convention	655.00	0	1,280.00	400.00	400.00
Field Trips	0	0	0	0	194.35
Hotline	0	75.60	88.45	90.50	254.80
Membership	1,034.08	1,437.95	1,274.69	2,398.59	2,174.85
Pigeon Mailing	3,685.50	1,305.85	1,757.42	1,742.97	3,206.62
Pigeon Page Comp,					
Printing, etc.	24,010.22	8,625.99	13,849.04	17,569.44	29,570.73
President	0	0	0	0	20.90
Publicity	444.00	185.00	647.75	401.06	665.23
Records	151.60	166.89	220.53	176.04	252.68
Schol/Grants	3,000.00	2,950.00	2,000.00	1,350.00	2,000.00
Treasurer	358.44	529.27	208.81	0	60.80
WSO Pubs/Bookstore	1,211.10	1,048.96	1,155.75	1,824.37	680.82
Haunts	0	0	0	780.00	55,765.06
Printing	0	7,179.30	157.80	0	1,130.91
Youth	28.97	140.36	0	100.84	288.97
Miscellaneous*	200.00	900.00	663.80	0	0
Total Expenses (Unrestr Rev)	42,708.37	31,750.17	33,923.55	35,606.90	111,365.31

* Miscellaneous support during 2004:
 American Bird Conservancy, \$100
 IBA Quad 30 Campaign, \$100

(continued)

FINANCIAL SUMMARY (continued)

Restricted Revenue	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Endowment					
Donations	1.00	161.00	292.00	183.00	161.00
Interest/Dividends	54.85	43.62	0	0	0
Life Memberships	3,800.00	4,000.00	1,450.00	2,200.00	1,700.00
Honey Creek	0	210.00	0	0	0
Donations	1,751.00	486.00	1,340.45	936.00	1,191.00
Bandathon	3,140.47	2,713.73	2,503.70	2,440.00	2,640.38
Memorials	0	275.00	2,235.00	757.67	150.00
Schol/Grants					
Donations	1,931.00	2,831.54	2,832.00	834.22	1,813.55
Haunts Sales	3,568.00	3,228.00	5,838.00	12,079.00	12,811.00
Youth Schol/Grant Dons	61.00	246.00	135.00	318.00	642.00
Other Donations	25.65	211.55	0	0	0
Haunts	0	0	250.00	500.00	474.94
Pigeon	0	0	0	0	1,500.00
Miscellaneous					
Costa Rica Trip	0	0	6,038.20	19,200.00	21,860.00
Total Restricted Revenue	14,332.97	14,406.44	22,914.35	39,447.89	44,943.87

Expenses (Restr Rev)	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Honey Creek	4,912.52	4,013.11	3,527.94	3,685.73	3,712.28
Youth Schol/Grants	527.00	100.00	388.28	0	790.00
Miscellaneous	0	43.00	0	0	0
Costa Rica Trip	0	0	19,888.20	5,555.63	21,566.00
Total Expenses (Restr Rev)	5,439.52	4,156.11	23,804.42	9,241.36	26,068.28

FINANCIAL SUMMARY (*continued*)

II. Grants Administered by WSO and Other Non-budget Projects, 2000–2004

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Atlas Income	62,111.68	7,486.34	34,313.73	54,547.84	8,260.85
Atlas Expenses	-6,626.57	-25,960.09	-34,440.55	-7,884.73	-36,591.01
Bird Mentor Kits Income	231.00				
Bird Mentor Kits Expenses	0				
Grant–Bald Eagle Income	2,465.25	3,623.30			
Grant–Bald Eagle Expenses	-2,465.25	-3,623.30			
Grant–Nicaragua Income	0		10,000.00		
Grant–Nicaragua Expenses	0	-3,285.65	-6,714.35		
Grant–1 Bird 2 Habitats Income	0		120.00		2,721.44
Grant–1 Bird 2 Habitats Exp	0			-181.60	
Grant–Osprey Income	14,150.40	11,050.00	13,000.00		
Grant–Osprey Expenses	-12,234.19	-6,359.46	-8,142.48		
Grant–WNV Tracking Income	13,092.05				
Grant–WNV Tracking Expenses	-13,092.05				
IBA Quad 30 Campaign Income	30,868.60	150.00			
IBA Quad 30 Camp Expenses	0				
MBS/CTB Summit Income	0	83,416.07	5,029.20	93,967.77	2,000.00
MBS/CTB Summit Expenses	0	-90,935.33	-23.78	-93,463.64	-592.62
Nicaragua Field Gd Income	1,220.00	490.00			
Nicaragua Field Gd Expenses	-220.00	-490.00			
SRSEF Income	1,690.71	1,353.35	1,062.52	3,643.33	4,613.52
SRSEF Expenses	0				-300.00
WBCI Gull Symp Income	1,245.00				
WBCI Gull Symp Expenses	0				
WBCI IBA Coord Income	44,171.81	20,000.00			
WBCI IBA Coord Expenses	-40,343.36	-16,635.69			
WBCI PR/Nat Tr Coord Income	48,578.63	15,525.00			
WBCI PR/Nat Tr Coord Exp	-50,297.43	-12,149.33			
WSO/WBCI Symp 2005 Inc	2,927.00				
WSO/WBCI Symp 2005 Exp	-154.07				

III. WSO Balance Sheet as of 31 December

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Cash (Checking)	2,170.45	2,924.12	2,582.70	2,822.52	2,612.27
Bookstore	4,176.07	6,805.88	6,043.44	0	0
Slides	1,539.24	7,156.64	7,007.79	0	0
General Savings	140,606.88	78,391.40	34,873.01	28,987.33	17,890.65
Money Mkt	17,229.09	17,146.24	17,037.90	0	0
Endowment Savings	14,158.45	10,302.60	16,120.98	3,982.44	1,559.35
Money Mkt/Mut Funds	47,220.54	43,494.39	36,646.21	50,025.56	50,025.56
MBS Savings	0	0	7,520.05	2,504.13	0
Atlas Savings	110,876.96	55,391.85	70,363.31	70,490.13	23,161.20
SRSEF Savings	5,508.11	3,817.40	2,867.70	3,991.50	5,000.00
CD	18,269.25	17,793.71	17,587.38	15,000.00	0
WSO Pubs/Bkst Inventory	21,697.85	27,081.61	26,455.11	44,888.65	59,640.03
Slides Inventory	1,590.02	1,590.02	1,609.85	8,164.20	7,546.05
Fixed Assets (Equip/Land)	31,895.13	30,410.00	38,464.74	40,814.23	40,814.23
Total	416,938.04	302,305.86	285,180.17	271,670.69	208,249.34

response we had to our request a year ago for more articles for publication. We currently have several waiting to be included. However, please continue to supply us with these interesting and informative papers. Editors NEVER believe they have too many papers waiting to be published.

We also wish to thank David Kuecherer for his work as Art Editor for the journal and we hope all the bird artists and photographers will continue to share their efforts with WSO members via *The Passenger Pigeon*.

And please remember to watch "our" birds for interesting and unusual behavior and send your reports of it to us for the "From Field and Feeder" column. This column will appear periodically as we accumulate a sufficient number of stories about the odd things birds do.

ANNUAL REPORTS OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Awards—Daryl Tessen—Awards to be announced at convention banquet.

The Badger Birder Editor—Mary Uttech—I'm very appreciative of the regular content contributors to the *Birder*. Your thoroughness and enthusiasm help keep the newsletter interesting and valuable. I'd encourage others of you, especially those of you in areas of the state not typically covered in the *Birder*, to send me your events announcements, reports, or any related items you feel would be of interest to our readers. Space limitations may occasionally prevent me from including your item, but in most cases, room can be found.

Advertisers report high response rates to their ads in the *Birder*. Ad rates

are reasonable and there hasn't been a price increase in quite a few years.

We publish 11 issues a year. In the past couple of years, the combined summer issue has been the July/August issue. This year, the summer issue will be the June/July issue because birding activities tend to be a bit lighter during this period.

Bird Reports Coordinator—Wayne Rohde—WSO's Bird Reports Coordinator (BRC) is charged with the responsibility of maintaining, revising, copying, and distributing various bird report forms (including seasonal county report forms and Christmas Bird Count forms, along with rare bird documentation forms) to seasonal observers and CBC compilers across the state; receiving and reviewing completed seasonal and documentation forms in order to prepare four quarterly summary reports for *North American Birds* (NAB); and copying and forwarding all completed forms to the four Seasonal Editors of *The Passenger Pigeon* (PP) and to WSO's Records Committee. Once again, these responsibilities have been my focus during the past year.

With the Fall 2004 Seasonal Report, I began my third and final year of service as WSO's BRC. My responsibilities will end with the completion of the Summer 2005 Seasonal Report for NAB, and I look forward to seeing who will serve in this capacity in the near future. Although the past three years of occupying this role have been a wonderful and educational privilege, the time constraints have simply proven to be excessive for my personal schedule. Accordingly, the WSO Board of Directors is currently engaged in the process of further streamlining all bird reports forms, and in-

vestigating the prospect of utilizing a web-based reporting system to augment hand written reports and thus automate the processing of data, in the hope of finding just the right individual (or individuals) to fill this vital position for WSO.

The WSO committee overseeing the task of finding a replacement, and researching the means of simplifying the collection, tabulation and assessment of data, is considering the possibility of dividing the current BRC responsibilities among several individuals—whether by task, geography or season. Thus, according to one scenario, a team of people might work in concert, where one individual sends out forms, another analyzes completed WSO seasonal and rare bird forms, yet another analyzes sightings shared via the Wisconsin Bird Net, and still another writes up the NAB reports. According to the other scenarios, the state could be divided geographically, with various subcoordinators summarizing different regions of the state, or the calendar year could be divided seasonally, with spring, summer, fall and winter subcoordinators. Nothing is yet set in stone, so be sure to contact me (at 262. 275. 5548 or wsrohde@genevaonline.com) if you have any suggestions or questions . . . particularly if you would like to volunteer to serve in any (or all!) of these capacities.

In addition to attending WSO board meetings, participating in the 2004 WSO Convention and Pre-convention Bus Tour, and joining a handful of WSO field trips this past year, I've enjoyed the opportunity to meet and befriend many fine birders across the state. It's also been a privilege to share my joy of birding with several organizations, through a slide presentation

"This Adventure We Call Birding," including Hoy Audubon of Racine, the Ice Age Trail of Elkhorn, Lakeland Audubon of Williams Bay (which I serve as field trips chair, CBC compiler and newsletter editor), the Ned Hollister Bird Club of Beloit (which I serve as president and newsletter editor), and the Rotary Club of Lake Geneva. Each presentation furnishes another opportunity to tell folks about Wisconsin's premiere birding organization, the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology.

As in years past, I thank Karl David, Thomas Soulen, Mark Peterson and Kenneth Lange for their ongoing and indefatigable service as *PP* Seasonal Editors, and Jim Frank as Records Committee Chair. My gratitude also goes to all who are so conscientious about sending their seasonal reports and documentations in a thoughtful, thorough and timely way; your observations provide the data WSO needs to capture the picture of what is happening with the birds of Wisconsin. And a special note of appreciation is due to all who continue to serve WSO on its Board of Directors; if there's one thing I've learned in the past three years of serving on the board, it's that the Wisconsin birding community should be proud to have such a fine, qualified, and dedicated group of people at the helm of our organization.

Wisconsin Big Day Counts—Wisconsin birders may be aware of the fact that there is no article on Wisconsin Big Day Counts in the Fall 2005 *Passenger Pigeon*. Happily, the reason for its omission is not that "The Pigeon" will no longer carry Big Day articles, but that the articles will henceforth appear in the Spring issue of each year—which is the initial issue published each calendar year.

Although the majority of Big Day Counts understandably occur during the glorious month of May, they may be held during any month of the year, and the change in publication date will permit the annual *PP* article to be a summary of all Big Day Counts that took place in the course of each calendar year, on a month-by-month basis. The next Big Day article will appear in the Spring 2006 *PP*, and it will include not only counts held during 2005, but also a couple of 2004 counts that were received too late for the 2004 deadline.

Those submitting Big Day Counts should send them to Wayne Rohde, author of the Big Day Count articles, by **no later than 15 January** of each year, for the previous year's count(s) (e.g., counts conducted during 2005 are due by 15 January 2006). Feel free, though, to send in your count, via the U. S. Postal Service, at any time during the course of the year in which it is held.

While some Big Day Counts entail several counties, others are focused on a single county. The success of Big Day Counts is dependent on a combination of skill and good fortune, including migration, weather, planning, endurance, etc. Veterans of Big Day Counts find them to be exhilarating birding experiences, marked by a spirit of camaraderie (and, sometimes, competitiveness!); some even use these counts as fund raisers for various conservation projects.

Regardless of your motivation, we encourage you to participate in one or more such Big Day Counts this year, at any time of the year, and to submit your count results, on a standard WSO Field Checklist card, to: Wayne Rohde, W6488 Beloit Rd., Walworth, WI 53184

Bookstore—Joan Sommer—The WSO Bookstore continues to fill the need of Wisconsin birders for WSO-produced materials such as *Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts*, Blue Books, and field checklists.

Total sales for 2004 were \$10,223.34 split between in-house sales of \$8,795.38 and the online bookstore's sales of \$1,427.96.

Sales of *Haunts* remained surprisingly strong in 2004 with sales of 154 copies compared to 2003 sales of 124 copies. The strong sales may be due in part to the April 2004 decision of the WSO Board to reduce the retail price of *Haunts* from \$30.00 to \$25.00. Wholesale sales to retailers such as ABA, and numerous bird supply stores, also remained robust in 2004.

Our Joy of Wisconsin Birding T-shirts continued to sell strongly in 2004. Only a few are left and they will not be reprinted.

The WSO Bookstore continues to maintain its concentration on Wisconsin birding guides and other Wisconsin-related materials of interest to the birding community. The online bookstore, administered by the Thayer folks of software fame, allows WSO to offer the WSO membership a wider range of titles in a variety of subject areas that would not otherwise be possible.

The WSO Bookstore can continue to exist only with your ongoing support. Purchasing your birding books and other birding materials through the WSO Bookstore offers a way for you to support the WSO and to obtain the materials you need at a reasonable cost. We will continue to offer a focused selection of materials of interest to the WSO community as long as there is interest and support.

If you know of a title that would be of interest to our community, please let me know so I can evaluate whether it might be offered on a one-time, limited-basis order or as a permanent addition to our catalog of titles.

I always appreciate hearing comments or suggestions on how the bookstore can be more valuable to you! The bookstore exists to serve your needs. Please let me know how I can serve you better.

See our WSO in-house catalog at: <http://www.uwgb.edu/birds/wso/bookstore.htm> and the online bookstore catalog at: <http://www.withoutbricks.com/estore/default.asp?affiliate=WSOBookstore>.

Good birding! And see you in the field.

Conservation—Bill Mueller—As Conservation Chair of WSO, I attended all quarterly board meetings since last year's convention. I've submitted columns entitled "Conservation Notes" to Mary Uttech for issues of *The Badger Birder*.

Representing WSO, Noel Cutright and I are part of the Advisory Team for the state Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan. This advisory group is working with WDNR in the development of a plan for the conservation of "species of greatest conservation need" in the state. The planning process is also aimed at determining the allocation of funds from the State Wildlife Grants. Briefings were held in a number of cities across the state during January to provide an overview of this process to state and federal agency employees and citizens.

Noel Cutright, Jane Dennis, Ursula Petersen and I also represent WSO on the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative Issues Committee. The Commit-

tee utilized a "prioritization matrix" method for choosing its future direction. The committee has worked on a set of "Issues Papers," aimed at describing the position of WBCI, and at providing information for WBCI partners and the public on a variety of topics. All of these will be available online at the WBCI website at <http://www.wisconsinbirds.org/IssuesPapers.htm>. These now include papers on wind power and its effects on bird populations (this first one is now available), the effects of feral and free-ranging cats on bird populations, lead poisoning and birds, with additional papers on pesticides and birds, climate change, and birds. The WBCI website has links to similar papers on other organizations' websites, including one on the effects of window strikes on birds, provided by the Bird Conservation Network.

The Issues Committee is working with members of the Urban Habitat Subcommittee of WBCI to bring the successful "Lights Out!" program from Chicago to cities in Wisconsin, starting with a building monitoring effort this spring in Milwaukee. This program works with building owners and managers to turn lights out during migratory periods; in Chicago, this effort has reduced mortality of migrant birds there by 80%.

Finally, Issues has written and submitted a letter to the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge staff, other offices of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation providing our suggestions and requests regarding proposed actions to reduce highway mortality of birds and other wildlife along State Highway 49 at the north end of Horicon Marsh. This is being

sent out to all 144 WBCI partner groups; those groups in agreement with our position will be able to join with us by signing on to the letter.

As one of the two WSO representatives to the American Bird Conservancy, I've signed on to letters supporting legislation that would remove all non-native, introduced species from the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and legislation re-authorizing the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, in addition to raising funding from the current \$5 million to \$15 million. Other actions to which WSO has signed on include a letter requesting that the Bureau of Land Management reconsider opening lands for petroleum development in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, including areas around Teshepuk Lake and the Colville River, where many bird species have critical breeding sites and an important area used by geese for the late summer molt is located.

The Policy Council of the American Bird Conservancy, of which WSO is a member, has been reconstituted as the Bird Conservation Alliance (BCA), with our continuing involvement.

Education—Mariette Nowak—My work on this committee for the last year consisted of the following:

- Attendance at quarterly Board Meetings and the February Symposium.
- Talks on Birdscaping with Native Plants for the following groups: Sheboygan County Audubon Society, Horicon Marsh Bird Club, Riveredge Bird Club and Northwind Perennial Farm.
- Joint work with Publicity Committee on the revision of WSO handouts,

including writing one on Neotropical Migrant Birds.

I welcome other WSO members to join me, so that an Education Committee can be formed and educational efforts expanded.

Field Trips—Jeff Baughman and Tom Schultz—Presented a full roster of popular and successful field trips.

Historian—Noel Cutright—

- Worked with Shirley Robbins to obtain the last of Sam's bird-related documents.
- Worked with Carl Hayssen's daughter to obtain all of Carl's WSO-related documents. Thanks also go to Anne Moretti for her valuable assistance.
- Continued to work on trying to protect bird-related materials in the estate of Ed Prins.
- Initiated contact with other elderly folks in the state who might have bird-related items that should be maintained. Placed notice in *The Badger Birder* about this topic also.

Membership—Jesse Peterson—In 2004, membership stabilized at a level very near 2003 as membership non-renewals were offset by a large increase in new members. In an attempt to continue to build membership, we are continuing to work to increase awareness of WSO through various activities initiated or performed by various members of the WSO board.

Activities and accomplishments throughout the past year include:

- Conducted "Tell a Friend" membership drive.
- Along with other board members, distributed Membership Brochures to several state parks.

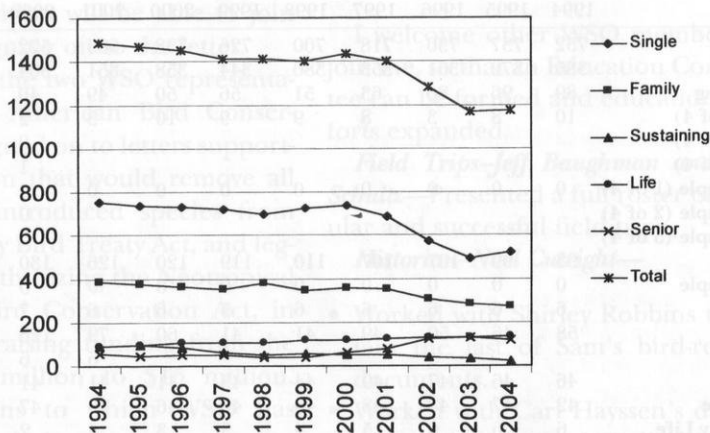
Total Membership at Calendar Year End:

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Single	752	737	730	718	700	726	738	685	572	494	520
Family	385	372	361	353	380	344	358	351	304	282	275
Sustaining	89	96	86	63	51	56	50	49	40	34	25
Life (1 of 4)	10	8	3	8	9	9	10	3	2	0	2
Life (2 of 4)									2	2	0
Life (3 of 4)									1	2	1
Life-Couple (1 of 4)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Life-Couple (2 of 4)									0	0	2
Life-Couple (3 of 4)									0	0	0
Life	93	99	107	107	110	119	120	126	130	129	133
Life-Couple	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Patron	6	6	6	6	6	5	6	6	7	7	8
Senior	58	46	50	49	41	41	60	79	126	131	120
Youth								6	6	7	11
Library	46	46	47	49	44	43	41	41	41	35	34
Exchange	42	47	48	48	48	46	46	46	47	36	36
Honorary Life	6	6	6	5	4	3	3	4	2	2	2
Board	2	5	8	8	18	12	5	4	3	3	3
Total	1489	1468	1452	1414	1411	1404	1437	1400	1283	1167	1175

Membership Renewal Status (as of 4/30/2005):

	Paid thru 2004	Renewed for 2005	% Renewed	New Members
Single	520	461	89%	29
Family	275	249	91%	4
Sustaining	25	24	96%	0
Life (1 of 4)	2	1	50%	1
Life (2 of 4)	0	0	0%	0
Life (3 of 4)	1	1	100%	0
Life-Couple (1 of 4)	1	1	100%	0
Life-Couple (2 of 4)	2	2	100%	0
Life-Couple (3 of 4)	0	0	0%	0
Senior	120	105	88%	3
Youth	11	10	91%	1
Library	34	31	91%	1
Subtotal	991	885	89%	39
Life	133			
Life-Couple	3			
Patron	8			
Honorary Life	2			
Board	3			
Exchange	36			
Subtotal	185			
Grand Total	1176			

Membership Trends 1994-2004:



- Continued oversight of printing and mailing of *The Badger Birder*.
- Continued distribution of the e-*Badger Birder*, an electronic version of the WSO newsletter.
- Monitored and managed the publication exchange program.
- Managed the annual membership renewal activity.

Publicity—Ursula Petersen—The publicity committee focused on evaluating and updating the handouts that accompany the WSO display. We retained several of our best brochures and planned additional ones also known as fact sheets. The completed fact sheets to date were also placed on the WSO website and include optics, where to find bird-related information, feeding, first aid to injured wildlife, and neotropical bird information. The committee consists of Christine Reel, Bill Mueller, Jane Dennis, Mariette Nowak, Barb Duerksen and Ursula Petersen. Additional materials are in progress.

The WSO display was set up at the

Woodland Owners conference in fall of 2004 and at the WSO/WBCI symposium, the Milwaukee Zoo and WSO convention in 2005, thanks to Bill Mueller's kind assistance with transportation. Ursula took a second display (fashioned by Jeff Baughman) with information about the organization and endangered birds to the Mississippi Flyway Birding Festival in May of 2005. Thanks to all who helped with publicity in one way or another.

Records—Jim Frank—The 2004 Wisconsin Records Committee evaluated 166 reports accepting 135 of them for an 81% acceptance rate. The seasonal breakdown is as follows:

Season	Reports	Accepted
Winter	30	23
Spring	57	42
Summer	20	19
Fall	59	51

Noteworthy were Wisconsin's first Wilson's Plover record and the addition of Cackling Goose to the state list via the splitting this species from the

Canada Goose. Those two species move the state list to 424 species. Also reported was the state's second White-winged Dove record.

The committee was composed of Bob Domagalski, Scott Baughman, Dan Belter, Mark Korducki, and Jim Frank (chair).

Research—Bob Howe—My research-related activities during 2004-05 included ongoing work on the Nicolet National Forest Bird Survey, completion of the manuscript for the *Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas*, and work on several other projects that are part of my work here at UW-Green Bay. I've also been working with officers of the Raptor Research Foundation, Noel Cutright, and several others in planning for the RRF annual convention scheduled for October 12–16, 2005, at the KI Center in Green Bay. A circular with details of the conference is available for WSO members who are interested in attending. The Nicolet National Forest Bird Survey this year will be held during the weekend of June 10–12 at the LeFeber Scout Camp west of Wabeno. Details are given on the NNF web site (<http://www.uwgb.edu/birds/nnf/news.htm>).

During 2004-05 I worked on the WBCI Important Bird Areas project, both as part of the selection committee (with Noel) as well as on a WBCI-funded project to systematically identify IBAs in the Nicolet NF. A similar project in Door County will be implemented this summer.

UW-Green Bay students, Jennifer Davis, and I have started an interesting project funded by the Citizen-Monitoring Partnership Program that will result in a web-based series of tutorials (habitat photos + audio recordings) and tests for training volunteer field

observers. Eventually, we hope to establish a "certification program" where volunteers can document their level of expertise. Jennifer Davis will construct the web interface and Nick Walton (with help) will acquire the photos and audio recordings.

I have been approached by a WSO member who is concerned about providing needed support for the Wisconsin Checklist Project, currently administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. I failed to follow up on this request, but mention this in hope that my successor will be able to pursue the issue.

Finally, with this report, I submit my resignation as Research Chair and WSO Board member. I'm just not comfortable missing so many meetings, and I am sure there are replacements who can be better participants in WSO activities than I have been lately. I've been on the Board for 19 years now and have cherished the opportunity to work with such a kind and dedicated group of people. Given my recurring record of absences, however, I think it's time to give someone else a turn. I certainly hope to remain active in WSO activities and someday when my life settles down a bit I hope to return as a contributor to the Board. I will miss all of you but expect to see you frequently at various WSO and other bird-related activities.

Scholarships and Grants—Janine Polk—WSO Grants, to provide additional support for work that is being carried out and funded through another program, were awarded to:

- William Stout, "Urban Cooper's Hawk Ecology in the Metropolitan Milwaukee Area,"
- Meggin Weinandt, "Assessing the

Conservation Implications of Common Loon Parasites: Black Flies, Haematozoans, and the Loon Immune Response.”

Steenbock Awards, for beginners, amateurs and independent researchers, to fund almost any type of meaningful bird-related project, were awarded to:

- Norma Rudesill, Yellow-headed Blackbird survey,
- Matthew Wagner, Wolf River habitat restoration project.

Website—Jennifer Davis—Continued to maintain WSO website including:

- posting the Annual Convention information
- posting items in the Important Dates section
- posting articles from *The Badger Birder* to the *Birder* News section
- archiving Hotline Reports (Jane Dennis prepares the reports for the web)
- posting Birding Help Wanted items on the Birding News page
- posting fact sheets on the Birding News page
- posting PDF versions of *The Badger Birder*
- posting the Table of Contents from each issue of *The Passenger Pigeon*
- updating Bird/Nature Organization entries
- updating WSO Administrators and Committee Chairs
- updating the WSO State Checklist
- updating and revising the Christmas Count page
- updating the Bookstore page.

Youth Education—Barbara Duerksen—Youth Education Coordinator activities of the past year:

- Youth Grants Program—grants are awarded in spring and fall for bird research or education. We received no youth grant applications for last September’s grant cycle.
- Meetings—attended WSO Board Meetings and those of the education subcommittee of WBCI, the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative.
- Presentations—a two-day outdoor bird conservation workshop as a part of the Richland County Conservation Field Days for sixth graders, programs and guided bird walk for high school biology classes, and a program and guided bird walk for adults during fall and spring migration.
- Bird Conservation Mentor Program—continued development of this joint project of WSO and WBCI to introduce students and others to the common birds of Wisconsin and their habitats, in the classroom and outdoors. Focus was on fundraising efforts and development of audiovisual and educational materials for the kits to be placed in each Wisconsin county. A presentation on the mentor program and the first orientation for mentor program volunteers were given at the Neotropical Birds Symposium in February. The first 4 kits (containing a scope, tripod, binoculars, field guides, and CD) are now placed in Ozaukee, Wood, Brown, and Sauk/Richland counties.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Short-eared Owl by Gary Krogman

Nathan Carlson, a veterinarian in Barron County, does a lot of his birding while on vet calls. He just started learning to digiscope this past year using his Nikon couplet 4500 with Celestron C80 scope. His wife Nan sometimes joins him for birding.

Mark Ehlers lives in Brown Deer, Wisconsin where his "day" job is selling guns and bolts at the hardware store. He has been a photographer since high school, but about 5 years ago his

interest in birds grew. She is on the Executive Board of Marsh Management Council and also participates in Christmas Bird Counts, crane counts and the Horizon Marsh Bird Festival.

Robbye Johnson lives in Superior, Wisconsin and has been documenting the birds in Douglas County for many years. Besides being an excellent birder, she is an accomplished artist. The cover of this issue is a forest landscape drawing she made in 1988.

Conservation Implications of Common Loon Parasites: Black Flies, Haematozoans, and the Loon Immune Response.

Youth Education—Barbara Duerksen—Youth Education Coordinator activities of the past year:

Steenbock Awards for beginners, and the Steenbock Award for the best research paper. The past year's list of Steenbock Award winners were awarded:

- Youth Grants Program—grants are awarded in spring and fall for bird research projects. The past year's list of Youth Grants winners were awarded:



Northern Hawk Owl photographed in Douglas County at Christmas 2004 by Randy Korotev of St. Louis, MO.

- posting fact sheets on the Birding News page
- posting the Table of Contents from each issue of *The Passenger Pigeon*
- updating Bird/Nature Organization entries
- updating WSO Administrators and Committee Chairs
- updating the WSO State Checklist
- updating and revising the Christmas Count page
- updating the Bookstore page.

their classrooms, in the classroom or outdoors. Focus was on fundraising and educational materials for the kits to be placed in each Wisconsin county. A presentation on the mentor program and the first education for mentor program was given at the Northeast Birds Symposium in February. The first 4 kits (containing a scope, tripod, binoculars, field guides, and CD) are now placed in Dodge, Wood, Brown, and Sauk/Richland counties.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Jack R. Bartholmai is an amateur wildlife photographer and wood sculptor. His work appears frequently in local newspapers, travel brochures, calendars, and bird publications. He gives numerous talks on birds and his work and is an active member of the Horicon Bird Club. He is the 2005 recipient of the WSO Bronze Passenger Pigeon Award.

Erik Bruhnke is a junior at Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin where he is majoring in natural resources. He got hooked on birds about four years ago and now has a life list of 250 species. His dream profession would be to lead birding tours and to become an ornithologist. He almost always has his camera in the field with him.

Nathan Carlsen, a veterinarian in Barron in Barron County, does a lot of his birding while on vet calls. He just started learning to digiscope this past year using his Nikon coolpix 4500 with a celestron C80 scope. His wife **Nan** sometimes joins him for birding.

Mark Ehlers lives in Brown Deer, Wisconsin where his "day" job is selling nuts and bolts at the hardware store. He has been a photographer since high school, but about 5 years ago dis-

covered his passion lies with photographing wild birds. In 2004, his Whooping Crane images won the grand prize in the photo contest by the International Crane Foundation. Mark's owl gallery can be seen at: www.pbase.com/marke/owls and his home page is: www.wingsoflight.com.

Cathy Gagliardi lives in St. Paul, Minnesota and has a cabin in Birchwood, Wisconsin. She considers herself a backyard birder with 17 feeders at her home and 25 at the cabin. The Great Gray Owl she photographed was a life bird for her.

Vicki Hollenberg, of Beaver Dam, is a member of the Horicon Bird Club, serving as their webmaster. She is on the executive board of Marsh Melodies, a series of nature programs at Horicon Marsh each spring, and she participates in Christmas Bird Counts, crane counts, and the Horicon Marsh Bird Festival.

Robbye Johnson lives in Superior, Wisconsin and has been documenting the birds in Douglas County for many years. Besides being an excellent birder, she is an accomplished artist. The cover of this issue is a Boreal Owl drawing she made in 1988.

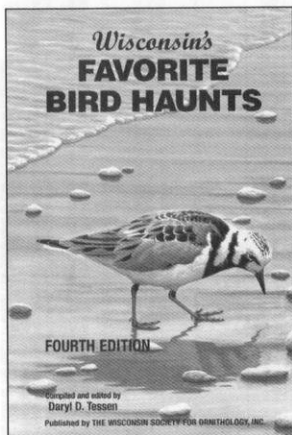
Randy Korotev of St. Louis, Missouri spent his Christmas of 2004 looking for owls in Douglas County, Wisconsin.

Gary Krogman has been digiscoping birds within 100 miles of his Eau Claire home for several years. Butterflies are also a favorite subject for his photography.

Dennis Malueg is a serious amateur bird and wildlife photographer who visits most any corner of Wisconsin and beyond to capture his images. His home "studio" is more than 80 acres in rural Waushara County.

Aaron Stutz lives in Madison where he teaches math at Middleton High School. He spends his free time birding, photographing birds, and volunteering with the Madison Audubon society.

Delia Unson, of Madison, got bitten by the birding bug about ten years ago. Since then she's birded intensively in Wisconsin, the U.S. and several other countries with her husband, Chuck Heikkinen. She started digiscoping about two years ago and life has not been the same since.

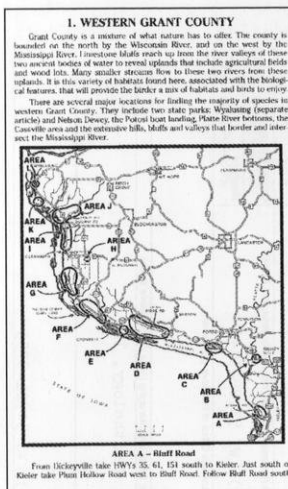


Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts, Fourth Edition (2000)

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 jsommer2@wi.rr.com

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

1. Publication Title The Passenger Pigeon	2. Publication Number <table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>8</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>		4	2	2	8	2	0	3. Filing Date 08/01/2005
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Full Name	Complete Mailing Address
The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Inc.	2022 Sherryl Lane Waukesha, WI 53188-3142

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box ☒ None

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one)
 The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes:
☒ Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
☐ Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)

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15. Extent and Nature of Circulation		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		1106	1130
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation	(1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541. (Include advertiser's proof and exchange copies)	1037	997
	(2) Paid In-County Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541 (Include advertiser's proof and exchange copies)	0	0
	(3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution	0	0
	(4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	9	8
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 15b. (1), (2), (3), and (4))		1046	1005
d. Free Distribution by Mail (Samples, complimentary and other free)	(1) Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541	1	1
	(2) In-County as Stated on Form 3541	1	1
	(3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0	0
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)		5	5
f. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 15d. and 15e.)		7	7
g. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c. and 15f.)		1053	1012
h. Copies not Distributed		53	118
i. Total (Sum of 15g. and h.)		1106	1130
j. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15c. divided by 15g. times 100)		99.3%	99.3%

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☒ Publication required. Will be printed in the Fall 2005 issue of this publication. ☐ Publication not required.

17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner
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