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# The *Passenger* PIGEON

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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 Assistant Editor for art (see left column). Manuscripts that deal with Wisconsin birds, ornithological topics of interest to WSO members, and WSO activities are considered for publication. For detailed submission guidelines, see pages 131–132 of the Summer 2007 issue (Vol. 69, No. 2) or contact the Editors. As a general guide to style, use issues after Vol. 60, No. 1, 1998.

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*Front Cover: David Franzen has kindly allowed us to put his photo of an adult Black-billed Cuckoo on the front cover*

## **WSO and Conservation Advocacy**

**A**s I am writing this in March 2015, we have entered a tumultuous period for conservation in the state of Wisconsin. The proposed budget cuts for 2015–2017 included recommendations to halt new land acquisitions through the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund until 2028, eliminate key DNR research positions directly related to bird conservation, and weaken the powers of the Natural Resources Board, thereby excluding the voice of Wisconsin citizens from land conservation decision-making.

A large expanse of remarkable grassland bird habitat located in Sauk County is at risk of being compromised by high-impact recreational activities. The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, formerly the Badger Army Ammunition Plant, contains one of the most significant grassland bird populations in the state, including breeding Bell's Vireos, Henslow's Sparrows, Bobolinks and many other species of conservation concern. Yet the current master planning process for the property is considering the allowance of a shooting range, ATV trails and other incompatible recreation. It is unlikely that an opportunity to restore or preserve grassland habitat of this size (3,400 acres) exists anywhere else in southern Wisconsin.

On the other side of the state, an ecologically valuable 247-acre parcel of land bordering Lake Michigan just north of Kohler-Andrae State Park is slated to become a golf course. This parcel and adjoining state lands provide critical migratory stopover habitat and thus were designated an Important Bird Area. With so much of the Lake Michigan shoreline being highly developed, the few remaining undeveloped parcels, such as this one, are extremely important to migrating birds.

I provide these three examples not to darken your day but rather to illustrate the overwhelming need for an organization like WSO. Birds need an advocate. Conservation needs an advocate. And based on your comments from our strategic planning process, many of you would like for WSO to fill that role. You recognized the magnitude of our state's conservation challenges and urged WSO to take a more active role in conservation. But conservation means different things to different people, so we issued another member survey in late 2013 to better define WSO's role in bird conservation and to help us develop an action plan for the future.

Over the last year, we have taken your feedback to heart and have made great strides in strengthening our conservation focus. We now have a very active Conservation Committee that meets monthly and helps to prioritize the issues that warrant WSO's immediate attention. Their work is addressing many of the issues that you, our members, raised during the strategic planning efforts. I'd like to examine the most popular responses to three of the conservation survey questions, and most importantly, report on how we have been addressing them.



**CONSERVATION SURVEY QUESTION #1:**

**Indicate the five most important conservation issues on which WSO should focus.**

**YOUR ANSWERS:**

- 1) Migratory Stopover Habitat
- 2) Public Habitat Management and Fragmentation
- 3) Private Habitat Management and Fragmentation
- 4) Keeping Cats Indoors
- 5) Endangered and Threatened Species

Last year, WSO tackled a project pertaining to THE most important conservation issue to our members: migratory stopover habitat. Remember that ecologically valuable 247-acre parcel mentioned earlier? Local opposition to the proposal focused on land use and water quality concerns. WSO stepped in to add bird issues to the discussion. WSO representatives testified at a July 16 hearing before the Town of Wilson Plan Commission and emphasized: 1) the role of the existing forest as migrant stopover habitat; 2) the significance of migratory stopover habitat; and 3) the historic great loss of this type of habitat along the Lake Michigan shoreline.

We also informed our members and the broader birding community of the proposed development and urged action. As a result of the overwhelming public outcry, the commission decided to defer action on Kohler's request for a conditional use permit, which would be required to override the town's 20-year Comprehensive Plan. WSO will continue to monitor developments with this project, including recent modifications to the original plan that indicate the developers are still intent on moving forward with the project.

**CONSERVATION SURVEY QUESTION #2:**

**What are the best strategies for addressing the priority bird conservation issues?**

**YOUR ANSWERS:**

- 1) Educate legislators
- 2) Focus education efforts on non-members
- 3) Review and comment on public planning documents
- 4) Help fund worthy initiatives by other organizations

Public habitat management was the second most important conservation issue to our members, and many of you suggested reviewing public planning documents as a way to address this issue. The WSO Conservation Committee has been closely monitoring the planning process of the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area (SPRA). Because SPRA supports breeding populations of several rare grassland and shrubland bird species, WSO strongly recommended that future planning efforts for SPRA carefully consider the timing and location of any recreational activities, and that planning decisions are guided by sound land management and stewardship principles. We submitted our comments on the Draft Regional and

Property Analysis to the Wisconsin DNR and plan to review the final master plan when it is released later this year.

Many of you also felt that it was critical to educate our state's legislators on conservation issues. We agree with you, and I'm happy to report that WSO recently provided comments on the proposed state budget cuts for 2015–2017 to the Wisconsin Joint Committee on Finance. Our primary concerns included: a halt to vital land acquisition for wildlife under the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund, loss of key science staff positions directly related to bird conservation, and reduction of the Natural Resources Board to "advisory" status, giving unilateral control to the DNR Secretary to sell land and easily change long-held conservation policies. We also made a concerted effort to alert our members and the broader birding community to these proposed cuts and urged you to contact your local representatives and voice your support for conservation.

### CONSERVATION SURVEY QUESTION #3:

**What would be the best delivery method for the above strategies?**

YOUR ANSWERS:

- 1) Provide information via the WSO website/social media
- 2) Host conferences and workshops
- 3) Send a check to a worthy project
- 4) Provide information via WSO's own paper publications

You felt that the best way for WSO to deliver important conservation information was through our website and social media pages. With the major upgrade to our website and the creation of a Communications Committee, WSO now has a much greater ability to accomplish this type of outreach. Our website, Facebook page, monthly newsletter, and monthly eAlerts are coordinated and poised to reach not only our members but also the public at large.

One recent conservation issue that illustrates our coordinated approach is the proposed Sandhill Crane hunt in Wisconsin. When the hunt was first proposed in 2013, the WSO Conservation Committee developed an issues paper and made it available on our website. With the recent renewed interest in a Sandhill Crane hunting season, we have been using our Facebook page to direct people to the issues paper on our website. At the same time, we published an article in *The Badger Birder* asking our members to be informed on the issue and to attend the Conservation Congress Spring Hearings to represent the interests of birdwatchers. This article was also published on our website, which has reach beyond our membership, and then will also appear in our monthly eAlert email. It is our hope that by utilizing a variety of communication tools, we can inform a much larger audience.

Despite our great efforts toward addressing conservation issues, we realize our limitations as a volunteer organization. With so many conservation challenges and a continuous stream of new, unforeseen issues, we are forced to choose where to focus our limited resources. We simply cannot tackle every issue that arises, so

part of our overall conservation strategy is to support other organizations that also are fighting the good fight.

WSO has been an official sponsor of the Wisconsin Wetlands Association conference for the last two years. Attendance this year reached nearly 400, all of whom learned about the importance of wetland habitats, wetland restoration techniques, and much more. We have provided financial and administrative support for the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative annual meeting for several years as well as serve on their Steering, Issues and Education Committees. More than 100 people attended this year's event, which focused on managing private lands for birds. We have provided financial support to the Great Wisconsin Birdathon, Urban Ecology Center's "I Spy Birds Summer Camp," the Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory, and the second Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas. We donated \$4,000 from our 2014 Silent Auction proceeds to the Friends of Wyalusing State Park, Mississippi Valley Conservancy and the Natural Resources Foundation's Bird Protection Fund. We plan to donate 2015's Silent Auction proceeds to the Raptor Education Group, Inc., the Wausau Bird Club, and our own Honey Creek Preserve.

None of this work would be possible without the support of you, our members. We thank you for helping us to be an important advocate for bird conservation!

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## *From the Editors' Desk*

**A**s we were birding in southern California in early April, we found several Long-billed Curlews with their improbably long bills in a marshy preserve. That led to reflecting on how this species used to feed in the grassy expanses of Wisconsin in years past. It's hard to picture this now not just because of their long absence, but also because of how the land has been transformed. One area where the Curlews did roam is the Badger Munitions Plant, currently the scene of negotiations over how the land should be used now that the U.S. Army has relinquished it. How much will be used for precious wildlife habitat, and how much will be given over to recreational use inimical to the sustenance of wildlife? This is just one area in Wisconsin under threat, and there are many, many more in other states.

This issue deals loosely with conservation issues, starting with Kim Kreitinger's description of recent WSO efforts to preserve the bird habitat. Jim Beix follows with a history of the beginnings of the Bluebird conservation efforts in our state. Karen Voss then looks back on the early years of the Crane Count, one effort to keep the state safe for Sandhill Cranes. While the latter two articles may not focus explicitly on conservation, it is nonetheless central to their message. If we do not conserve, we lose. We lose not only the birds we love and their songs, we lose pieces of the planet we need to sustain human life.

Chuck Heikkinen and Delia Unson



Cedar Waxwing by David Franzen

# Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, The Formative Years

By *James R. Beix*

## BLUEBIRDS' NATIONAL DECLINE

In 1977 Dr. Lawrence Zeleny trumpeted the decline of the Bluebirds of North America in the June issue of *National Geographic* magazine. His article "Song of Hope for Bluebirds" was read by thousands. He reported a drastic decline of Eastern Bluebirds from the late '20s to the late '70s. He estimated that the Eastern Bluebird population deteriorated 90% over that period, to an all-time low. While there are no statistics available to verify this, he based his estimate on recollections of his fellow Bluebird enthusiasts who lived long enough to see these changes in Bluebird populations.

Earlier, in the 1964 volume 26 (2) of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology's Journal, *The Passenger Pigeon*, Sam Robbins reported on the scarcity of the Bluebird in Wisconsin illustrated in the 1963 summer bird count: the combined efforts of 71 observers on 46 separate counts involving over 216 hours in 46 separate counts, produced a total of only 53 Bluebirds. Robbins commented on Professor James Douglas' evaluation of severe winters in the four-year declining numbers of Eastern Bluebirds after the winter of 1957–58.

Cold weather meant not only increased energy requirements but also

fewer available insects for the birds. Bitter winters in 1976–77 and 1977–78 were implicated in further decline of the Eastern Bluebird in the Breeding Bird Surveys. Pesticides and toxic chemicals diminished insect food supply or directly poisoned birds. Nesting cavities declined as woodlots were cleared. Dead trees with nest cavities were routinely cut up for firewood or simply because they were unsightly. Steel fence posts replaced wooden posts that had frequently rotted and developed nest cavities for Bluebirds.

Large farms replaced small ones and patchwork fields with grass corners were replaced by vast acreages of monoculture row crops. Milk production on small farms with shady pastures bearing nesting cavities was replaced with stanchion barns. Recently, corn pricing has led to reduced tree lines that once supported cavity-bearing trees.

The introduction of the House Sparrow to the US in 1851 and the European Starling in 1890 brought non-native birds to compete with native, cavity-nesting birds in a devastating way. Bluebirds found it hard to compete with these aggressive invaders.

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"A slightly different version of this article previously appeared in the Summer, 1996 issue of Wisconsin Bluebird, Volume 11, Number 1."

## BEGINNING GRASSROOTS RECOVERY . . . NEST-BOX TRAILS

Lawrence Zeleny's writings encouraged numerous Americans to put up nest-boxes for Bluebirds, providing artificial nesting cavities for them. He authored numerous "Bluebird Trail" columns in the *Nature Society News*. People began seeing Bluebirds. People who had lived 70 years without seeing a Bluebird were now seeing them. In 1978 Zeleny founded the North American Bluebird Society (NABS). The organization served as an educational, conservation and research source for all three Bluebird species in Canada and the U.S.

In November of 1979, Joan Rattner Heilman of New York authored an article for *Parade* magazine, supplement to many Sunday newspapers nationally. Her "You Can Hear the Bluebirds Sing Again" resulted in 80,000 requests for a NABS brochure on Bluebirds.

In the same year Bluebird conservationists prompted the Minneapolis Audubon Society to organize the Upper Midwest Bluebird Recovery Program, which included 9 states, Minnesota and Wisconsin being among them. A Minneapolis newspaper article on Bluebird enthusiast Dick Peterson and his work with his nest-box promoted Minnesota interest. Peterson said his nest-box design was the result of nearly 20 years of Bluebird research.

In 1985 Dorene Scriven, a driving force in Bluebird recovery in the Minneapolis Audubon and the Upper Midwest Bluebird Recovery Program, urged Ernie and Delores Wendt of Haugen, WI to start a separate recovery program for Wisconsin. Dorene, (author of "Bluebird Trails: A Guide to Success"), had been deluged with requests for

Bluebird information from neighboring Wisconsin. The Wendts had belonged to the Upper Midwest Bluebird Recovery Program since 1982. Ernie was president and Delores was vice president of the Barron County Audubon Chapter in Wisconsin.

## BRAW GENEALOGY

At the same time Mike Mossman of the WI Endangered Resources Bureau of the Wisconsin DNR came on the scene. He attended the annual meeting of the Upper Midwest Bluebird Recovery Program in Minnesota in September of 1985. Mossman met with Dorene Scriven, the Wendts and Carrol Henderson of the Minnesota Non-Game Wildlife Program.

Mossman and the Wendts were encouraged to form their own Bluebird conservation program in Wisconsin. Aware of several Bluebird trail programs in Wisconsin, Mossman developed a list of Bluebird enthusiasts and DNR members and organized the first meeting of knowledgeable people on February 15th, 1986 at UW-Stevens Point. Twenty-seven people attended. Besides Mossman and the Wendts, others attending were DNR representatives Harvey Halvorsen, Dick Nikolai, Bruce Bacon and Don Bragg. Also attending were Andrew Nelson of Oxford, Kim Mello, an analytical biologist from the Camp McCoy Army Base and Ron Leys of the Outdoor Section of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*.

In the meantime, Ernie and Delores Wendt persuaded Wisconsin Governor Tony Earl to declare the first week in April "Bluebird Week" in Wisconsin. This encouraged hundreds of people to get excited about Bluebirds. A second meeting on March 15th saw agree-



ment in the name of the new Bluebird organization named Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin (BRAW). Goals and objectives, an organizational plan and trail guidelines were developed. Officers were elected; committee members and county coordinators were appointed. Jan Mitchell's BRAW logo was adopted. The acronym BRAW, for the Bluebird Recovery Association of Wisconsin, was suggested by Dick Nikolaias. "Braw" is a Scottish term, a variant of "brave," "excellent," "well-dressed."

By April, the Bureau of Endangered Resources mailed information to 2,000 interested people, newspapers, the Upper Midwest Bluebird Recovery Program and NABS. The board would meet in mid-winter and fall. An annual meeting would be held each September with Bluebird workshops held statewide throughout the year. Poynette was the site chosen for the first annual meeting. The May 5, 1986 issue of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* newspaper featured Ernie and Delores Wendt as coordinators of the new Bluebird recovery effort in Wisconsin.

Membership would be free the first year with a newsletter being mailed three times a year. Each member was mailed a packet of nest-box designs, guidelines for nest-box mounting and data forms for monitoring the boxes. Future dues would be used for funding newsletter and nest-box design mailings.

The WI Bureau of Endangered Resources would fund the first year's printing, mailing and computer support. Harvey Halvorsen recruited a pro-bono attorney from Whitewater, Terry Race, who guided BRAW through its legally recognized incorporation and federal 501c3 status. This was achieved

the first year so that tax-deductible donations would help generate funding along with membership dues.

Halvorsen who was working with the DNR at the Bong Recreational Area in Western Kenosha County, was elected the first chairperson. Having an MS from UW Stevens Point, Halvorsen had spent a year in western Bluebird research in Portland, Oregon where he met and monitored Bluebird trails with Hugh Prescott, a prolific writer in *Sialia* and champion of the Western Bluebird. Halvorsen then worked in eastern Wyoming where in his spare time he worked on Mountain Bluebird trails. Hired by the WI DNR in 1985, he relocated to the Bong Recreational Area.

Vice Chairperson was Bruce Bacon from the DNR office in Baldwin. Delores Wendt was treasurer and Rose Clements of Brill was secretary. UW Extension Liaison was Scott Craven, UW-Madison wildlife ecologist. The newsletter editor was Don Bragg of the DNR office in Rhinelander. WI Society of Ornithology liaison was Noel Cutright who was also county coordinator of Milwaukee County. He spread the word of BRAW. Committee Heads: Dick Nikolai, Funding; Bruce Bacon, data-collection; Bill Reardon, Public Relations; Kim Mello, Andrew Nelson and Vince Bauldry, Nest-box Design.

Board meetings were characterized by "hard work, knowledge and willingness to share." When discord would arise about trail management or which nest-box was best, Mossman recalls that Harvey Halvorsen, Kim Mello, Dick Nikolai and Bruce Bacon were "the steady heads." Only a few months old, BRAW announced its goal: Monitoring and increasing production of Eastern Bluebirds and certain other cavity

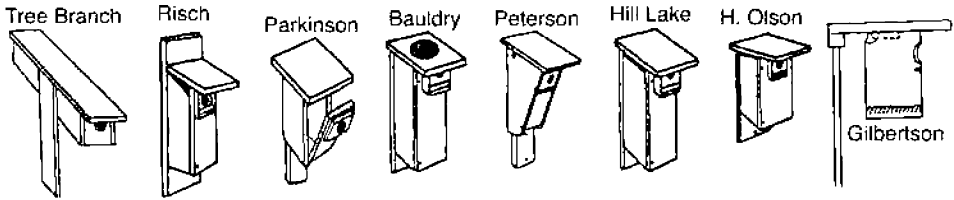


Figure 1. Bluebird Nesting Box Styles

nesters through a coordinated nest-box program.

The limits on suitable nesting sites had to be reversed. This meant that the nest-box design had to be sound, the habitat appropriate and the nest-boxes had to be monitored.

BRAW provided an opportunity for Bluebird enthusiasts and researchers to share their experiences, knowledge and ideas. Bluebird trails were promoted as the main conservation effort.

### NEST-BOX DESIGN

BRAW offered four nest-box designs initially which were thought to be good designs: Hill Lake, Olson, Peterson and Bauldry. Each nest-box was named for its creator. Andrew Nelson had designed the Hill Lake nest-box. Fellow nest-box designers were Herman Olson, Dick Peterson and Vince Bauldry.

Wood block predator guards over the entry hole were advised for the Hill Lake, Olson and Bauldry boxes. The Peterson box showed 2 dowel pegs just inside and below the entry hole to discourage reaching cats and raccoons. Raccoon-proof posts were encouraged for mounting all boxes.

While recommending the above four boxes, BRAW felt that other nest-boxes could work. The nest-box committee received plans for coffee cans, milk car-

tons and jugs to serve as nest-boxes. Other worthwhile designs received over time included the slot box, Risch, Parkinson and Gilbertson. In 1992 the Zuern Tree Branch design was presented. The NABS-style house was not mentioned.

Bruce Bacon recalls: "As folks experimented with Bluebird house designs, they were very opinionated about which design was best. It always ended in a friendly debate but there were definite allegiances to a particular design! The houses that Bluebirds chose more frequently (shallow designs) weren't always the safest (deeper designs) from predators. And there were some regional preferences for particular designs." A review of *Wisconsin Bluebird* newsletters revealed no mention of the NABS nest-box during the first ten years.

The Bauldry nest-box was modeled after a hollowed-out wooden fence post with an open, screened hole in the roof. The open top on the box was meant to replicate a rotted fence post and to discourage house sparrows. Vince Bauldry had banded over 10,000 Eastern Bluebirds over 39 years. His detailed data was the largest dataset on a single population in all Bluebird studies. Bauldry had measured the depth of successful nests in wooden fenceposts and felt that 14 inches was a good depth to avoid raccoon predation. Un-

like the shallow Peterson, many boxes were deep to prevent cats and raccoons from reaching the nest.

Many nest-box designs offered were similar to the Hill, Lake and Olson. The latter box types could be constructed with minimal carpentry tools and were popular. A 1989 BRAW newsletter pictured Vince Bauldry, Herman Olson, Andrew Nelson (Hill Lake) and Dick Peterson with their respective nest-boxes. Dorene Scriven in Minneapolis remembers Nelson's sense of humor during his presentations on raccoon predation, reaching into an oversized Hill Lake nest-box with his arm while wearing a coonskin cap.

#### DUES AND MAILINGS

In 1987 BRAW dues were \$3.00/individual, \$5.00/family, and \$100 for Life-Membership. After 1990 individual/family dues were \$5.00; by 1996 dues for individual/family were \$8.00. Life-Membership was still \$100. By 1990 printing and mailing support from the Bureau of Endangered Resources ceased. BRAW would pay its own way for newsletter and packet mailings.

BRAW informational packets were mailed out, and included county coordinator workshops, nest-box plans, data-monitoring forms for Bluebird trails and identification advice on problems experienced during monitoring. Box placement and trail development advice were also offered.

#### PROMINENT BOARD MEMBERS REMEMBERED

Don Bragg of the Rhinelander DNR office answered members' inquiries in each issue of *Wisconsin Bluebird*, the

newsletter he edited. He felt the newsletter purpose was to be a forum of information exchange, not a scientific journal. Bragg authored thoughtful articles on Bluebirds, other native cavity nesters and biodiversity. *Wisconsin Bluebird*, in 1993–1994, BRAW's seventh year, reported 1800 members, many from out of state. There were 56 Life-Members at the time. Delores and Ernie Wendt worked as treasurer and vice chairperson, respectively, until 1994 when they retired from the BRAW board. Delores also had worked on selling and mailing caps and shirts with the BRAW logo as well as on new and membership renewal. Ernie had served as vice chairperson for seven years. He had a memorable quotation, "if you cannot monitor a nest-box, don't put it up." Dorene Scriven remembers them as "lovely people".

Mary Rather of Friendship, WI was a retired physical therapist who worked as a volunteer at the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge. She served on the board many years helping at county coordinator workshops and also working on the data-collection committee. The county coordinator for Adams and Juneau counties, she is remembered as offering a sensible, calming approach at meetings with a great sense of humor, "a jewel in a sea of blue."

Cathy Chybowski, a naturalist who worked at the Bong Recreational Area in Kenosha county, recalls hundreds of requests for information about BRAW as she worked with Chairperson Halvorsen. She organized a huge educational effort at the beginning of BRAW. She wrote news releases for newspapers across the state to "get the word out."

Cathy and Halvorsen did a TV segment for "Outdoor Wisconsin" on Blue-

bird recovery, nest-box designs and monitoring. Along with Warren Close and Marilyn Anderson, Cathy did Bluebird workshops in southeastern Wisconsin and eventually was chair of statewide county coordinators. She authored a brochure on monitoring guidelines, served on the data-collection committee and was later chairperson of public relations.

### **MORE BLUEBIRDS BECAME EVIDENT**

Famous Wisconsin birder, Sam Robins, an active leader of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology for 50 years, wrote a weekly birding column in the *Country Today* newspaper. He attributed Bluebird trails for the increase in Eastern Bluebirds found in the 1987 WI Breeding Bird Survey. In a 1989 column he mentioned seeing 40 Eastern Bluebirds one September day while driving through Taylor, Oneida and Lincoln counties.

### **MINNESOTA CONNECTION CONTINUES**

Once BRAW was up and running, Minnesota continued to help. Dorene Scriven and the Upper Midwest Bluebird Recovery Program in Minneapolis loaned slides and cassette tapes on Eastern Bluebirds to be used at workshops and county coordinator presentations.

Minnesotan Dick Peterson, the designer of the popular nest-box that bears his name, attended BRAW annual meetings and donated 50 nest-boxes in 1987. Delores Wendt enrolled Dick Peterson as a Life-Member of BRAW. The Peterson nest-box is very popular to this day.

Dave Ahlgren of Stillwater, MN, a

UW graduate and pilot, was very active in Trumpeter Swan and Bluebird recovery in Minnesota. He attended annual BRAW meetings with Peterson and sold Peterson nest-boxes in kit form through the mail. Ahlgren said "the Peterson box is virtually predator proof if the nest-box is mounted on a waxed, 1/2 inch iron pipe with a Noel predator guard over the entrance hole. Don't use 1/2 inch electrical conduit to mount the Peterson box because it may not be able to support the large-body box in strong winds." Halvorsen recalls Ahlgren's great smile.

### **MEMBERSHIP DATA INCREASES BLUEBIRD PRODUCTION**

Joe O'Halloran, a retired patent attorney and former research chemist, joined BRAW and the Lafayette County Bluebird Society in 1994. Having a "passion for data and statistics" he joined the Data-collection and Analysis Committee. About 352 to 365 nesting surveys were being submitted annually reporting on over 5,000 nest-boxes. Armed with a computer program to analyze data, he found that shallow nest-boxes with predator protection were more productive in fledging Bluebirds.

Joe, working with Carol McDaniel of the BRAW board and using annual nesting survey forms from monitors, divided the state into two zones, East and West. The zones were within 50 square miles of being equal. The total number of nest-boxes in the East zone was twice that of the West zone but the number of Bluebirds fledged was nearly identical. Bluebirds fledged per box was 2.1 in the West zone, 1.7 in the East.

The West zone showed .9 Tree Swal-

lows fledged per box. Joe noted that the Bluebird hatch rate was significantly lower in the "high Tree Swallow" East zone. "Every little 'up' for Tree Swallows is accompanied by a corresponding 'down' for Bluebirds," he said. Peterson boxes were used more in the West Wisconsin zone.

The Peterson box occupancy percentage favored Bluebirds in both zones. At that time 60% of the nest-boxes used by BRAW monitors were Hill Lake, Peterson or Olson. O'Halloran reported Bluebirds had an aversion for Hill Lakes (deep box) where there are a substantial number of Tree Swallows. In counties with large Tree Swallow populations, Bluebird occupancy of Hill Lake boxes was 1/3 to 1/2 of the corresponding occupancy of Peterson boxes in the same county.

In the summer of '96 the *Wisconsin Bluebird* reported a nest-box study in Schoharie County, New York, with the New York State Bluebird Society. Data was available for 500 nest-boxes showing Peterson boxes preferred by Bluebirds 40% of the time compared to 18% for conventional NABS boxes. The Tree Branch usage was extremely low by Bluebirds while Tree Swallow usage rate was 25 of 100 boxes. A PVC type of nest-box was the least preferred by House Sparrows.

After a five-year study O'Halloran recommended unpairing nest-boxes and the response to this recommendation was a climb in the number of Bluebirds fledged. He reported that paired boxes favored Tree Swallows and reduced the number of Bluebirds fledged by 50%. The oval entry hole of the Peterson box was recommended for all nest-box designs rather than the traditional, round 1 1/2" hole.

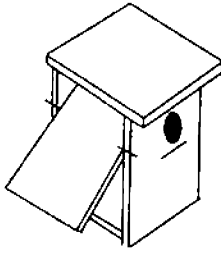
O'Halloran came away with three

conclusions from his continuing learning process and analysis: Avoid or change away from deep box types; use and encourage box types for which the Bluebird has a clear preference, for example, the Peterson; and we should look for raccoon protection through means other than deep box types. The NABS style nest-box, very popular today, was not mentioned in the *Wisconsin Bluebird* issues.

By 1996, ten years after its founding, BRAW had accomplished much in the way of conservation and education regarding Eastern Bluebirds and other cavity nesters in North America. Dedicated, hard-working individuals had done the "heavy lifting" to build a vigorous, effective organization for the future. The ideals of appropriate habitat, proper nest-box type and weekly monitoring are still the guide today. BRAW members' monitoring data continues to be source of conservation information and reliable assistance in the remarkable recovery of the Eastern Bluebird in Wisconsin.

Six years later, in 2002, Leif Marking, La Crosse County coordinator, became a champion of the NABS style nest-box when he reported over 2,000 Bluebirds fledged with the Brice Prairie Conservation Association. Marking had chosen the shallow, NABS box plan "because it was practical for building, required a minimal amount of material and the Bluebirds liked the offered space. I like simplicity and success." He felt he was honoring Lawrence Zeleny and NABS. By 2012, with approximately 600 members submitting nest-box data, 35,692 Bluebirds were fledged along with 15,588 Tree Swallows, Chickadees and House Wrens.

In a WSO newsletter of 2014, BRAW was described as "helping the E. Blue-



**NABS style**

Figure 2. NABS-Style Nesting Box

bird to recover its highest population in the last 50 years. This recovery represents the most successful recovery of a passerine species in state conservation history.”

Much of the information used for this history was gleaned from past *Wisconsin Bluebird* newsletters. Many responsible individuals who worked hard for BRAW in the first ten years may have inadvertently been left out. Unfortunately, pictures in past newsletters cannot be suitably reproduced.

Thanks to Harvey Halvorsen, Cathy Chybowski, Dorene Scriven, Mike Mossman, Bruce Bacon, Leif Marking and WSO’s Nancy Nabak for oral and written assistance in composing this history.

*James R. Beix is a retired MD who lives in rural River Falls, is a founding member of the St. Croix Valley Bird Club and has been a BRAW member since 1986.*

# Crane Count Classic— Capturing the History of the Early Years

*Karen Voss*

I vividly remember the first time I saw and heard a Sandhill Crane, on a birding field trip which must have occurred in the spring of 1973. I don't recall the marsh, but Karen Etter Hale, long-time Crane Count Coordinator for Jefferson County, thinks it's likely we were on the same field trip. It was my first year of graduate school at UW-Madison. I had been assigned a Teaching Assistantship in Ornithology, and she was taking the class. I was weak at the knees with my inexperience, yet loving every minute. Within a few months, following a field trip to the International Crane Foundation (ICF), George Archibald had agreed to take me on as a graduate student doing research on Sandhill Crane behavior.

At the time, so little was known about Sandhill Cranes in Wisconsin. There were a few nesting records and brief reports of cranes from the late 1800s through the 1960s. The population was likely at its smallest in the 1930s and 1940s with the expansion of farming and draining of wetlands, and may have dipped to as low as 25 pairs.

In the late '60s and early '70s there was a small Wisconsin explosion of interest and advocacy for cranes and wetlands. Larry Gregg and Dick Hunt, of the Wisconsin Conservation Department (WCD) surveyed area wildlife managers and biologists for reports of

cranes. In the early 1970s, Douglas Morissette, also of WCD, did public card surveys from a booth at the Wisconsin State Fair.

In 1972, George Archibald, having earned a PhD at Cornell, and Ron Sauey, also a student at Cornell, had begun to establish the International Crane Trust (later Foundation) at the site of the former Sauey family horse farm on the northern outskirts of Baraboo, WI. George wrote to *The Passenger Pigeon* (Winter, 1972), "This spring I am doing extensive field surveys of Wisconsin's Sandhill Cranes with the intent of understanding the species and eventually placing Whooping Crane eggs in their nests to initiate a breeding-migratory wild population of that species in Eastern North America."

At the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Ernie Gluesing, a wildlife biology student studying under Dr. Lyle Nauman, and with support from the DNR, conducted a statewide population-survey by plane, helicopter and on foot. They documented 250–300 pairs of cranes, and estimated a total of 850 Sandhills in Wisconsin in the summer of 1973 (Gluesing, 1974). His record of field sightings is peppered with George Archibald's name. In his thesis he acknowledged Dr. Archibald's help, noting that he "spent many hours in the field during the spring of 1973, search-



ing for ...Cranes and their nests,” and made “invaluable contributions to this study.”

On the heels of Ernie Gluesing came more of Dr. Nauman’s graduate students, all working to better understand the ecology of Sandhill Cranes. Tom Howard did research on nesting behavior at Necedah NWR. From 1975–1977, four graduate students divided up the research needs. Scott Melvin’s work focused on migratory behavior, using radio transmitters placed on Cranes and documenting their migration from Wisconsin wetlands, through Jasper-Pulaski NWR, and on to Florida wintering grounds. Ron Windingstad researched Crane population health, using blood sampling to look for parasites, and identifying diseases and disease vectors. Stan Skutek used chemical analysis of feathers as indicators of natal areas. The fourth graduate student was Alan Bennett. His research focused on crane population surveys and wetland habitat use, primarily in Marquette, Green Lake, and surrounding counties. “The earliest DNR wetland maps were individual booklets for each county, based on air photos from the 1940s to 1950s,” he recalled. Between the time that those photos were taken and his work in the mid-1970s central Wisconsin had undergone massive ditching and wetland drainage, with the development of muck farms. Alan’s hand-drawn wetland delineations onto topographic maps documented “a phenomenal amount of wetland loss that occurred in those years.”

Like Ernie Gluesing, Alan Bennett credits Ron and George at ICF for their assistance. His first meeting with Ron Sauey was a memorable one, he recalls. “Ron had agreed to help me make a tape recording of Sandhill Crane uni-

son calls to use for auditory censusing of breeding cranes. Ron was on the telephone when I arrived but he pointed me to a pen holding a pair of adult Sandhills. I got into position with my tape recorder and parabolic microphone and waited . . . no calls, just a pair of cranes pacing back and forth. Finally, Ron joined me at the pen. He let out a couple loud “GAROOO’s” . . . still nothing but silence. “Get ready” said Ron as he opened the cage door and slipped inside. He grabbed the female and just as quickly, the male attacked Ron and the pair sounded off with a 5-minute series of ear-piercing unison calls. For the next two years those calls were broadcast across scores of wetlands and played a key role in the first comprehensive Sandhill Crane survey of southcentral Wisconsin.”

Meanwhile in 1969, Jim and Libby Zimmerman’s fight to protect Cherokee Marsh on the northeast side of Madison marked the beginning of what was to become the Wisconsin Wetlands Association (WWA). Dorothy Haines, a writer and editor, remembers attending field trips with the Zimmermans. While walking through a field with Dorothy, Libby noted that the WWA was always in crisis mode, responding to threats as they arose. Her vision was for a broad-based organization that would focus on education and advocacy. Dorothy responded, “Well, you need a newsletter.” Thus she became the first and long-standing newsletter writer for WWA.

In the mid-1970s the common interests of ICF, WWA, the DNR and wildlife researchers began to coalesce into a collaborative effort. Steve Schmidt, a teacher at Middleton High School, with George and Ron’s encouragement, had his class count Sandhills in Columbia County. Alan Bennett remembers this

well. "I was really busy with my research, but was able to help him identify wetlands for his students to survey, and to offer advice on how to gather the data."

With that first citizen survey effort, the need for more "eyes on the sky" and "feet on wet ground" became evident. ICF stepped up its efforts to find citizen helpers. Both WWA and the Madison Audubon Society (MAS) drummed up interest with articles published in their 1976 and 1977 newsletters. Ron and George were overwhelmed with the responsibilities of the nascent ICF, but thanks to growing connections to UW-Madison and UW-Stevens Point, more students were becoming involved with activities at ICF.

On a field trip to ICF in 1976, Charlie Luthin first met George Archibald. Influenced by George, he returned in ICF when he graduated from the botany program at UW-SP in 1977, to begin reestablishing native prairie plantings. He also joined in efforts to find volunteers to help document cranes nesting in southeastern Wisconsin, as the beginnings of Crane Count began to take shape. Mark Martin, who at the time was a member of both MAS and WWA, recalls that in late February, MAS members Dorothy Haines, her friend Susan Foote, Mark and others met with Charlie and Ron at a restaurant in Madison to plan the upcoming Crane Count. Later at Dorothy's house, Mark and Dorothy assembled dozens of packets of Crane Count Instructions in preparation for a series of public meetings.

On March 8, 1978, over eighty people attended a Crane Count meeting at Monona Public Library. Dorothy Haines vividly recalls that Charlie and Ron brought along a young Sandhill Crane – very likely the first Crane sight-

ing for many of the meeting attendees. Mark distributed 47 instructional packets for wetland sites in Dane County, while Charlie distributed many more for Sauk and Columbia counties. In all, five counties were involved—Columbia, Sauk, Dane, Dodge and Jefferson.

Charlie moved on to graduate school at UW-Madison in 1979, and lacking a car, he became active in Madison-based WWA. His connections to ICF were strong, and with his Crane Count experience in the previous couple of years, WWA agreed to take over the Crane Count. An article in the December 1978 WWA newsletter stated, "To increase public awareness of wetland values, to provide firsthand experience in marshes, and to monitor the Sandhill Crane population, WWA is sponsoring a Crane Count in 1979. We are taking this project over from the International Crane Foundation, freeing them to spend time on other valuable research. We will be censusing Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Jefferson, Sauk and perhaps some other counties."

In reality, many wetland advocates had connections to multiple organizations. WWA assumed the lead responsibility, but members of the Sierra Club, Madison Audubon Society and other groups were regular participants. The Citizens Natural Resource Association pitched in with sponsorship assistance as well for the 1979 Count (WWA newsletter, March 1979).

In the spring of 1980, my family returned to Madison after an absence of two years, and I began volunteering at ICF. At the time, Scott Freeman was the Education Coordinator for ICF, and Mike Mossman was working for the DNR. Together, we designed data collection sheets, survey instructions and guidelines for county coordinators to

use in advertising and conducting the county meetings. Mike and Karen Etter Hale remember spending many hours poring over DNR maps, identifying and numbering wetland sites for participating counties.

In early 1981, I was hired to fill a lobbying position with the Wetlands Taskforce, whose mission was to pass wetlands protection legislation. The Taskforce, supported by environmental groups including Audubon, Sierra Club and WWA, developed and expanded a statewide network of wetland advocates—many of whom also became Crane Count participants or County Coordinators.

To help draw attention to this unique Crane Count, Frank Graham Jr., a field editor for National Audubon Society, was invited to participate in the spring of 1982. Scott Freeman, Susan Leopold, George and Kyoko Archibald, my husband, I and our older daughter, as well as Scott and Susan's black Labrador retriever spent the night with Frank at the Leopold shack, and counted Cranes the following morning. Frank Graham Jr.'s two-page article appeared in the July 1982 issue of *Audubon Magazine*.

Back then, observations from participants had to be reviewed and tabulated by hand. Rosie Meinholz, a long time WWA member recalls those times. "Karen (Etter Hale) and I laugh now about when we compiled the Crane Count results in the early 1980s on my kitchen table. We got to read comments like '6:14 am—27 Cranes walking single file'. . . must have been (geese) in Columbia County. Now I use that old table to fold laundry in the basement, and our counts are filed electronically."

Between 1980 and 1982, Crane Count expanded coverage from 8 to 43

of Wisconsin's 72 counties, in large part due to the intensive collaborative efforts of ICF and WWA. The number of participants grew from under 200 to over 1,600. ICF and WWA continued to collaborate on Crane Count into the mid-1980s, as the numbers of participants and cranes reported steadily grew. ICF's growing staff was able to take on the logistical tasks of organizing county coordinators and tabulating results. WWA continued to be a strong source of participants, and it is an annual rite of spring for many.

Rosie Meinholz recalls that in the early 1980s she went with Dorothy Haines to Dunlap Hollow Marsh, near Mazomanie for Crane Count, "This site is across the valley from the farm my grandparents moved to from the state of Oregon in 1926. We heard lots of snipe winnowing . . . but no cranes calling. Afterwards it was fun to gather at the Arboretum, eat Ken Wood's poppy seed bread, look at sightings posted on the Dane County map, and figure out who saw the same cranes flying overhead."

Since sometime in the 1990s Rosie has done the Jefferson County Crane Count from the west shore of Red Cedar Lake. "I always see cranes, and usually get to see a pretty sunrise. Often I camp overnight next to Libby Zimmerman's Octagon House. Libby wakes everybody up by doing crane calls! Doing Crane Count at Red Cedar Lakes means a breakfast of eggs, bacon, and often a rhubarb birthday cake for Libby because her birthday is in mid-April. And then there is more good food when our record sheets are given to County Coordinator Karen Etter Hale at the Rock River Canoe Company in Ft. Atkinson."

By 1985, nearly all of Wisconsin

counties were participating, with over 2,000 volunteers and over 6,000 cranes recorded. With the near-statewide scope and the established consistency of data collection, Crane Count served as a useful tool in assessing the abundance and distribution of cranes, and documenting the growing expansion of the population into previously unused wetlands.

In the mid-1990s the states of Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois and Iowa joined the Count, and the name was changed to the “Midwest Sandhill Crane Count”. Ten years later, coming full circle from George Archibald’s 1972 vision of reintroducing Whooping Cranes to Wisconsin, the Count was renamed again to the “Annual Midwest Crane Count”—reflecting the promising Whooping Crane reintroduction efforts. In 2012, the event took a big step into the electronic age, with data being entered by participants directly into *eBird*, a massive on-line data base.

Through the forty years of Crane Count’s history, a few things have remained unchanged. Every year, well be-

fore dawn, troops of high school classes, 4-H kids, life-long and first-time birders troop through the dark to their assigned wetlands. The collective steam from thousands of hot coffee cups rises into the misty morning air. A tentative robin calls; then the last of the nocturnal woodcock peents and winnowing snipe wings reach listening ears. Spring peepers test the air. Finally, a distant bugle of cranes, or the swish of near-silent coasting cranes passing overhead is heard. Pens and pencils come out of pockets, binoculars are lifted, and for two hours, several thousand hardy souls experience dawn on a wetland, much as it may have been experienced millennia ago.

*Karen Voss is a retired (2012) watershed management specialist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. She received her MS in Zoology at UW-Madison in 1976, and studied the development of behavior in Sandhill Cranes under the guidance of Dr. George Archibald at the International Crane Foundation.*



Black Tern by Davor Grgic

## 50 Years Ago—March 1, 2015, Nancy Nabak

Roadside surveys of farmland bird species revealed a mass invasion of Dickcissels into southern Wisconsin in the spring of 1964. The increase over 1963 was of the order of 50 fold in the south central counties and raised the status of the species from decidedly uncommon to the top or next to top position of abundance, well ahead of the ubiquitous Western Meadowlark. The birds were most numerous around alfalfa and clover fields but were encountered in all types of farmland. Interspecies associations at observation sites were closest with the Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird and Eastern Meadowlark and remotest with the Vesper Sparrow.

Grackles and mothballs. While visiting our son in Falls Church, Virginia, in June 1964, we experienced an incident, which may interest WSO members. People in Falls Church place mothballs in their gardens to discourage dogs. I don't know how effective they are with dogs, but grackles have found a use for them. While sitting on the porch, I saw three grackles, and the first one picked up a mothball and placed it on his wing where it joins his body. It rolled off and he began picking at the spot, then moved on and the second one moved up and stood beside the mothball and began picking at the same spot. He moved on and the third stepped up and picked up the mothball and placed it on the same spot and, as it rolled off, he picked at the wing. On several occasions afterwards we observed the grackles putting mothballs on their backs, rumps and holding them against their breasts. I expect this is modern "bird anting" with man's chemicals.—Mrs. E.R. Smale, Racine

*Excerpts from The Passenger Pigeon, Summer 1965, Volume 27, number 2*



Common Loon by David Franzen



# The Summer Season: 2014

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**T**he climate in summer 2014 was cool and wet then dry, similar to the conditions in summer 2013. The average temperature across all regions ranged from approximately 60°F to 70°F in June and from 63–67°F in July. These mostly align with the 1981-present (long-term) average for the state, with June being 0.4°F above average and July being 0.6°F below average. Statewide rainfall was high in June (6.75 inches) being nearly 40% above the long-term average. The west-central region received the most rain (8.75 inches) and the north-east received the least (4.20 inches) in June. Conversely, July rainfall was less than half of June (2.50 inches) and was over 60% below the long-term average. Deviations across regions varied less in July, with the highest being 3.10 inches (north-central) and the lowest being 1.80 inches (northeast). Weather data were gleaned from the Wisconsin State Climatology Office.

In total, 281 species and two hybrids were observed this summer in all 72 counties (compare to 271 species and one hybrid in 2013 and 272 species and one hybrid in 2012). Several items regarding the summer report are different, which include the following: All species observed—common, rare, and

established exotic—are listed. The total number of reporting counties for a species is always stated and general distribution across the state are noted for most species. Only unique reports are counted; for example, if two or more birders were birding together and submitted separate reports, they would all be listed as only one unique report. A percentage comparison to the average number of reporting counties to [www.eBird.org](http://www.eBird.org) (eBird) over the past five years (including 2014) is noted at the end of each regular species. Although longer term data would be more ideal, eBird wasn't launched until 2002. It took several years for it to become popular, meaning that there are significant gaps in data within the past decade. Data from the past five years are more accurate. Plus and negative signs denote the percentage above or below average, whereas "0%" means that there is no difference between this summer's reporting counties and the five-year average. Thank you to Sunil Gopalan for collecting and compiling these eBird data.

The most notable change is that breeding records are highlighted in this report. As stated on eBird, probable breeding indicates that the observer saw one or more of the following:

Brood patch or other physiological evidence, territory held for 7+ days (usually by a singing male), courtship, copulation, visiting probable nest site, agitated behavior, or a pair in suitable habitat. Breeding confirmed indicates that a birder witnessed one or more of the following: Nest with young or eggs, occupied nest, recently fledged young, adult feeding young, adult carrying food or a fecal sac, or a distraction display.

All 72 counties together reported a total of 178 species and two hybrids nesting (breeding confirmed), with an additional 21 species only noted as nesters. Keep in mind that these classifications are exclusive of each other; for example, if a species was recorded as having both probable breeding and breeding confirmed, it is reported here as only breeding confirmed, as only the highest breeding classification is recorded for each species. It should be noted that eBird *breeding* reports were extracted from May and August 2014 in addition to the normal summer months. Skepticism was used for breeding reports that provided insufficient details for species whose courtship displays include carrying food (i.e. raptors and terns), species whose family groups are known to wander after breeding, or for those that are out-of-range (namely late migratory duck species that are not known to nest in the state). The Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas (1995–2000) was consulted to determine documented breeding ranges.

In an effort to be as all-inclusive as possible, other resources were utilized for this report, such as personal contacts, government agencies, Facebook pages, and the Wisconsin Birding Network list-serve. A thank you is extended to all eBird users, documentation

providers, and other resources for their contributions for the 2014 summer report. If you know of people who have significant bird observation data but do not enter them on eBird, please relay these data to a seasonal report compiler or enter them on behalf of the original observer on eBird. Also, please encourage the observer to start entering data on her/his own.

### RARITIES

Many rare birds were seen this summer. Among those in the rare category include Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Yellow-crowned Night Heron (two locations), White-faced Ibis (two locations) and a Plegadis ibis, continuing Black Vulture, Swainson's Hawk, King Rail (two locations), returning Black-necked Stilt, Parasitic Jaeger, Little and Laughing Gulls at a number of locations, White-winged Dove, returning Chuck-will's-widow, continuing Crested Caracara, Western Kingbird (two locations), Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Lark Bunting, Blue Grosbeak (two locations), and Painted Bunting.

Unusual bird sightings include Tundra Swan, multiple Bufflehead, Red-throated Loon, Horned, Eared, and Western Grebes, Spruce Grouse, Snowy Egret, lingering Rough-legged Hawk, Piping Plover, Whimbrel, Red Knot, Red-necked Phalarope, Franklin's, Thayer's, Lesser Black-backed, Glaucous, and Great Black-backed Gulls plus a Herring Gull × Lesser Black-backed Gull hybrid, lingering Snowy Owl, White-eyed Vireo, Northern Mockingbird, Kirtland's, Yellow-throated, and Prairie Warblers, Yellow-breasted Chat, lingering White-crowned Sparrow, Summer Tanager, and White-winged Crossbill.



### OMISSIONS

Several corrections have been noted for the 2013 Summer Season Report:

Another Whimbrel was photographed by Sinkula on 13 July at the Cat Island Causeway (Brown County). This represents the earliest fall arrival date. The previous record was 16 July in Oconto and Racine Counties in 2006 and 2013, respectively (the Smiths and Keyel, respectively).

An adult breeding-plumaged Red Knot was also observed at the Cat Island

Causeway (Brown County) from 13–18 July by Prestby and Sinkula.

Last year was a productive year for Loggerhead Shrikes in the state. In addition to the birds already listed in the 2013 report, here are two additional reports: The Dane County bird mentioned in last year's report actually turned out to be a Breeding confirmed pair and was seen from 10–17 June (Schneider et al.). Another bird was found in Lafayette County on 13 June (Michael Guttery).

For Blue-winged Warbler, it should

read that Burnett *and* Marathon were the northern-most reporting counties.

### CODES

\*=rare species that requires documentation OR new county breeding record (according to the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas)

BBS=Breeding Bird Survey

et al.= “and others” (i.e. Last Name et al. means found by Last Name and observed by others)

fide=second hand report to observer

mob=multiple (three or more) observers

NPS=National Park Service

NWR=National Wildlife Refuge

pers. comm.=personal communication

SNA=Scientific Natural Area

SWA=State Wildlife Area

USFWS=U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

WA=Wildlife Area

WBBA=Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas (1995–2000)

WDNR=Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

### REPORTS

(1 June–31 July 2014)

**Black-bellied Whistling Duck\***—An adult visited a small private pond with domesticated ducks in Ozaukee County from 4 July through August (see Fall Season: 2014). Originally found by Gantner; identified and observed by mob. This marks Wisconsin’s 11<sup>th</sup> record and third July record.

**Canada Goose**—Reported from 69 counties. Breeding confirmed in 45 counties. [+1.5%]

**Mute Swan**—This exotic species was observed in these 10 counties (compare to 12 counties in 2013): Ashland, Brown, Dane, Door, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Rock, Waukesha, Waupaca,

and Wood. Kingery counted 13 birds at Hidden Lakes (Waukesha County) on 3 July. Breeding confirmed in Ashland, Door, and Waukesha Counties. [−7.4%]

**Trumpeter Swan**—Reported from 27 counties statewide, similar to 28 counties in 2013. Twenty-two birds were counted at Necedah NWR (Juneau County) on 4 June by Stotz. Breeding confirmed in 13 counties, with probable breeding occurring in two additional counties. [+23.9%]

**Tundra Swan**—An apparent pair was observed at Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary (Brown County) on 4 July and 19 July by Buck and D. Meyer, respectively.

**Wood Duck**—Reported in 66 counties (compare to 68 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in 29 counties and probable in one county. [+3.1%]

**Gadwall**—Reports came from 17 counties scattered across the state (compare to 13 counties last summer), with about half of the counties hosting over-summering birds. This is the highest number of reporting counties in the past decade. Brown County contained the most individuals, where up to 25 birds spent the summer at Cat Island Causeway (mob). Breeding confirmed in Brown, Dodge, Marquette\* (Christensen), and Waushara\* (Christensen) Counties, plus probable in Eau Claire County\* (C. Schultz). [+66.7%]

**American Wigeon**—The following nine counties contained birds this summer: Brown (mob; over-summered), Dane (Thiessen), Dodge (mob; over-summered), Fond du Lac (mob; over-summered), Juneau (Chartier), Manitowoc (Sonntag), Marathon (Belter), Outagamie (Swelstad and Sonneland), and Waukesha (Szymczak and Schaefer), which is up from last summer’s four reporting counties. Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) contained up to 12 individuals (mob). Breeding confirmed at Horicon Marsh NWR in Dodge County (Hannah). [+87.5%]

**American Black Duck**—Reported from 11 northern and central counties and two southern counties (Dodge and Sheboygan), up slightly from last summer’s 11 counties. Breeding confirmed in Sawyer and Wood\* (Christensen) Counties. [+14.8%]

**Mallard**—Reported from 69 counties. Breeding confirmed in 29 counties and probable in one county. [+3.3%]

**American Black Duck x Mallard**—There were two reports of this hybrid this summer: One was observed at Short Bridge (Bayfield County) on 8 July by Brady, and a female with four ducklings were seen at Beaver Dam (Dodge County) on 23 July by Ward.

**Blue-winged Teal**—Reported from 36 counties scattered across the state, down from last summer's 45 counties. Breeding confirmed in six counties plus probable in two counties. [−1.7%]

**Northern Shoveler**—Reported from 16 central and southern counties (compare to last summer's 21 counties). Of the reporting counties, only Brown, Dodge, Fond du Lac, and Portage Counties contained over-summering birds. Breeding confirmed in Portage County\* (Pendergast) and probable in Dodge and Waukesha Counties. [+14.3%]

**Northern Pintail**—Reported from the following five counties: Brown (Swelstad and Prestby), Dodge (mob), Door (Stettner), Fond du Lac (Mitch and Michael Foret), and Waukesha (mob). Last summer also had five counties reporting birds. No counties hosted definitive over-summering birds. Probable breeding noted in late May in Marathon County\* (Belter). [+31.6%]

**Green-winged Teal**—Reported from 15 counties from all regions except the northeast and southwest, significantly down from 26 counties in 2013. The high count was of 350 birds in Winnebago County on 16 June (Ziebell). Breeding probable in Portage County. [−1.3%]

**Canvasback**—The following five counties reported birds this summer: Brown (two locations, mob), Dodge (mob), Fond du Lac (mob), Manitowoc (Sontag and J. Trick), and Wood (Christensen), down from last summer's eight counties. Horicon Marsh NWR (Dodge and Fond du Lac) and Wood County were the only sites that held over-summering birds. Interestingly, Christensen encountered three broods of ducklings in Wood County\*. No birds were documented during the previous WBBA. [+4.2%]

**Redhead**—Reported from 17 counties statewide except for the southwest region, the same number of counties as reported in 2013. Of the reporting counties, seven held over-summering birds. The high count came from Fond du Lac County, where 80 were counted at Horicon Marsh NWR on 11 July (Bontly and Wanger). Breeding confirmed in Dodge, Fond du Lac, and Outagamie\* (Swelstad) Counties, plus probable in Green Lake County. [+41.7%]

**Ring-necked Duck**—Reports came from 22 counties in all regions except the southwest this summer (compare to 19 counties last summer). This is the highest number of reporting counties in the past decade. Half of the counties contained over-summering birds. Fifteen birds were counted at Crex Meadows SWA (Burnett County) on 20 June by Paulios. Breeding confirmed in Douglas, Green Lake, Jefferson\* (K. Hale), Monroe, Portage, Price, Shawano, and Wood Counties. [+32.5%]

**Greater Scaup**—Reported in the following five counties: Bayfield (mob), Brown (mob; over-summered), Door (Noeldner), Kewaunee (Sinkula), and Manitowoc (mob; over-summered), which is fewer than nine counties in 2013. The high count came from the Manitowoc Lakefront (Manitowoc County), where Sontag observed 18 birds on 1 June. [0%]

**Lesser Scaup**—Reports came from 14 counties from north-central, south-central, and eastern regions (compare to 17 counties in 2013). Brown, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, and Winnebago Counties contained over-summering birds. Up to 24 individuals were seen at Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) throughout the summer by mob. [+48.9%]

**Bufflehead**—All reports: One female was observed along Resort Road (Brown County) on 10 July by Swelstad, a young male was seen on 21 June by Tessen and possibly the same bird was observed off of Jersey Road and Highway A (both in Dodge County) on 3 July by Wegner and E. Howe. An individual was observed at the Manitowoc Lakefront (Manitowoc County) on 17 July by Sontag, and one female was seen at Big Muskellunge Lake (Vilas County) on 23 July by Schilke. The female in the last sighting appeared distressed and/or agitated, but no other breeding evidence was ever observed. Probable breeding was noted at Horicon Marsh NWR (Dodge County) in May by Prim. [+53.8%]

**Common Goldeneye**—The following 11 counties held birds this summer: Bayfield, Brown, Door, Grant (Geisthardt), Jefferson (Stutz), Kewaunee, Marathon (Belter and Hurlburt), Oneida, Ozaukee, Price, and Sawyer (compare to nine counties last summer). Breeding confirmed in Door and Oneida\* (Haese-Lehman) Counties. [+57.4%]

**Hooded Merganser**—Reported from 42 counties statewide (compare to 45 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in eight counties plus probable in one county. [+13.5%]

**Common Merganser**—Reported from 17 central and northern counties (compare to 16 counties in 2013). An ill male was seen in the Yahara River (Dane County) 20–21 June by C. Williams. The high count this season came from Trout Lake in Vilas County, where 36 birds were counted on 29 July (Stone). Breeding confirmed in three counties plus probable in one county. [+21.6%]

**Red-breasted Merganser**—Reports came from these seven counties: Door (over-summered), Douglas, Manitowoc, Milwaukee (over-summered), Oconto, Ozaukee, and Vilas. This is down significantly from last summer's 16 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in Door County. [-16.7%]

**Ruddy Duck**—Reported from 12 counties all in the southeast quarter of the state except for Dunn County (compare to 16 reporting counties in 2013). Five counties hosted over-summering birds. Ziebell counted 213 birds in Winnebago County on 16 June. Breeding confirmed in Columbia, Dodge, Fond du Lac\* (Dunnington), and Outagamie\* (Swelstad) Counties, plus probable in Green Lake County. [+5.3%]

**Northern Bobwhite**—These eight counties reported birds (same number of counties as last summer): Calumet (Fissel), Dane (Boland), Dodge (Tessen), Iowa (Kivikoski and K. Kavanagh), Portage (R. Mueller), Rock (Boone and Fitzgerald), Sheboygan (R. Mueller and Tessen), and Waukesha (three locations; mob). The Wiedenfields heard and observed 13 birds in Waukesha County on 6 July. All of these are likely escaped and/or released birds (Domagalski pers. comm.). [+2.6%]

**Gray Partridge**—The only report was of two birds seen along the Amtrak in Columbia County on 3 July (Guth). [0%]

**Ring-necked Pheasant**—Reported from 40 counties statewide (compare to 33 counties in 2013). This is the highest number of reporting counties in the past decade. Breeding confirmed in 19 counties. [+28.2%]

**Ruffed Grouse**—Reports came from 38 counties across the central and northern regions, plus Grant County. This is up from last summer's 33 reporting counties and is the highest number of reporting counties in the past decade. Breeding confirmed in 29 counties plus probable in one county. [+25.8%]

**Spruce Grouse**—One bird was seen at the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage (Iron County) on 23 July by Dallapiazza. [-61.5%]

**Sharp-tailed Grouse**—The only report came from Bayfield County, where Anich observed an individual on 4 July. This is down from last summer's three reporting counties. [-50.0%]

**Greater Prairie-Chicken**—Birds were reported from Leola Marsh SWA (Adams County), Buena Vista WA (Portage County), and Paul Olson WA (Wood County) this summer. Breeding confirmed in Portage County. [-7.1%]

**Wild Turkey**—Reported from 69 counties, the highest number of reporting counties in the past decade. Breeding confirmed in all counties except La Crosse, Menominee, Trempealeau, and Waukesha. [+8.2%]

**Red-throated Loon**—All reports: Seven birds were observed near Port Wing (Bayfield County) 9–10 July by Geraghty and three individuals lingered at Wisconsin Point (Douglas County) through 2 June (Anich and R. Johnson). The Bayfield County report is one of six July reports ever recorded in Wisconsin.

**Common Loon**—Thirty central and northern counties held birds this summer, in addition to these three southern counties: Jefferson (up to three over-summered between at least four locations; mob), Ozaukee (5 June by Frank), and Walworth (4–5 July by Watts). This is down slightly from last summer's 37 counties. The high count of 16 birds was seen on Trout Lake (Vilas County) on 26 July by Schilke. Breeding confirmed in 14 counties. [+1.9%]

**Pied-billed Grebe**—Reported from 36 counties from all regions except the southwest (compare to 42 counties in 2013). Fifty birds were seen at Schoeneberg Marsh (Columbia County) on 16 July by Swanson. Breeding confirmed in 13 counties. [0%]

**Horned Grebe**—M. Evanson observed four birds at the Manitowoc Impoundment (Manitowoc County) on 13 June.

**Red-necked Grebe**—All reporting counties: Burnett, Columbia, Juneau (one bird at Necedah NWR on 26 June by Leonardo), St. Croix (a pair seen off one of County Road E's lakes on 8 June by Persico), Vilas (one at Powell Marsh on 7 June by SJ K), and Winnebago (one on 16 June by Ziebell). This is up considerably from last summer's two reporting counties. Breeding con-

firmed in Burnett and Columbia Counties, plus probable in St. Croix County. [+57.9%]

**Eared Grebe**—Ziebell found a bird in Winnebago County on 16 June.

**Western Grebe**—A bird was seen at the Manitowoc Lakefront (Manitowoc County) from 8–17 June by M. Gray et al.

**Double-crested Cormorant**—Reported from 44 counties in all regions (compare to 42 counties in 2013). Swelstad estimated 1,200 birds on the Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) on 6 July. Breeding confirmed in five counties. [+11.7%]

**American White Pelican**—Reports came from 38 counties statewide again this year. Thirteen of these counties contained over-summering birds. The high count was 2,700 as estimated by Prestby on the Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) on 14 July. Breeding confirmed in Brown County. [+21.0%]

**American Bittern**—Reported from 31 counties across the state except the southwest (compare to 29 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Columbia\* (Christensen), Green Lake\* (Christensen), Marinette, Marquette, and Wood Counties, with breeding probable in Dodge and Portage Counties. [+14.8%]

**Least Bittern**—Twenty-two counties in all regions held birds this summer (compare to 16 counties last summer). With the exception of Dodge and Outagamie Counties, no county contained more than four reports. Breeding confirmed in Columbia, Dodge, Green Lake, Marquette, and Ozaukee Counties, plus probable in Portage County\* (Pendergast). [+29.4%]

**Great Blue Heron**—Reported from 68 counties. Paradise Valley SWA (Waukesha County) hosted 130 birds on 20 July, as estimated by Moretti. Breeding confirmed in eleven counties. [+1.5%]

**Great Egret**—Reported from 33 central and southern counties (compare to 33 counties in 2013), with the exception of Ashland County, where an individual was observed on 22 July (Anich and Brady). Paradise Valley SWA (Waukesha County) again hosted this year's high count, where 280 were estimated on 20 July by Moretti. Another 200 birds were observed at an unknown location and date in Dodge County (Tessen). Breeding confirmed in Brown, Green Lake\* (Christensen), and St. Croix\* (B. Collins) Counties, plus probable in Waukesha County. [+9.3%]

**Snowy Egret**—All reports are of single birds: Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary (Brown County) on 14 July by McDonald, north of Prairie du Chien (Crawford County) on 21 July by Geraghty, Horicon Marsh NWR (Dodge County) on 21 June by T. Wood, and Cana Island (Door County) on 18 June by Beachy. This is up from last year's two reporting counties and is the highest number of reporting counties in the past decade. [+45.5%]

**Cattle Egret**—All reports: One at the Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) on 8 June by Prestby, 10 along Charlesburg Road on 3 July by Domagalski and 17 at Lake Shore Drive on 29 July by Yoerger (both in Calumet County), up to three observed between two locations in Dodge County from 26 June–24 July (Benson et al.), up to 16 reported from multiple locations in Fond du Lac County from 1 June–4 July (M. Kemp et al.), four birds at Black Wolf on 11 June (Ward), one north of Lone Elm near Highway 45 on 13 June (M. Evanson), and at least one bird was seen from 1 June–31 July at an unknown location by Ziebell (all three in Winnebago County). This is up from last summer's three reporting counties. [+66.7%]

**Green Heron**—Reported from 66 counties (same number of counties as 2012 and 2013). Breeding confirmed in eight counties plus probable in two counties. [+8.6%]

**Black-crowned Night Heron**—Eighteen counties from the southeastern quarter of the state reported birds (compare to 20 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Brown County and probable in Green Lake\* and Marquette\* Counties (both Christensen). [+12.5%]

**Yellow-crowned Night Heron\***—A juvenile was found by Belter along South Eau Claire Road (Marathon County) on 29 July and was seen by mob through 31 July (see Fall Season 2014 Report for last date seen). An adult was found by Hernandez on 26 June in Milwaukee County and was seen by mob from multiple locations in Milwaukee through 27 July (Lubahn).

**White-faced Ibis**—Two reporting counties: One was photographed at Nine Springs Natural Area (Dane County) on 7 June by Yunke and four birds were observed 14 June–30 July at the Mascoutin Valley State Trail (Winnebago County) by Fissel and Heikkinen et al. Breeding probable in Winnebago County\* (Roti Roti). Note: Although a juvenile was observed begging for food, which would normally count as Breeding confirmed, this record was not counted as such because this is a species that is known to wander after fledging the nest. While it is likely that the bird nested



in the state this summer, no nesting location was ever reported. No birds were documented in the previous WBBA.

***Plegadis sp.***—A bird in non-breeding plumage was found in Fort Atkinson along Highway 26's flooded fields (Jefferson County) on 4 June by Watson.

***Black Vulture*\***—The individual originally found on 25 May on Washington Island (Door County) by E. Howe and Wegner was photographed again by Walsh at the same location on 23 July. This marks the 10<sup>th</sup> state record and second summer record. The other summer record came from Milwaukee County and was dated 2 July, 1951 (John Diedrich and William Schultz).

***Turkey Vulture***—Reported from 68 counties. Breeding confirmed in La Crosse County\* (Puent) and probable in Rock County. [+1.5%]

***Osprey***—Reported from 50 counties (compare to 56 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in 26 counties plus probable in two counties. [+4.6%]

***Bald Eagle***—Reported from 68 counties (compare to 63 counties last summer). Breeding confirmed in 30 counties. [+12.6%]

***Northern Harrier***—Reports came from 49 counties (compare to 51 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Columbia, Portage, Rock\* (Cullum), and Wood Counties, with probable breeding in Dodge and Marathon Counties. [+13.4%]

***Sharp-shinned Hawk***—Reported from 16 central and northern counties (compare to 18 counties total last summer), in addition to a pair that nested in Waukesha County (Szymczak). Breeding confirmed in Bayfield County as well. [+7.6%]

***Cooper's Hawk***—Reported from 44 counties statewide (compare to 42 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in 12 counties and probable in one county. [+3.8%]

***Northern Goshawk***—All summer reports: One on 13 July in Ashland (Griffin), two birds on 9 June and one bird on 9 June and 16 July in Florence (Peczynski and K. Kavanagh, respectively), one on 14 June in Forest (K. Kavanagh), three birds on 30 July in Langlade (Richmond), and one on 5 June and another on 26 June in Vilas (Martineau and M. Anderson, respectively) Counties. This is down slightly from last year's six

reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in Florence (Peczynski), Langlade\* (Richmond), Lincoln (May report by Hardman), and Oconto (August report by Mooren) Counties. [+25.0%]

***Red-shouldered Hawk***—Reported from 21 central and southern counties, plus northern reports from Florence (B. and K. Kavanagh), Polk (Maercklein), and Sawyer (the Chrousers) Counties; compare to 25 reporting counties in 2013. Breeding confirmed in Marquette, Portage, Walworth, and Wood Counties. [+3.2%]

***Broad-winged Hawk***—Reported from 31 central and northern counties and nine southern counties (compare to 43 counties in 2013). Walsh observed a kettle of 100 birds at Rock Island SP (Door County) on 26 June. Breeding confirmed in Clark, Florence, and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties, and probable from an additional four counties. [+9.9%]

***Swainson's Hawk*\***—R. Johnson photographed an individual flying over the barrens south of Stone's Bridge (Douglas County) on 3 June.

***Red-tailed Hawk***—Reported from 67 counties. Breeding confirmed in nine counties plus probable in two counties. [+7.0%]

***Rough-legged Hawk***—Two birds lingered at Buena Vista WA (Portage County) from 5–14 June by J. and P. Trick, et al.

***Yellow Rail***—None reported this year nor were any reported last summer.

***King Rail*\***—A pair of birds originally found by Tushoski on 30 May continued at Bellville Community Park (Dane County\*) through June 13 (K. Kavanagh). A pair with a young chick was documented at the more expected Horicon Marsh NWR site (Dodge County\*) on 22 July by Schiffman. See "*By the Wayside*" for documentation on the Horicon Marsh NWR birds.

***Virginia Rail***—Reports came from 31 counties from all regions except the southwest (compare to 28 counties last summer). Breeding confirmed in six counties. [+15.7%]

***Sora***—Reported from 37 counties from all regions (compare to 42 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Columbia, Marquette\* (Christensen), and Portage\* (Pendergast) Counties, plus probable in Green Lake. [+26.7%]

***Common Gallinule***—All reporting counties: One bird at Schoeneberg Marsh (Columbia

County) on 22 July by E. Howe, birds seen throughout the season at Horicon Marsh NWR (Dodge and Fond du Lac Counties) by mob, two birds reported at Lake Mills SWA (Jefferson County) from 7–20 June by Kinzer, et al., at least one individual was reported along Van Patten Road from 9 June–2 July (Outagamie County) by Swelstad and Sonneland, et al., a calling bird at Sheepskin Marsh WPA (Rock County) on 10 June by Cullum, at least six birds observed between two locations in Waukesha County from 6 June–7 July (Gustafson, Poetzl, and Cassini), and birds were seen 1 June–31 July in Winnebago County (Ziebell). This is down from last summer's 11 reporting counties. Twenty birds were observed on 16 June in Winnebago County (Ziebell). Breeding confirmed in Dodge and Fond du Lac Counties. [–4.8%]

**American Coot**—Reported from 22 counties in all regions except north-central, northeast, and southwest this summer (compare to 27 counties in 2013). Ziebell estimated 440 birds in Winnebago County on 16 June. Breeding confirmed in seven counties and probable in one county. [+2.8%]

**Sandhill Crane**—Reported from 67 counties. Breeding confirmed in 34 counties plus probable in three counties. [+0.3%]

**Whooping Crane**—Birders submitted reports from Adams (mob), Dodge (mob), Fond du Lac (mob), Green Lake (T. Schultz), Juneau (mob), Marathon (Hoeft and SJ K), Marquette (Christensen), Monroe (Stratton), and Portage (Leow) Counties - the same number of reporting counties as last year. The single high count came from Juneau County, where Chartier counted 14 birds on 12 June. The Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership estimates that 93 birds spent the summer in Wisconsin. The organization also reports that 13 wild chicks hatched, but only one survived to adulthood. Unusual was a hybrid Whooping Crane x Sandhill Crane pair that attempted to nest in Dodge County. Additional Breeding confirmed came from Adams, Juneau, Marathon, Marquette, Monroe, and Wood Counties. [+28.6%]

**Black-bellied Plover**—All reports for the summer were of single birds: Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) on 4 June by Beilke and Prestby, Point Road (Dodge County) on 7 June by T. Wood, Manitowoc Lakefront (Manitowoc County) on 17 July by Sontag, Seagull Bar SNA (Marinette County) on 31 July by J. Campbell, and Samuel Myers Park (Racine County) on 13 July by Goldberg. This is half of last year's reporting counties. [–10.7%]

**Semipalmated Plover**—North-bound migrant reports came from seven counties (compare to 18 counties last summer), with the last individuals being seen on 13 June in Fond du Lac (M. Evanson) and 10 June in Kenosha (Fitzgerald) Counties. Reports of south-bound migrants came from 13 counties, with the earliest birds being seen on 6 July in Brown (Wanger) and on 9 July in Dodge (Sonneland and Swelstad) Counties. Fifteen birds were seen at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center (Bayfield County) on 1 June by Anich. [+15.4%]

**Piping Plover**—Apart from monitoring efforts, all reports are as follows: Seven birds detected on Long Island (Ashland County) on 7 July by Geraghty, one bird at Seagull Bar SNA (Marinette County) on 31 July by J. Campbell, and two birds were photographed at Sheboygan Beach (Sheboygan County) on 30 July by H. and R. Morris. J. Trick reports that monitoring efforts led by USFWS, NPS, WDNR, and the Bad River Tribe detected four nesting pairs that successfully fledged 11 offspring on Long Island (Ashland County).

**Killdeer**—Reported from 66 counties. Breeding confirmed in 28 counties with probable breeding in two counties. [+3.1%]

**Black-necked Stilt**—Only the traditional location of Horicon Marsh NWR (Dodge County) held birds this summer, where at least five individuals were reported from 17 June–22 July by mob. No breeding was ever confirmed. [–44.4%]

**American Avocet**—All the reports this summer were of single south-bound birds: Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) on 12 July by Prestby, Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park (Dane County) on 23 July by Swisher and Gomez-Ibanez, and near Beaver Dam (Dodge County) on 20 July by T. Schultz. This is down from last year's seven counties, which was the highest number of reporting counties in the past decade. [–20.0%]

**Spotted Sandpiper**—Reported from 50 counties statewide. On several late July dates, Prestby counted 25 birds on the Cat Island Causeway (Brown County). Breeding confirmed in Racine County plus probable in Grant, Milwaukee, and Ozaukee Counties. [+15.2%]

**Solitary Sandpiper**—All 33 reporting counties were of south-bound migrants (compare to 36 counties in 2013). The first reports came from Wood (7 July by DeRubeis) and Manitowoc (8 July by Sontag) Counties. Twenty-two birds were

counted in a flooded field along Highway 26 (Dodge County) on 10 July by Daley. [+20.4%]

**Greater Yellowlegs**—Spring migrants were recorded in two counties, with the last individual being seen in Chippewa County on 4 June (Geraghty). Fall migrants were recorded in 19 counties (compare to 16 counties last summer). The first reports came from Milwaukee (30 June by Christopher Schroeder) and Rock (1 July by Boone) Counties. [+15.9%]

**Willet**—All reports were of single birds: Maslowski Beach (Ashland County) on 3 June by Brady, Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) on 14 June by Sonneland and Swelstad, Schumacher Road (Dane County) on 22 July by Schiffman, and Samuel Myers Park (Racine County) on 12 July by E. Howe. [+53.8%]

**Lesser Yellowlegs**—Spring migrants were reported from four counties, with the last bird being seen on 7 June in Dodge County (T. Wood). Fall migrants were reported from 22 counties, much fewer than last summer's 31 reporting counties. The first fall migrants were noted on 24 June in Marathon (DeRubeis) and 27 June in Kewaunee (Goodman) Counties. Tessen recorded 150 birds on 14 July and 140 birds on 19 July (both in Dodge County). [-3.5%]

**Upland Sandpiper**—Reports came from 15 counties statewide except for the west-central region (compare to 18 counties in 2013). With the exception of Dane, Douglas, Iowa, and Portage Counties, no county contained more than four reports. Breeding confirmed in Ashland, Dane, Portage, and Winnebago Counties, plus probable in Clark, Iowa, and Rock\* (Cullum) Counties. [-2.6%]

**Whimbrel**—All reports were of single north-bound birds: Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) from 2–4 June by Prestby and Beilke, unknown location on 2 June by Tessen and Neshotah Park on 16 June by J. and P. Trick (both in Manitowoc County). [0%]

**Ruddy Turnstone**—Spring migrant reports came from Brown, Douglas, Manitowoc, and Sheboygan (14 June by the Raddatzes) Counties. The only fall migrant reports came from Cat Island Causeway (Brown County), where up to four birds were seen between 25–30 July by Prestby. This is down from seven reporting counties in 2013. [-13.0%]

**Red Knot**—An adult in worn breeding plumage was at North Beach (Racine County) on

31 July. It was found by Fare and also observed by Pugh.

**Sanderling**—Spring migrant reports came from the following counties: Brown, Kewaunee, Manitowoc (17 June by Tessen), and Sheboygan. Fall migrant reports came from Brown (14 July by Prestby) and Racine Counties. This is down from last year's eight reporting counties. [+4.2%]

**Semipalmated Sandpiper**—Late spring migrant reports came from eight counties (compare to 20 counties in 2013), with 11 June in Marathon County (Hurlburt) and 15 June in Sheboygan County (Nechvatal) being late dates. Fall migrant reports came from 14 counties, with 28 June in Dodge County (Tessen) being among the earliest. Birds were seen in Brown County from 2 June–28 July (mob), making determining migratory status difficult. [-3.2%]

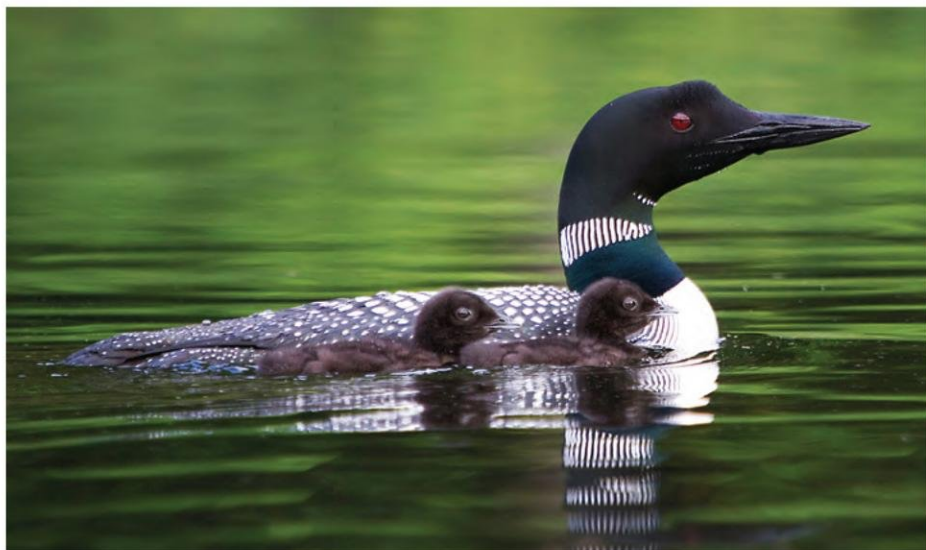
**Least Sandpiper**—North-bound migrant reports came from three counties, with the last report coming from Dodge County on 7 June (Szal). Twenty-seven counties reported south-bound migrants, with 28 June in Dodge County (Tessen) being the earliest, followed by 2 July in three counties. [+20.7%]

**White-rumped Sandpiper**—All six reporting counties were of spring migrants: Brown, Burnett, Dane, Douglas, Sheboygan (15 June by Stettner), and Waukesha Counties. This is down from last summer's 10 reporting counties. [-36.2%]

**Baird's Sandpiper**—Spring migrants were reported from Brown and Waukesha Counties, with the former having a single bird on 14 June (Sonneland and Swelstad). Fall migrants were reported from these nine counties: Brown, Chippewa, Crawford, Dane (11 July by Thiessen), Dodge, Jefferson, Racine, Sauk, and Winnebago. [+16.3%]

**Pectoral Sandpiper**—The only spring migrant report was from Dane County on 4 June (Schwarz). Fall migrant reports came from 20 counties (compare to 22 counties last summer), with the first reports coming from Adams (2 July by DeRubeis) and St. Croix (5 July by P. Campbell) Counties. [+16.3%]

**Dunlin**—Spring migrant reports came from the following six counties: Brown, Dane, Manitowoc, Ozaukee, Racine, and Waukesha. Up to 27 birds were reported on the following dates by mob at Cat Island Causeway (Brown County): 8, 13, 14, 22, and 24 June and 7 July. These are all likely spring migrants. The only fall migrant report came from Fond du Lac County on 17 July



Common Loon and Chicks by David Franzen



Red-headed Woodpecker by Dennis Connell

(the Sehloffs). This is less than half of last summer's 15 reporting counties. [-28.6%]

**Stilt Sandpiper**—All reports were of fall migrants and came from these seven counties (compare to eight counties last summer): Brown (6 July by Wanger), Dane, Dodge (4 July by E. Howe and Wegner), Douglas, Jefferson, Marathon, and Sauk. [+20.7%]

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper**—None reported this season.

**Short-billed Dowitcher**—All reports were of fall migrants: Brown, Chippewa, Dane, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Jefferson, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, and Winnebago Counties. The first migrants were seen on 2 July (Fissel) and 3 July (Wegner and E. Howe), both in Dodge County. Also seen in Dodge County were 100 birds on 12 July (Tessen). This is a drop from last summer's 13 reporting counties. [+2.3%]

**Long-billed Dowitcher**—The only report was of a lone bird on 12 July in Dodge County (Tessen). This is the same number of reporting counties as last year. [-42.9%]

**Wilson's Snipe**—Reported from 30 counties statewide (compare to 34 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Wood County plus probable from eight counties. [+6.4%]

**American Woodcock**—Reported from 24 counties statewide except the southwest (compare to 28 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in five counties plus probable in three counties. [-11.8%]

**Wilson's Phalarope**—Birds sighted in Dodge County throughout July (mob) and Portage County on 9 June (La Puma and M. Gray) were likely nesting birds. Another bird in Springfield Corners (Dane County) on 28 June by Schwarz may have also been a breeding bird. The remaining counties were fall migrants: Brown, Chippewa, Dane, Douglas, Fond du Lac, Marathon, and Washington, with 9 July in Douglas County (Svingen) being one of the earlier dates. This is similar to last summer's eight counties. Breeding confirmed in Dodge County. [+25.0%]

**Red-necked Phalarope**—Two reporting counties: County DM Road ponds (Dane County) on 16 July by Schwarz and two birds between Breezy Point Road and Jersey Road (Dodge County) from 17–22 July by mob.

**Parasitic Jaeger\***—A light adult was photographed at Wisconsin Point (Douglas County) on 12 June by Stensaas, representing the fourth summer record for the state.

**Bonaparte's Gull**—Reported from 12 counties (compare to 11 counties in 2013), with only Dodge, Outagamie, and Sauk Counties being away from the Great Lakes. Of these reporting counties, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Sheboygan Counties hosted over-summering birds. High counts came from Manitowoc (800 birds—almost entirely juveniles—on 11 July at the Manitowoc Impoundment by Swelstad) and Sheboygan (500 individuals at North Point Park on 14 June by Petherick) Counties. [+22.5%]

**Little Gull\***—Three reporting counties: One was observed at Kewaunee Harbor (Kewaunee County) on 15 June by Sinkula, several were seen at Manitowoc Lakefront (Manitowoc County) from 1 June–31 July, with the high count being an astonishing 11 first-summer birds on 13 June (Ayyash), and five birds—two of which were immature and one an adult—were at North Point Park (Sheboygan County) from 6–28 June by T. Wood and Schwarz et al. This is up both in distribution and numbers from last year (two birds in two counties). [+87.5%]

**Laughing Gull**—All reports: A second-cycle bird was at Neshotah Park (Manitowoc County) on 14 June by Ayyash, an adult was in Grant Park (Milwaukee County) on 16 June and 4 July by Lubahn et al., an adult was also seen at Port Washington (Ozaukee County) 8–9 June by T. Wood et al., and two adults were observed at North Point Park (Sheboygan County) from 12 June–11 July by Tessen et al. This is up from last year's two reporting counties. [+33.3%]

**Franklin's Gull**—All reports were of single birds: Long Island (Ashland County) on 9 July by Geraghty, Point Comfort (Brown County) on 4 June by Prestby, Manitowoc Lakefront (Manitowoc County) on 17 July by Sontag, and Sheboygan Lakefront (Sheboygan County) from 6–12 June by Schwarz et al. This is similar to last year's three reporting counties. [+53.4%]

**Ring-billed Gull**—Reported from 53 counties statewide. Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary (Brown County) had 2,000 birds on 6 July by Wanger, Ayyash estimated 2,100 individuals at the Sheboygan Lakefront (Sheboygan County) on 11 July, and Ziebell estimated 2,000 birds in Winnebago County on 8 June. Breeding confirmed in Brown County plus probable in Door County. [+4.3%]

**Herring Gull**—Reported from 29 counties across the state except for the west-central region (compare to 28 counties in 2013). Sontag estimated 1,500 birds along the Manitowoc Lakefront (Manitowoc County) on 11 June. Breeding confirmed in Brown, Marathon\* (Belter), and Milwaukee Counties. [+10.7%]

**Thayer's Gull**—A bird was observed and photographed at Sheboygan Lakefront (Sheboygan County) from 8–12 June by mob, and again on 11 July (Ayyash). These represent two of ten summer records, the latter being the latest record to date. The previous late date was 1 July, 2004 in Ozaukee County by James Frank.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull**—All reports: An immature as seen on Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) on 13 July by Prestby, multiple birds were reported from 13–17 June and 18 July from several locations in Manitowoc County (Woodcock et al.), a third-cycle bird was seen at the South Shore Yacht Club (Milwaukee County) on 12 June by Lubahn, one second-cycle and one “old” third-cycle bird were seen at Port Washington (Ozaukee County) from 8–14 June by T. Wood et al., and multiple birds were observed from 5 June–29 July at North Point Park (Sheboygan County) by Swelstad et al. The high count in Manitowoc County was eight birds at Neshotah Park on 14 June (Ayyash), but even more incredible was a count of at least 20 birds at North Point Park on 11 July (Ayyash). None of the 20 birds was older than third-cycle individuals. This is an increase from last year's three reporting counties and is the highest number of reporting counties in the past decade. The Lesser Black-backed Gull has been expanding its range in Wisconsin in recent years and is now considered a permanent non-breeding resident (Domagalski pers. comm.). [+81.8%]

**Herring Gull x Lesser Black-backed Gull**—An individual molting from first into second cycle plumage was observed at the Sheboygan Lakefront (Sheboygan County) on 8 June by Ayyash, A. Hale, and Gyllehaal.

**Glaucous Gull**—One first-cycle and one second-cycle bird were observed at the Manitowoc Lakefront (Manitowoc County) from 1–26 July by Sontag, and another bird was seen at Port Washington (Ozaukee County) on 14 June by Heikkinen and Fissel. This is the same number of reporting counties as last year.

**Great Black-backed Gull**—All reports: An immature was observed at the Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) on 13 July by Prestby, several were seen between two locations in Manitowoc

(Manitowoc County) from 4 June–30 July by Malcolm and Ward et al., one was seen at Lake Park (Ozaukee County) on 14 June by Backus, and multiple birds were observed at North Point Park (Sheboygan County) from 5 June–29 July by Carl Schroeder et al. The high count was four birds both at the Manitowoc Lakefront in Manitowoc County on 26 June (Nojek) and at North Point Park in Sheboygan County on 13 June (Sommer and Bontly). This is similar to last year's three reporting counties and is the highest number of reporting counties in the past decade. [+81.8%]

**Caspian Tern**—Reported from 23 counties in all regions except the central, north-central, southwest, and west-central regions. This is comparable to last year's 24 reporting counties. Over-summering birds occupied eight of these counties. [+18.6%]

**Black Tern**—Reported from 32 counties in all regions except the northeast (compare to 28 counties in 2013). Over 200 birds were observed in Fond du Lac County on 23 July (Tessen). Breeding confirmed in 15 counties. [+13.5%]

**Common Tern**—Reported in 12 counties, with the only inland reports coming from Green Lake\* (Christensen) and Winnebago (WDNR) Counties. These were also the only two counties where breeding was confirmed. Last year's reports came from 12 counties as well. [+17.6%]

**Forster's Tern**—Reported from 27 counties statewide except for the north-central region (compare to 25 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Brown, Columbia\* (Shealer), Dodge, Green Lake, and Marquette\* (Shealer) Counties. [+42.1%]

**Rock Pigeon**—Reported from 65 counties. Guth estimated 450 birds in La Crosse's Amtrak yards (La Crosse County) on 3 July. Breeding confirmed in six counties. [+1.6%]

**Eurasian Collared-Dove**—Reported from Chippewa (Gordon), Columbia, Crawford, Grant, Iowa, La Crosse, Milwaukee, Outagamie, Rock, and Walworth Counties. This is similar to last year's 11 reporting counties. [+16.3%]

**White-winged Dove\***—The 19<sup>th</sup> state record and seventh summer record came from Luepkes' backyard in Spencer (Marathon County) on 24 June. Observed by Belter, Backus, and Tessen.

**Mourning Dove**—Reported in all 72 counties. Breeding confirmed in 12 counties plus probable in two counties. [+1.4%]



Other Nations – Watercolor by Janet Flynn



Merlin Chick by Alyssa DeRubeis





House Wren with Nest Material by David Franzen



Ovenbird Nestling by Alyssa DeRubeis



**Yellow-billed Cuckoo**—Reported from 45 counties across the state (compare to 43 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Dunn County plus probable in Grant, Portage, and Rock Counties. [+17.8%]

**Black-billed Cuckoo**—Reported from 52 counties statewide, the same number of reporting counties as last year. Nine birds were counted in the western barrens of Bayfield County on 4 July (Anich). Breeding confirmed in Portage, Marathon, and Vernon Counties plus probable in Clark County. [+4.4%]

**Eastern Screech-Owl**—Reported from Dane, Door, Manitowoc, Portage, Walworth, and Winnebago Counties - down from last year's eight counties. A family group of five birds was detected in Winnebago County on 6 July (Benson). Breeding probable in Portage County. [+7.1%]

**Great Horned Owl**—Reports came from 28 counties from all regions except the north-central region (compare to 26 counties last summer). Breeding confirmed in seven counties. [-1.4%]

**Snowy Owl**—The 16<sup>th</sup> summer record flew two feet above Shirley Miller's head on 11 June on Washington Island (Door County).

**Barred Owl**—Reported from 46 counties in all regions, which is up from last year's 36 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in six counties plus probable in one county. [+11.1%]

**Long-eared Owl**—The only report was of a dead bird on the road near Hoyland's property in Dunn County on 22 June.

**Short-eared Owl**—All three birds reported came from Portage County: A pair nested at Buena Vista WA through at least 3 July (DeRubeis et al.) and another bird was seen south of Lake DuBay on 18 July (Phillips). Because the latter bird was foraging at 4:15pm, it too may have been hunting to feed nestlings. [-28.6%]

**Northern Saw-whet Owl**—All reports were of single heard-only birds unless noted otherwise: Douglas County on 7 June (Davis), Jefferson County on 16 June (Prestby), Oneida County on 9 June (Huset), two heard on 5 June (Martineau) and another heard on 9 June by Schilke (separate locations in Vilas County), and five well-grown chicks were in a nesting box in Portage County\* on 2 June (Jacobs). This is up substantially from last year's single reporting county and is the highest number of reporting counties in the past decade. Side note: Northern Saw-whet

Owls have been nesting in Portage County since 1991 (Jacobs pers. comm.). [-78.6%]

**Common Nighthawk**—Reported from 28 counties statewide (compare to 38 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Adams, Marinette\* (Anich), and Vilas Counties, plus probable in Dane and Portage Counties. [-2.1%]

**Chuck-will's-widow\***—The bird first found last year returned to Kettle Moraine SF on both the Jefferson County and the Walworth County sides of Young Road, where it was heard by many. It was first relocated on 11 May by Weberpal and it was last reported on 7 July by M. Evanson (both in Walworth County). Breeding probable in Jefferson\* and Walworth\* Counties. [+11.1%]

**Eastern Whip-poor-will**—Reports came from 30 counties statewide (compare to 27 counties in 2013). Two nightjar survey routes harbored this year's high counts: Pigeon Creek (Jackson County) contained 32 birds on 9 June by Otto and 28 birds were counted on the Amberg route (Marinette County) on 14 June by Prestby. Breeding confirmed in Adams and Walworth\* (E. Howe) Counties and probable in Portage County. [+8.7%]

**Chimney Swift**—Reported from 63 counties (compare to 65 counties last year). High counts include 230 birds at the Leicht Property (Brown County) on 19 June by J. Johnson and 240 birds on 23 July and 450 birds on 24 July at the Blue Door Consulting building (Winnebago County) by Ziebell. Breeding confirmed in Brown County plus probable in six counties. [0%]

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird**—Reported from 68 counties. Lund counted 19 birds at Hazel Run (Clark County) on 16 June. Breeding confirmed in seven counties plus probable in three counties. [+1.8%]

**Belted Kingfisher**—Reported from 64 counties. Breeding confirmed in six counties. [+2.9%]

**Red-headed Woodpecker**—Reported from 49 counties in all regions (compare to 44 counties in 2013). This is the highest number of reporting counties in the past decade. The high count came from Necedah NWR (Juneau County), where 44 birds were counted on 31 July by Hayes. Breeding confirmed in nine counties. Probable breeding was recorded in an additional seven counties. [+13.4%]

**Red-bellied Woodpecker**—Reported from 66 counties (similar to last summer's 65 reporting counties). This is the highest number of re-

porting counties in the past decade. Breeding confirmed in 15 counties plus probable in three counties. [+7.5%]

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**—Reported from 45 counties in all regions except the southeast. This is a drop from last year's 52 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in 12 counties with probable breeding noted in an additional three counties. [-3.4%]

**Downy Woodpecker**—Reported from 68 counties. Breeding confirmed in 16 counties and probable in four counties. [+4.3%]

**Hairy Woodpecker**—Reported from 64 counties. Breeding confirmed in 21 counties plus probable in four counties. [-1.8%]

**Black-backed Woodpecker**—Reported from Douglas County on 30 June (the LaValleys), and Vilas County: one at Nixon Lake on 26 June (M. Anderson) and two at the Conserve School on 5 June (Martineau). This is the same number of locations as 2013. Breeding probable in Vilas County (Martineau). [+11.1%]

**Northern Flicker**—Reported in 70 counties. Breeding confirmed in 10 counties and probable in three counties. [+2.0%]

**Pileated Woodpecker**—Reported from 60 counties. Breeding confirmed in five counties and probable in five counties. [+2.7%]

**Crested Caracara\***—This first state record was originally found by Holm and C. Smith on 13 May on Washington Island (Door County). It was last observed on 7 July at the same location (fide Walsh).

**American Kestrel**—Reported from 62 counties, similar to last summer's 59 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in five counties and probable in four counties. [+7.6%]

**Merlin**—Reports came from 22 counties in the central and northern regions (compare to 18 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Adams\* (Hay), Bayfield, Chippewa\* (Bonk), Door, Dunn\* (P. Campbell), Eau Claire\* (Geraghty), Marathon\* (Belter), Outagamie\* (fide Tiede), Portage\* (Jacobs), and Shawano\* (DeRubeis) Counties. All of these new breeding records are suggestive of a recent range expansion to the south. (Side note: This is the third consecutive year of nesting Merlins in Portage County.) Probable breeding was observed in Ashland and Iron Counties. Interesting was a 20 May report of an apparent pair in Iowa County\*

(Decker), which counts as probable breeding status. (Side note: Merlins have been recorded nesting in Marathon County since 2002 and in Portage County since 2008. A 2012 breeding record exists for Adams County as well (Jacobs).) [+32.5%]

**Peregrine Falcon**—Assuming there was no movement between sites, a minimum of 40 adults and offspring were counted in 18 counties scattered across all regions except the northeast and northwest (compare to 19 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Ashland\* (Anich), Buffalo, Dane, La Crosse\* (Stratton), Manitowoc, Ozaukee, Sauk\* (Ressel), Vernon, and Winnebago\* (Tiede) Counties, plus probable in Milwaukee County. [+16.9%]

**Olive-sided Flycatcher**—Late spring migrants were noted in Dane, Grant, Marquette, Ozaukee (15 June by Sommer), and Winnebago (14 June by Patterson) Counties. Reports from the breeding range came from Bayfield, Burnett, Door, Douglas, Florence, Forest, Oneida, Sawyer, Shawano, and Vilas Counties (compare to 22 counties in 2013). [+11.9%]

**Eastern Wood-Pewee**—Reported from 70 counties, similar to last summer's 69 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in six counties plus probable in four counties. [+3.2%]

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**—Reports of late spring migrants came from Brown, Juneau (9 June by La Puma), Marquette, Milwaukee, and Ozaukee Counties, fewer than last summer's eight counties. Summer range reports came from 13 counties, the same as last year's reporting counties. Unusual was a report of a bird on 27 July in Waupaca County (C. Taylor), which was likely an early fall migrant. [+11.8%]

**Acadian Flycatcher**—Reported from 19 southern and extreme west-central counties, plus a northerly report from Polk County on 13 June (Maercklein). This is similar to last year's 21 reporting counties. The high count came from Walworth County, where 15 birds were counted at the La Grange Oak Woods section of Kettle Moraine SF on 28 June (Szymczak). The last reports came from Grant (30–31 July) and Sauk (30 July) Counties. Breeding confirmed in Grant, Iowa, Milwaukee\* (Szymczak), Walworth, and Waukesha Counties and probable in Rock County. [0%]

**Alder Flycatcher**—Reported from 53 counties from all regions of the state (compare to 50 counties last summer), although over-summering in the southern half of the state only occurred in Dodge, Ozaukee, and Sauk Counties. The only



Ruby-throated Hummingbird Male by David Franzen



Female Blackburnian Warbler by David Franzen



Dickcissel on Compass Plant by Sunil Gopalan



Little Gull (First Summer) by Amar Ayyash

report from Vernon County was of a bird observed on 30 July (Hutnik), which was probably an early fall migrant. Breeding confirmed in Portage County and probable in Clark County. [+5.6%]

**Willow Flycatcher**—Reported from 40 counties in central and southern regions, plus 22 June in Burnett (Wu) and 11 June in Polk (Maercklein) Counties in the north. This is a drop from last summer's 51 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in Dane, Iowa, Portage, and Wood\* (Christensen) Counties, plus probable in Rock County. [-1.4%]

**Least Flycatcher**—Reported from 64 counties (compare to 62 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Jackson, Outagamie, and Portage Counties, plus probable in three counties. [+10.0%]

**Eastern Phoebe**—Reported from 67 counties. Breeding confirmed in 27 counties. [0%]

**Great Crested Flycatcher**—Reported from 70 counties (compare to 69 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in eight counties plus probable in four counties. [+4.8%]

**Western Kingbird\***—One bird was photographed on Washington Island (Door County) on 7 June by T. Schultz, and another was photographed along Springbrook Road (Marathon County) on 6 June by Belter and Backus.

**Eastern Kingbird**—Reported from 70 counties (compare to 71 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in 22 counties and probable in three counties. [+1.7%]

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher\***—A bird was photographed on Washington Island (Door County) on 23 June by Walsh and seen through 8 July by others.

**Loggerhead Shrike**—Two reports of single birds: Wisconsin Highway 54 in Jackson County on 14 June (S. Spencer) and the same location as 2013 in Buena Vista WA (Portage County) on 5 June by Tessen. No details were provided for either report. [-11.1%]

**White-eyed Vireo**—Two reports: Two individuals were heard and observed at Yellowstone Lake SP (Lafayette County) on 2 June by T. Wood, and another bird was observed at Wyalusing SP (Grant County) on 27 July by the Baumanns. This is half of last year's reporting counties. [-23.1%]

**Bell's Vireo**—Reports came from the following 11 counties: Crawford, Dane, Dunn, Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, Grant, Green, Iowa, La Crosse, Rock, and Sauk. This is the same number of reporting counties as last year. Breeding confirmed in Iowa and La Crosse Counties and probable in Dunn County. [+44.7%]

**Yellow-throated Vireo**—Reported from 61 counties (compare to 65 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Portage County plus probable in Clark, Grant, and Rock Counties. [+5.2%]

**Blue-headed Vireo**—Reported from 19 central and northern counties. All southern sightings: Wyalusing SP (Grant County) on 9 July by mob, Albany SWA (Green County) on 16 June by Watson, Storrs Lake SWA (Rock County) on 14 June by Watson, and two locations in Waukesha County, where birds were found 7 June and 6–26 July (mob). This is down significantly from last summer's 32 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in Forest and Ozaukee\* (Medvitz) Counties with breeding probable in Clark and Vilas Counties. [-5.7%]

**Warbling Vireo**—Reported from 63 counties (compare to last summer's 64 counties). A high count of 26 birds was reported at Horicon Marsh NWR's One Mile Island (Dodge County) on 4 June by Henrikson. Breeding confirmed in four counties and probable in another four counties. [+1.9%]

**Red-eyed Vireo**—Reported from all 72 counties. Forty-four birds were observed at the Chippewa County Forest on 9 June (Betchkal and Hogseth), and another 50 birds were estimated at Point O Pines (Sawyer County) on 26 June by Gordon. Breeding confirmed in 11 counties plus probable in two counties. [+3.2%]

**Gray Jay**—The only reporting county was Forest, where multiple birders observed up to three birds at two to three locations on 6 and 8 June and 4 July. This is down from last year's three reporting counties and is the lowest number of reporting counties in the past decade. Probable breeding was noted in May in Vilas County (Martineau). [-70.6%]

**Blue Jay**—Reported in all 72 counties. Breeding confirmed in 19 counties. [+1.4%]

**American Crow**—Reported in all 72 counties. Breeding confirmed in eight counties plus probable in one county. [+0.8%]

**Common Raven**—Reported from 35 counties in the central and northern regions. Breeding confirmed in three counties with breeding probable in an additional county. [+5.4%]

**Horned Lark**—Reported from 38 counties from all regions (compare to 40 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Portage and Rock Counties and probable in Grant County. [+0.5%]

**Purple Martin**—Reported from 41 counties from all regions (compare to 46 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in 13 counties plus probable in three counties. [-2.8%]

**Tree Swallow**—Reported from 71 counties. Prestby estimated a pre-migratory staging flock of 3,500 birds at the Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) on 30 July. Breeding confirmed in 62 counties. Hall reports that 11,483 birds fledged from monitored bluebird nest boxes. [+2.0%]

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow**—Reported from 60 counties (compare to 56 counties last summer). Cat Island Causeway (Brown County) again held this year's swallow high count with 250 birds on 28 July (Prestby). Breeding confirmed in nine counties and probable in four counties. [+8.7%]

**Bank Swallow**—Reported from 49 counties, a drop from last year's 59 counties. The high count of 500 birds was observed at Oaklawn Academy (Dane County) on 23 July by Swanson. Breeding confirmed in 12 counties. [-3.9%]

**Cliff Swallow**—Reported from 62 counties (compare to 68 in 2013). Breeding confirmed in 21 counties plus probable in one county. [-1.0%]

**Barn Swallow**—Reported from 68 counties. Collison estimated 500 birds at Horicon Marsh NWR (Dodge County) on 8 June. Breeding confirmed in 18 counties and probable in one county. [-1.8%]

**Black-capped Chickadee**—Reported in all 72 counties. The high count was 42 birds at Shaginappi Park (Fond du Lac County) on 17 July by Patterson. Breeding confirmed in 51 counties plus probable in two counties. Hall reports that 1,129 birds fledged from monitored bluebird nest boxes. [+2.9%]

**Boreal Chickadee**—Two reporting counties, the same number as last year: Two birds were observed in Florence County on 8 June (Beilke and Bender), and up to four birds were seen between two locations in Forest County 4–31 July (mob). [-28.6%]

**Tufted Titmouse**—Reported from 31 central and southern counties with the exception of Barron County where up to three birds were seen on 6 and 24 July (Prestby and Hurtgen). This is similar to last year's 32 reporting counties. Swanson counted eight birds at the Oaklawn Academy (Dane County) on 13 July. Breeding confirmed in Clark\* (Lund), Portage\* (Pendergast), Rock, and Waukesha Counties, plus probable in Dane, Grant, and Vernon Counties. (Side note: This species has been breeding in Portage County since at least 2009 (Berner).) [+9.2%]

**Red-breasted Nuthatch**—Reported from 44 counties from all regions of the state except the southwest (compare to 47 counties in 2013). Over-summering in the southern third only occurred in Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Waukesha Counties. Breeding confirmed in three counties and probable in two counties. [-6.8%]

**White-breasted Nuthatch**—Reported from 71 counties. Breeding confirmed in 12 counties plus probable in four counties. [+5.0%]

**Brown Creeper**—Reported from 26 counties scattered across the state (except the southwest). This is up slightly from last year's 23 counties and is the highest number of reporting counties over the past decade. Possible over-summering in the south only occurred at Cedarburg Bog in Ozaukee County (Frank). Breeding confirmed in Marathon, Portage, and Wood Counties, plus probable in Manitowoc County. [+26.2%]

**House Wren**—Reported from 68 counties. Breeding confirmed in 60 counties plus probable in one county. Hall reports that 4,268 birds fledged from monitored bluebird nest boxes. [+0.3%]

**Winter Wren**—Reported from 21 northern and central counties in addition to Sauk County (Leonard). This is similar to last summer's 23 counties. Breeding probable in Portage and Vilas Counties. [+3.8%]

**Sedge Wren**—Reported from 51 counties across the state, down slightly from 58 counties in 2013. Ziebell estimated 120 birds in Winnebago County on 16 June. Breeding confirmed in Dane and Portage Counties plus probable in Rock County. [-4.9%]

**Marsh Wren**—Reports came from 45 counties statewide, the same as last summer. An incredible 2,100 birds were estimated in Winnebago County on 16 June (Ziebell). Breeding confirmed in four counties plus probable in three counties. [+7.1%]





American Woodcock by Cynthia Bridge



Spotted Sandpiper Chick by David Franzen



Black-billed Cuckoo with Nestling by David Franzen



**Carolina Wren**—Reports came from the following 10 counties: Dane (three locations, mob), Eau Claire (Geraghty), Grant (three locations, mob), Iowa (A. Holschbach), Jefferson (three locations, K. Hale and Daley), Marinette (heard only by J. Campbell), Outagamie (Tessen), Rock (J. Meyer and Cullum), Waukesha (M. Baumann), and Winnebago (heard only by Ulsabar). This is comparable to 11 counties in 2013. Breeding probable in Grant County\* (Thiele). [+16.3%]

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**—Reported from 43 central and southern counties, plus three northern counties: Marinette (over-summering noted by J. Campbell), Polk (Trexel), and Price (Moran). Compare to last summer's 48 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in 11 counties. [-2.5%]

**Golden-crowned Kinglet**—Birds were reported from Ashland, Bayfield, Door, Douglas, Florence, Forest, Oneida, Sawyer, and Vilas Counties. A singing male lingered through 6 June at the Scuppernong Ski and Hiking Trail of the Kettle Moraine SF (Waukesha County) by Szymczak. This is up slightly from last year's nine reporting counties. Breeding probable in Vilas County. [-9.1%]

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet**—All reporting counties: Bayfield (Anich), Forest (mob), Sawyer (Schaefer and Szymczak), and Vilas (Anich). No county contained more than two reports. This is the same number of reporting counties as 2013. [+11.1%]

**Eastern Bluebird**—Reported from 69 counties. On behalf of the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, Hall reports that 23,321 birds fledged from monitored bluebird nest box trails across the state (compare to 23,074 in 2013 and 36,074 in 2012). He has no doubt that bluebirds nested in all 72 counties, even though only 64 counties confirmed breeding. Two additional counties had probable breeding. [-0.6%]

**Veery**—Reported from 57 counties statewide, down slightly from last summer's 63 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in Clark, Marinette, Portage, and Walworth Counties. [+5.6%]

**Swainson's Thrush**—Reported from the following three northern counties: One bird on the Grand View BBS (Bayfield County) on 26 June by Anich and four birds along the Popple River BBS (Florence and Forest Counties) on 7 June by Carl Schroeder. Late spring migrants were detected in Dane County on 1 June (Kauffman and Maxwell)

and 2 June in Outagamie (Tessen). Two birds in Marathon County on 28 July were likely early fall migrants (Belter). This is up from last year's three reporting counties. [+42.9%]

**Hermit Thrush**—Reported from 25 central and northern counties except for Ozaukee County where a bird was encountered at the Cedarburg Bog on 7 June (Frank). This is down from last summer's 29 counties. Breeding confirmed in Portage County and probable in Adams County. [-7.1%]

**Wood Thrush**—Reported from 59 counties statewide (compare to 58 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in two counties plus probable in four counties. [+3.5%]

**American Robin**—Reported in all 72 counties. Breeding confirmed in 42 counties and probable in one county. [+1.1%]

**Gray Catbird**—Reported from 69 counties. Breeding confirmed in 24 counties and probable in four counties. [+2.1%]

**Northern Mockingbird**—All reports: One was photographed on 1 June at Rock Island SP (Door County) by Walsh, another bird was observed on 2 June in Monroe County (Epstein), a bird was photographed at Lea Flowage on 22 June (Rusk County) by Stutz, a bird was observed along Highway 23 near Plymouth (Sheboygan County) on 9 July by Tessen, and another was present at Purity Farms (Waukesha County) from 6–8 June by Korkor et al. This is fewer than last year's eight reporting counties. [+13.6%]

**Brown Thrasher**—Reported from 66 counties, similar to 67 counties in 2013. The high count of 12 birds came from Moquah Barrens (Bayfield County) on 12 July by Oksiuta. Breeding confirmed in 16 counties plus probable in five counties. [+7.1%]

**European Starling**—Reported from 69 counties. Breeding confirmed in 21 counties and probable in two counties. [+1.2%]

**Cedar Waxwing**—Reported in all 72 counties. Breeding confirmed in 13 counties and probable in three counties. [+3.5%]

**Ovenbird**—Reported in 68 counties (compare to 67 counties last summer). Breeding confirmed in six counties and probable in six counties. [+6.6%]

**Louisiana Waterthrush**—Reported from the following six counties (compare to seven

counties in 2013): Burnett (9 June by Maercklein), Columbia (Durward's Glen on 6 June by Hogseth), Grant (four birds between EVNP and Wyalusing SP 1 June-9 July by Thiele and T. Wood), La Crosse (3 July by Griffin), Sauk (eight birds between Baxter's Hollow, Hemlock Draw, and Parfrey's Glen SNAs 1 June-22 July by mob), and Vernon (Ice Cave on 18 July by Epstein). Breeding confirmed in Sauk County and probable in Grant County. [+15.4%]

**Northern Waterthrush**—Reported from 16 central and northern regions except west-central. One or more birds apparently over-summered in Dodge County (Tessen). This is down slightly from 18 counties last year. With the exception of Burnett and Florence Counties, no county contained more than three reports. Breeding probable in Fond du Lac (D. Scheiman), Portage (Pendergast), and Vilas Counties. [+1.3%]

**Blue-winged Warbler**—Reported from 41 counties in central and southern regions as well as Barron (P. Campbell), Burnett (McDonald), and Door (Walsh) Counties. This is comparable to last year's 40 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in Clark, Portage, Sauk, Vernon, and Walworth Counties, plus probable in Grant and Rock Counties. [+9.6%]

**Golden-winged Warbler**—Reports came from 24 central and northern counties except the east-central region (compare to 26 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Florence County and probable in Clark and Portage Counties. [+2.6%]

**Black-and-white Warbler**—Reported from 40 central and northern counties in addition to Grant (Ouren) and Milwaukee (mob) Counties. This is up slightly from last year's 34 counties. Breeding confirmed in Florence and Portage Counties plus probable in Clark and Polk Counties. [+3.6%]

**Prothonotary Warbler**—Reports came from 15 southern and west-central regions, plus Polk County (Maercklein). This is up from last summer's 11 counties and is the highest number of reporting counties in the past decade. Daley counted 18 birds along the Bark River between Highway N and Rock River (Jefferson County) on 28 June. The last report came from Dane County on 26 July (Holland). Breeding confirmed in six counties plus probable in one county. [+29.3%]

**Tennessee Warbler**—Late spring migration was only observed in Brown County, where a bird lingered through 4 June (Beilke). The first fall birds were noted on 16 July in Bayfield County

(Brady) and 22 July in Portage County (Schaufenbuel). Additional fall migrant reports came from Clark and Milwaukee Counties. This is down from the nine reporting counties in 2013. [-7.4%]

**Nashville Warbler**—Reported from 31 counties in the central and northern regions with reports from Grant (Maier) and Ozaukee (Brown) Counties from the south. This is comparable to 33 counties in 2013. The high count of 32 individuals came from the pine barrens near Valhalla (Bayfield County) as counted by Anich on 8 June. Breeding confirmed in Grant County\* (Maier) as well as four other counties, plus breeding probable in an additional four counties. [+3.3%]

**Connecticut Warbler**—Murkowski noted a late migrant in the Shoe Lake area (Manitowoc County) on 1 June. The remaining five counties are from the breeding range: Approximately five birds were noted between three locations in Bayfield County on 4 June and 10 and 14 July (mob); one bird was at the Namekagon Barrens SWA (Burnett County) on 13 June by Schmoker; at least two locations in Douglas County hosted birds on 8 and 26 June and 1 July (mob); one on Pine River Road (Forest County) on 4 July by Goldberg; and another individual at Mud Creek Hike Zone (Vilas County) on 22 June by M. Anderson. This is comparable to last summer's five reporting counties. [+30.4%]

**Mourning Warbler**—Reported from 44 counties statewide, although over-summering in the southern third was only confirmed in Milwaukee and Ozaukee Counties. This is the same number of reporting counties in 2013. Breeding confirmed in Milwaukee County\* (Zehner) and three other counties. Probable breeding noted in three counties. [+11.1%]

**Kentucky Warbler**—All reporting counties: Six birds were recorded between Wyalusing and Nelson Dewey SPs (Grant County) from 1 June-11 July (mob); a lone bird was observed at Tower Hill SP (Iowa County) from 2-18 June by mob; a male was heard at Kickapoo Valley Reserve (Vernon County) on 16 June (Duerksen); and a returning male was observed in the John Muir section of Kettle Moraine SF (Walworth County) on 1 and 28 June (Szymczak and M. Kemp). Although this is down slightly from last year's five reporting counties, the number of sites is the same. Breeding probable in Grant County. [+5.3%]

**Common Yellowthroat**—Reported from 71 counties. Cullum estimated 45 birds at Evansville



Green Heron by Bob Larson

SWA (Rock County) on 2 July. Breeding confirmed in 21 counties and probable in five counties. [+2.6%]

**Hooded Warbler**—Reports came from 14 counties from mostly the east-central and southern third of the state (compare to 16 counties in 2013). Unusual locations include the following: A returning male was seen at Emmons Creek SFA (Portage County) from 4–7 June by Backus et al., and a female that hit a window and flew off in Timber Meadows (Vilas County) was photographed by Liebl on 20 June. High counts of 12 birds came from the La Grange Oak Woods section of Kettle Moraine SF (Walworth County) on 28 June and Southern Kettle Moraine SF (Waukesha County) on 6 June, both by Szymczak. Breeding confirmed in Milwaukee\* (Szymczak), Walworth, and Waukesha Counties plus probable in Rock County. [+2.9%]

**American Redstart**—Reported from 66 counties, similar to last year's 67 reporting counties. Forty birds were estimated at Peninsula SP (Door County) on 10 July by Radtke. Breeding confirmed in 11 counties plus probable in four counties. [+1.2%]

**Kirtland's Warbler**—On behalf of USFWS and WDNR, Grveles reports that the 2014 census detected 11 males at the Adams County site, one at the Bayfield County site, and another in Marinette County. Seven females were at the Adams County site, as well, where three nests successfully fledged 8–10 offspring. In total, a maximum of 30 birds was found this summer. This is down from 2013 both in reporting counties and number of males and females found; Douglas County held a bird last year but did not this year. Fifteen males and nine females were at Adams County last summer. Surveying efforts in Adams County ended on 11 July and birds were still being observed at that time. However, Grveles points out that the birds likely stayed longer at the site, as previous years have hosted family groups into mid-August. [–11.8%]

**Cape May Warbler**—All reporting counties: Bayfield (Brady and Anich), Douglas (the LaValleys), Florence (mob), Forest (mob), and Sawyer (mob). No county contained more than six reports. This is similar to last year's six reporting counties. [–3.8%]

**Cerulean Warbler**—Reports came from 16 counties in all central and southern regions, comparable to 15 counties in 2013. With the exception of Grant, Jefferson, Milwaukee, and Sauk Counties, no county contained more than three reports. Twelve birds were counted at Wyalusing

SP (Grant County) on 8 June by Nechvatal. The last bird observed was in Grant County on 22 July (Thiele). Breeding confirmed in Grant County and probable in Rock County\* (Boone). [+23.1%]

**Northern Parula**—A late spring migrant lingered through 12 June in Milwaukee County (Vargo and D. Casper). Probable late spring migrants were also noted in Dodge, Green Lake, Jefferson, and Ozaukee Counties. Interesting was a 6 July report from Waukesha County (Szymczak). The remaining 13 counties were from northern regions. This is slightly down from 22 counties in 2013. [+6.7%]

**Magnolia Warbler**—A late spring migrant was found on 1 June in Milwaukee County (Schlitz Audubon Record). The other 11 counties were from northern regions (compare to 13 counties in 2013). [–4.8%]

**Blackburnian Warbler**—A late spring migrant stayed through 16 June in Milwaukee County (Lubahn). Late spring migrants were also observed in Ozaukee and Sauk Counties. The 19 remaining counties were from the central, east-central, and northern regions. This is up from last year's 18 reporting counties. [+12.2%]

**Yellow Warbler**—Reported from 67 counties. Breeding confirmed in 14 counties and probable in five counties. [–0.3%]

**Chestnut-sided Warbler**—Reported from 45 counties statewide (compare to 53 counties in 2013), although over-summering in the southern third was only documented in Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties. Gordon estimated 50 birds at Point O Pines (Sawyer County) on 25 June. Breeding confirmed in seven counties and probable in three counties, including Waukesha (Szymczak). [–0.9%]

**Blackpoll Warbler**—Two reports, both of single birds on 7 June: Clark County (Lund) and Florence County (K. Kavanagh).

**Black-throated Blue Warbler**—Reports came from the following nine counties (comparable to 10 counties in 2013): Ashland, Bayfield, Door, Florence, Forest, Menominee, Oneida, Sawyer, and Vilas. With the exception of Forest and Vilas Counties, no county contained more than four reports. Breeding confirmed in Menominee County (Iacono) and probable in Vilas County. [+18.4%]

**Bay-breasted Warbler**—A singing male was at Copper Falls SP (Ashland County) on 13 June (Chartier).

**Palm Warbler**—A late spring migrant lingered through 6 June in Sheboygan County (T. Wood). Breeding range reports came from the following 11 counties: Bayfield, Douglas, Florence, Forest, Marinette, Oneida, Portage, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, and Vilas. This is an increase from last summer's eight reporting counties and is the highest number of counties reported in the past decade. With the exception of Vilas County, no county contained more than three reports. Anich counted nine birds at the Vilas County Forest on 5 June. Breeding probable in Portage County (Pendergast). [+30.4%]

**Pine Warbler**—Reported from 41 counties from all regions except south-central (compare to 46 counties in 2013). Breeding probable in three counties. [−0.5%]

**Yellow-rumped Warbler**—Reports came from 19 counties in all central and northern regions except east-central. This is a drop from last summer's 25 reporting counties. Martineau counted 21 individuals at the Conserve School (Vilas County) on 5 June. Breeding confirmed in Douglas, Forest, Portage (Janz), and Vilas Counties plus probable in Adams (Hannah) and Oneida Counties. [−17.4%]

**Yellow-throated Warbler**—In Grant County two returning birds found this year by Yoerger on 3 May were seen through 21 July at Wyalusing SP by mob, and a continuing male from 10 May was singing again on 22 June in Cassville (Thiele). Breeding probable in Grant County. [−28.6%]

**Prairie Warbler**—Two reporting counties: A male was photographed at Rock Island SP (Door County) on 30 June by Walsh, and another male continuing from 4 May (Hahn) was seen through 20 July (Szymczak, et al.) at the D.J. Mackie Area of the Kettle Moraine SF again this year (Waukesha County\*). The latter bird was probably breeding, marking a new breeding record according to WBBA. [+42.9%]

**Black-throated Green Warbler**—Reported from 31 counties from all regions except south-central (compare to 33 in 2013). Over-summering in the south was only confirmed in Waukesha County and possibly Milwaukee County. Intriguing was a report of a bird on 10 July in Iowa County (Heikkinen). The high count came from Forest County, where 25 birds were counted at Three Johns Lake on 4 July (Ristow). Breeding

confirmed in Forest and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties plus probable in two counties. [+13.1%]

**Canada Warbler**—Reports came from 15 counties in the central and northern regions, except from the east-central and west-central subregions. Spring migrants were noted in Milwaukee County on 7 June (M. Kemp) and Sauk County on 1 June (McDowell). Other southern reports include a bird in Grant County on 17 July (Ouren) and another in Vernon County on 13 July (Stratton), both of which were probably early fall migrants. This is down slightly from last year's 23 reporting counties. Breeding probable in Portage County (Pendergast). [+6.7%]

**Wilson's Warbler**—One male was singing in Florence County on 8 June (Carl Schroeder).

**Yellow-breasted Chat**—All reports: Two birds were seen at La Riviere Park (Crawford County) from 2–27 June by T. Wood et al., and up to three birds were reported from Dane County between Brooklyn SWA, Pheasant Branch Conservancy, and UW-Madison Arboretum from 1 June–13 July by mob. A maximum of two birds was seen between EVNP and Wyalusing SP (both Grant County) from 4 June–17 July by mob; two birds were observed at Albany SWA (Green County) on 5 and 16 June by M. Evanson and Watson; and a bird found at Whitnall Park (Milwaukee County) on 14 May by Szymczak lingered through 5 June. This is similar to six reporting counties in 2013 but one more location was reported this year. Breeding probable in Grant County\* (Thiele). [−10.7%]

**Eastern Towhee**—Reported from 59 counties (compare to 63 counties in 2013). B. and K. Kavanagh counted 20 birds at Dunbar Barrens SNA (Marinette County) on 3 July. Breeding confirmed in 11 counties and probable in four counties. [−2.6%]

**Chipping Sparrow**—Reported from all 72 counties. Breeding confirmed in 21 counties plus probable in seven counties. [+1.7%]

**Clay-colored Sparrow**—Reported from 58 counties statewide (compare to 61 counties in 2013). The Schloffs estimated 25 birds at Buena Vista WA (Portage County) on 14 June. Breeding confirmed in seven counties and probable in three counties. [+3.6%]

**Field Sparrow**—Reported from 58 counties statewide, which is the same as last year. Twenty birds were counted at Spring Green Preserve (Sauk County) on 19 July by White. Breeding confirmed in seven counties and probable in six

counties, including Vilas County (Martineau). [+4.7%]

**Vesper Sparrow**—Reported from 47 counties statewide (compare to 55 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Adams, Marinette, and Portage Counties plus probable in Rock County. [-1.7%]

**Lark Sparrow**—Reports came from 17 counties in all central and southern regions except east-central (compare to 16 counties in 2013). The high count came from La Crosse County, where 10 birds were along Fishermen's Road on 4 June (Epstein). Breeding confirmed in Grant, Portage\* (mob), and Sauk Counties plus probable in La Crosse County. (Side note: Prior to 2014, three breeding records existed for this species in Portage County (Berner).) [+21.4%]

**Lark Bunting\***—An adult male was observed at Powell Marsh (Vilas County) on 14 June by J. Bates. This is one of six summer records. See "By the Wayside" for documentation.

**Savannah Sparrow**—Reported from 66 counties. High counts came from Milwaukee County—50 birds at Milwaukee County Grounds on 13 June (Huf)—and Portage County—49 birds at Buena Vista WA on 1 July (Hannah). Breeding confirmed in five counties plus probable in three counties. [+2.5%]

**Grasshopper Sparrow**—Reported from 26 counties scattered across the state. This is down significantly from last summer's 43 reporting counties. High counts include 20 birds at Buena Vista WA (Portage County) on 14 June by the Sehloffs and 21 birds at Spring Green Preserve (Sauk County) on 28 June by Hannah. Breeding confirmed in Portage County plus probable in Rock and Sauk Counties. [-24.0%]

**Henslow's Sparrow**—Reports came from 30 counties in all regions except north-central, including reports from Door (C. and R. Lukes), Florence (B. and K. Kavanagh), and Polk (Betchkal) Counties. This is similar to last year's 28 counties. About two-thirds of the counties contained a maximum of four reports. Twelve birds were counted at the Schurch-Thompson Prairie (Iowa County) on 28 June by Nechvatal. Breeding confirmed in Iowa and Portage Counties, plus probable in six counties. [+3.4%]

**Le Conte's Sparrow**—Reported from the following seven counties: Ashland (Geraghty), Bayfield (Brady), Burnett (Azar), Douglas (mob), Shawano (T. Ewing), Vilas (mob), and Wood

(mob). This is the same number of reporting counties as last year. No county contained more than three reports. Anich counted nine birds at Clough Island (Douglas County) on 3 June, where probable breeding was also noted. [+12.9%]

**Nelson's Sparrow**—As with 2013, none were reported this season.

**Song Sparrow**—Reported from all 72 counties. Several birders estimated 70 birds at Horicon Marsh NWR (Dodge County) on 8 June. Breeding confirmed in 23 counties and probable in six counties. [+2.0%]

**Swamp Sparrow**—Reported from 60 counties, which is down slightly from last year's 66 counties. Breeding confirmed in seven counties and probable in two counties. [-3.5%]

**Lincoln's Sparrow**—Reports came from 11 northern counties as well as Portage County, where a bird was observed at Dewey Marsh SWA on 26 June (Pendergast and McCuen) and Wood County, where a singing male was heard along Ball Road on 6 July (McCuen). This is up from last year's 11 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in Portage County (Pendergast) and probable in Oneida County. [+18.2%]

**White-throated Sparrow**—In addition to the 23 central and northern reporting counties, southern reports are as follows: A late spring migrant lingered through 4 June at Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park (Dane County) by Dunnington, two birds were singing on 25 July at the Pike Lake Unit of Kettle Moraine SF (Washington County) by Renner, and another report came from Waukesha County on 7 June (Marvelli). This is down slightly from last year's 27 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in Oneida and Portage Counties plus probable in Douglas and Vilas Counties. [+2.4%]

**White-crowned Sparrow**—All late spring migrant reports: One bird at Rock Island SP (Door County) on 6 June by Walsh, another bird at the Manitowoc Lakefront (Manitowoc County) from 1–4 June by Sontag, one bird on Woodcocks' property (also Manitowoc County) on 9 June, and an individual was seen on 2 June at the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center (Milwaukee County) by Zehner and Vokoun. An apparently injured adult stayed in Walsh's backyard on Washington Island from 3 June–13 July and another bird was spotted northeast of Sturgeon Bay on 19 July (Baxter), both of which are in Door County. These two sightings represent only two of seven July records. This is up substantially from last

summer's one reporting county and single location.

**Dark-eyed Junco**—Reported from the following northern counties: Bayfield (Anich), Door (injured bird; Kile), Forest (Baughman), Lincoln (Frazier), Oconto (Munroe), Price (Moran), and Vilas (mob). This is comparable to last summer's six reporting counties. No county contained more than three reports. Probable breeding reported in Vilas County. [−5.4%]

**Summer Tanager**—A male was observed in Milwaukee (Milwaukee County) on 17 June (fide Brady). This is one of six summer records since 1900.

**Scarlet Tanager**—Reported from 60 counties (compare to 67 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Clark and Rock Counties plus probable in nine counties. [+0.3%]

**Northern Cardinal**—Reported from 68 counties. Breeding confirmed in 17 counties plus probable in three counties. [+5.9%]

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak**—Reported from 70 counties. Breeding confirmed in 19 counties and probable in six counties. [+2.3%]

**Blue Grosbeak\***—Another productive year for this species in the state. A male was seen along Prairie Grove Road (Iowa County) on 10 June by Schiffman and a pair was seen again this year by numerous birders at Spring Green Preserve (Sauk County) from 3 June into August (See Fall Season, 2014), which was originally found by A. Holschbach. Breeding was also confirmed at this site (mob). No breeding evidence was detected during the last WBBA. Blue Grosbeaks have been seen during the summer in Sauk County in 2007, 2009, and 2013. The sightings this year represent two of 13 summer records; nine of these records have occurred since 2002.

**Indigo Bunting**—Reported from 70 counties. Breeding confirmed in nine counties and probable in six counties. [+0.9%]

**Painted Bunting\***—Timm hosted an adult male at his bird feeder in Green Lake County on 21 June, which was viewed and photographed by T. Schultz. This marks Wisconsin's 21<sup>st</sup> state record and first summer record.

**Dickcissel**—Reported from 45 counties from mostly central and southern regions, plus Ashland (Geraghty), Door (Walsh and Schilke), and Taylor (Peché) Counties. This is down considerably from last summer's 61 reporting counties.

Breeding confirmed in Dane, Iowa, and Portage Counties, plus probable in three counties. [−14.8%]

**Bobolink**—Reported from 61 counties from all regions (compare to 64 counties in 2013). The high counts of 100 birds were estimated at Buena Vista WA (Portage County) on 14 June and along Wilton Road (Waukesha County) on 1 June, both by the Sehloffs. Breeding confirmed in five counties and probable in three counties. [+1.0%]

**Red-winged Blackbird**—Reported in all 72 counties. Breeding confirmed in 28 counties and probable in six counties. [+1.1%]

**Eastern Meadowlark**—Reported from 59 counties statewide, down slightly from last year's 64 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in nine counties plus probable in one county. [−3.3%]

**Western Meadowlark**—Reports came from 14 counties in all regions except east-central, down from last year's 18 reporting counties. Ten birds were counted in Portage County on 5 June (Tessen). Breeding confirmed in Portage County and probable in Rock County. [−11.4%]

**Yellow-headed Blackbird**—Reports came from 25 counties in all regions except the northeast (compare to 30 counties in 2013). A report from Lincoln County (Frazier) was isolated from the other regions. Ziebell estimated 1,200 individuals in Winnebago County on 16 June. Breeding confirmed in six counties and probable in one county. [+5.0%]

**Brewer's Blackbird**—Reports came from 30 counties scattered across the state (compare to 32 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in Outagamie and Portage Counties, plus probable in five counties. [+1.4%]

**Common Grackle**—Reported from 71 counties. High counts: Prestby estimated 400 birds along the Ahnapee River in Algoma (Kewaunee County) on 25 June and E. Howe estimated 430 individuals in Gorney Park (Racine County) on 15 July. Breeding confirmed in 22 counties and probable in three counties. [+2.3%]

**Brown-headed Cowbird**—Reported from 70 counties. Breeding confirmed in 15 counties and probable in four counties. [+3.6%]

**Orchard Oriole**—Reports came from 44 counties in mostly central and southern regions, in addition to the northerly locations of Marinette (mob) and Rusk (Stutz) Counties. This

is similar to last year's 46 reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in 14 counties (including Marinette by J. and P. Trick) plus probable in two counties. [+15.8%]

**Baltimore Oriole**—Reported from 70 counties. Breeding confirmed in 30 counties and probable in four counties. [+2.6%]

**Purple Finch**—Reports came from 30 counties in all central and northern regions, the same as last year's reporting counties. Breeding confirmed in four counties and probable in two counties. [+15.4%]

**House Finch**—Reported from 57 counties from all regions (compare to 62 counties in 2013). Breeding confirmed in eight counties and probable in five counties. [−1.4%]

**Red Crossbill**—All reporting counties: Bayfield (Brady and Geraghty), Douglas (mob), Marinette (Prestby), and Vilas (Prestby). Excluding the 30 June report from Vilas County, all were July reports. With the exception of Bayfield County, no county contained more than four reports. This is down from last year's six reporting counties. [+17.6%]

**White-winged Crossbill**—The only report was of a lone bird in Douglas County on 11 July (Svingen). Last year two counties reported birds.

**Pine Siskin**—Reports came from the following six counties: Ashland, Bayfield, Clark, Florence, Langlade, and Walworth (E. Howe). This is down considerably from last year's 19 reporting counties. [−53.8%]

**American Goldfinch**—Reported in all 72 counties. Breeding confirmed in nine counties and probable in 12 counties. [+2.0%]

**European Goldfinch**—Since the presumed release of several European finch species in the Chicago area in Illinois in 2002, birds are being encountered in the western Great Lakes region with increased regularity. One bird was observed at the Eagle Harbor Ephraim (Door County) on 11 June by Peterson and up to seven birds were seen on 6, 27, and 29 June in Racine County (E. Howe and LaJoyce). Breeding was confirmed in Racine County (LaJoyce), which suggests a feral population is becoming established.

**Evening Grosbeak**—Reported from the following counties: Bayfield (Anich and Brady), Douglas (Kirk), Florence (B. and K. Kavanagh), Forest (mob), and Vilas (Martineau). With the exception of Forest County, no county contained

more than two reports. This is the same number of reporting counties as last year. Probable breeding recorded in Vilas County. [−16.7%]

**House Sparrow**—Reported from 64 counties. A high count of 451 birds was seen at the Riverside Park Urban Ecology Center (Milwaukee County) on 10 July by Vargo and D. Casper. Breeding confirmed in 15 counties. [−3.3%]

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Jan Seiler, Annette Selk, Thomas Sell, Paul Senner, Greg Severson, Kevin Seymour, John Shattuc, Hiram Shaw, Laurie Shawver, David Shealer, Rebecca Sher, Charles Sickles, Wanda Sieber, Dessi Sieburth, Amy Silver, Adam Sinkula, Pamela Skaar, Aaron Skinner, Nicholas Sly, Amber Smallwood, Richard Smallwood, A Smith, Brian Smith, Gregory Smith, Jerry Smith, Scott Sneed, Dale Snider, Joan Sommer, Art Sonneland, Charles Sontag, Bill Sonzogni, Lloyd Southwick, Hugh Spann, Martha Spencer, Seth Spencer, Hans Spiecker, David Spitzer, Aparna Sridhar, Nancy Stanford, Alex Stark, Brad Steger, Bruce Steger, Greg Steggerda, Ben Steinhoff, Naomi Steinruck, Sparky Stensaas, Pepi Stern, Craig Stettner, Becca Stetzer, Cicero Stewart, Paula Stich, Amy Stockert, Sarah Stokes, Elizabeth Stone, Susa Stonedahl, Douglas Stotz, Gary Stout, Doug Stratton, Jean Strelka, Marge Strempel, Aaron Stutz, Peder Svingen, James Swanson, Jack Swelstad, Daniel Swier, Ginny Swisher, Anna Szal, Andrea Szymczak, Eva Szyzskoski, Dan Tallman, Craig Taylor, Jerry Taylor, Josh TeSlaa, Kurt Thiede, Jason Thiele, Jennifer Thieme, Steve Thiessen, Sue Thomas, Darwin Tiede, Nancy Tikalsky, Don Timm, Wendy Tobin, Bill Tollefson, Dena Tollefson, John Tollefson, William Trachte, Ryan Treves, Dale Trexel, Joel Trick, Patti Trick, Patty Trnka, Sarah Tsalbins, Semeon Tsalbins, Paul Turelli, David Turner, Ray Tushoski, Two Rivers Stopover Project, Bradford Tyler, Michael Tyskiewicz, Allison Ulset, Delia Unson, Ken Uslabar, Tom Uttech, Cody Vacha, Abbie Valine, Penny VanTassel, Tim Vargo, Cristina Vaughan, Dick Verch, Elmer Verhasselt, Dan Versaw, Jeff Virant, Ann Vogtschaller, Elaine Vokoun, Patti

Vollmer, Carol Von Ott, Rob W, Laurie Walecki, Bill Walker, Christian Walker, Emily Walker, Patricia Walker, Ransford Walker, Sylvia Walker, Melody Walsh, Mike Wanger, Todd Ward, C Warneke, Jay Watson, Bridget Watts, WDNR Game Bird Brood Survey, Brad Webb, Jasonn Weber, Matt Weber, Scott Weberpal, Dan Weese, Kristin Wegner, James Weis, Laura Wentz, David Wenzel, Jennifer Wenzel, Mark Westelev, Richard Wetzel, Jeffrey White, Jane Whitney, David Wiedenfeld, Cory Wiedenhoef, Gary Wiegel, Kyle Wiktor, John Wilke, Colleen Wilkinson, David

Willard, Andrew Williams, Carol Williams, Catherine Winans, Mary Winegar, Ben Winesett, Marlyn Winter, John Winze, Debbie Wisser, Max Witynski, Matthew Wojtyla, Ted Wolff, David Womack, George Wood, Steve Wood, Thomas Wood, Julie Woodcock, Woodland Dunes Nature Center, Mason Woods, Jian-Long Wu, Sarah Wynn, Quentin Yoerger, Tom Younkin, Jeff Yunke, Jayne Zabrowski, Jody Zamirowski, Norma Zehner, Tom Ziebell, Haydee Zimmerman, Roy Zimmerman, Brad Zinda, Kelly Zopfi, and Jeff Zuhlike.



Eastern Kingbird by Stephen Fisher

# WSO Records Committee Report: Summer 2014

*Quentin Yoerger*

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**T**he WSO Records Committee reviewed 28 records of 17 species for the Summer 2014 season, accepting 22 of them (79%). The season highlights included Blue Grosbeak from two locations. Little Gulls made another good showing along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Washington Island continued to be a migrant trap with Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and Western Kingbird.

## ACCEPTED RECORDS

Table 1 provides a list of records accepted by the WSO Records Committee during the Summer 2014 season. Information on each record, such as species, location, observer(s), and date(s), is accompanied by the tally of votes made by the five-person committee. Records with one or fewer dissenting votes are accepted into the state records.

## RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

In the header for each record, voting tallies are shown in parentheses. Votes to accept are listed first. Two or more dissenting votes from the five-person

committee results in a Record Not Accepted.

### **Black-chinned Hummingbird—**

Ice Age Trail in Two Rivers, Manitowoc County, 07 June and 10 June 2014 (0-5).

The bird was observed on two dates at very close range. The first observer watched the bird while perched and focused on attempting to see the red throat. After being unable to note any red in the gorget started to note other field marks and submitted this description: “The color of the back, wings, and tail was darker than the emerald green of ruby-throated hummingbirds, the breast looked dingy as compared to white”. The second observer described the bird as: “The hummingbird was a male with a green back, sides and crown, dark gorget and light coloured breast and neck area and belly”.

Both observers focus much of their attention on trying to see the ruby iridescence in the throat on this bird and based their identification on the lack of this iridescence. Several fieldmarks that would help positively ID this bird were

Table 1. Summer, 2014 Accepted Records

Species	Date	Observer	Location	County	Photo	Vote
Black-bellied Whistling Duck	7/6	Mike Wanger	Private residence	Ozaukee	Yes	5 - 0
Blue Grosbeak	6/10	Darrell Schiffman	Prairie Grove Rd	Iowa		4 - 1
Blue Grosbeak	6/3	Aaron Holschbach	Spring Green Preserve - West	Sauk		5 - 0
Blue Grosbeak	6/4	Daryl Tessen	Spring Green Preserve - West	Sauk		5 - 0
Blue Grosbeak	6/4	Dale Bonk	Spring Green Preserve - West	Sauk	Yes	5 - 0
Blue Grosbeak	6/5	Thomas Wood	Spring Green Preserve - West	Sauk		5 - 0
Blue Grosbeak	6/5	Jym Mooney	Spring Green Preserve - West	Sauk	Yes	5 - 0
Glossy Ibis	5/21	Darrell Schiffman	Horicon Marsh	Fond du Lac	Yes	5 - 0
King Rail	6/1	Kyle Lindemer	Belleville Community Park	Dane	Yes	5 - 0
King Rail	7/22	Darrell Schiffman	Horicon Marsh - Old Marsh Rd	Dodge		5 - 0
Lark Bunting	6/14	John Bates	Powell Marsh	Vilas		5 - 0
Little Gull	6/6	Thomas Wood	Deland Park Sheboygan	Sheboygan		5 - 0
Little Gull	6/17	Thomas Wood	Manitowoc Impoundment	Manitowoc		5 - 0
Little Gull	6/13	Amar Ayyash	Manitowoc Lakefront	Manitowoc	Yes	5 - 0
Little Gull	6/9	Jym Mooney	North Point Sheboygan	Sheboygan	Yes	5 - 0
Painted Bunting	6/21	Tom Schultz	Bluffton Road	Green Lake	Yes	5 - 0
Prairie Warbler	6/30	Melody Walsh	Rock Island State Park	Door	Yes	5 - 0
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	6/23	Melody Walsh	Airport Rd Washington Island	Door	Yes	5 - 0
Western Kingbird	6/5	Dan Belter	Spring Brook Road	Marathon	Yes	5 - 0
Western Kingbird	6/7	Tom Schultz	Washington Island	Door	Yes	5 - 0
White-winged Dove	6/24	Dan Belter	Eau Pleine Rd - Spencer	Marathon	Yes	5 - 0
White-winged Dove	6/24	Daryl Tessen	Eau Pleine Rd - Spencer	Marathon		5 - 0
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	7/9	Thomas Wood	Lakeshore State Park	Milwaukee		5 - 0

not noted. The committee would like to see a description of the wing projection, bill shape and length, and a purple gorget to clinch the ID.

**Little Blue Heron—**

Lake Mason, Adams County, 08 July 2014 (0-5).

The description submitted was “bird is a blue grayish color with a browner head and neck. Beak is pointed and black. There is a white stripe down the front of its neck and breast. Short tail, long wading legs”. The bird was photographed and pictures were provided. The photo submitted was of a Green Heron.

**Mountain Bluebird—**

Stone Lake, Price County, 10 June 2014 (1-4).

The bird was seen walking to the edge of the lake. It was described as “Same size as Eastern Bluebirds but a very light color on its back and its breast/a very light blue with grey on its back. The breast was very easy to see with a very light orange, no spots.” This report describes a female bluebird but lacks detail sufficient to rule out a drab female Eastern Bluebird.

**Western Kingbird—**

Spring Brook Road, Marathon County, 5 June 2014 (0-5).

The description submitted was “grayish, w/yellow belly, dark wing, dark

stripe between eye and beak.” This is an example of incomplete documentation of a bird reported by others and accepted by the Records Committee. All reports submitted should be able to independently identify the bird. This report doesn’t mention anything about the size or shape of the bird. Nor does it make any attempt to eliminate the very similar Couch’s or Tropical Kingbird.

**Wood Stork—**

Big Muskego Lake, Waukesha County, 13 July 2014 (1-4).

The observation was made with the naked eye of birds flying over. The description provided was “observed 2 large white birds flying north along the east shoreline of Big Muskego Lake. As they came into full view overhead I could plainly see the black flight feathers as well as the yellow-colored bills indicating they were juveniles.” “The all black flight feathers of the wood storks were the first thing I noticed and what stood out the most as an identifier.”

The Committee found this to be an interesting report. The report is not being accepted because members felt that the description does not fully eliminate other similar inflight species such as White Ibis or White Pelican.





Cedar Waxwing by David Franzen

## “By the Wayside”—Summer 2014

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*These reports of rare species include  
King Rail and Lark Bunting.*

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### **KING RAIL** *(Rallus elegans)*

**22 July 2014, Horicon National Wildlife Refuge, Dodge County**— The first bird was fully on the road and visible. A second adult came out of the rushes and was visible at the edge of the road. Finally a black chick came out of the weeds and stood on the road before all three headed back into the cattails. The rail was viewed from a front view only and with a side view of the neck and head. The rail on the road was twice the size of a Virginia Rail and close to the size of a Green Heron. Large slender beak with slight curvature downward. Very rusty colored neck and rusty cheeks with white streak above the eye.—*Darrell Schiffman, Waunakee, Wisconsin.*

### **LARK BUNTING** *(Calamospiza melanocorys)*

**14 June 2014, Powell Marsh Wildlife Management Area, Vilas County**— The bird was observed twice standing on the dike path out in front of us as we walked southwest into the Powell Marsh WMA. The first time was brief, and what we clearly saw was a bird about the size of a Red-winged Blackbird that was all black except for very obvious white

wing patches. It flew quickly, and the white wing patches were again very obvious in flight. It dove into some dense shrubbery and we lost sight of it. My first thought was a Red-winged Blackbird that was a partial albino—the Lark Bunting possibility simply didn’t occur to me. A minute later it had landed out in front of us again, and this time it sat on the path for about two minutes, giving us very good looks through our binoculars. Again, the overall shape and coloration was that of a Red-winged Blackbird, perhaps a bit smaller, but the white wing patches were dramatic. We approached the bird slowly, getting to within 75 feet or less, and the three of us (my wife, daughter, and I) all exchanged the one pair of binoculars we had along and had lengthy looks. The bird eventually flew again eastward and disappeared into some shrubs. I’ve only seen a Lark Bunting once before out west, so we pondered this sighting for a minute or more until finally the mental picture of a Lark Bunting popped into my aging mind, and we pulled out our iPhone and looked it up on iBirdPro, and the bird exactly matched the picture. The bird didn’t sing, but the very clear and close visual contact clearly confirmed what we had seen was a Lark Bunting.—*John Bates, Mercer, Wisconsin.*



Northern Harrier Chicks by Alyssa DeRubeis

# Wisconsin Flycatcher Slam

*Tim Hahn*

**I**t was more good fortune than intrepid birding, but even so on 1 June, 2013 I had about as good a flycatcher day as any birder could hope to have in Wisconsin.

Anytime I'm birding with friends, and we've nearly checked off an entire category of birds on the WSO check list, I like to see if we can complete a "slam"—all likely corvids, all likely swallows, all likely plovers, etc. The starred/review species don't count, since they either aren't expected in the state, or at least they are only expected in very specific locations. Most of these groups have four, five or six species to find which would constitute a "slam" which, given location and season, usually isn't all that difficult, but is always fun. A flycatcher slam, however, was not something I'd ever considered since it includes ten species. An empid slam, perhaps, but not all the flycatchers. But little did I know that waking up on the first day of June, having snoozed through my alarm enough times that I probably missed a species or two, that an odd detour, birding at highway speed, and grilling burgers would lead to accomplishing this "feat".

The day started at Ryan Park in Pewaukee, my new favorite birding spot. Eastern Kingbirds (*kzeet kzeet*) and Eastern Wood-Pewees (*peee-a-weee*) had become standard fare at the park by this point in the season, but a Willow Fly-

catcher (*fitz-bew*) was a new bird for the park this spring. Its song had alerted me to its presence, and I located it traveling across the prairie, stopping at each bush to sing and allow for ID confirmation.

I had planned to meet my friend Paula in Delafield, but I was running ahead of schedule so I decided to take a jaunt down a road I'd never traveled before, because it looked like good habitat. My instincts were right, and at the corner of Nagawicka and Oakwood Roads, with my windows down, I heard an Alder Flycatcher demand "*free beer!*" I parked and stepped out of the car for a few minutes to hopefully hear the bird repeat its song for confirmation. A few local residents slowed as they drove past to inspect the random person standing on the side of the road at 8:00 am on a Saturday, staring into the scrubby woods. Finally I heard it again "*free beer!*" just before a Great Crested Flycatcher (*greeep!*) called nearby for comparison. I was pretty stoked at this point, as Alder Flycatcher is not a bird one can expect to find every year in Waukesha County.

Our plans were to meet up with the Benjamin F. Goss Bird Club, of which we are both members, to spend the day birding with them in the Southern Kettle Moraine State Forest. We stopped at the Emma Carlin Trail to check for a Yellow-breasted Chat, which we found,

and turned the corner to find the birding group. We heard more Great Crested Flycatchers, Eastern Wood-Pee-wees, and the anticipated Acadian Flycatcher (*pizza!*), with some Cerulean and Hooded Warblers to boot. We hit the road to our next spot, and on the road south of Palmyra a singing Least Flycatcher (*chebek*) made itself known with perfect timing as we past it at highway speed.

Probably the most unexpected flycatcher was a near miss at Young Prairie. Paula and I had gone ahead of the group to scout a pond for possible shorebirds. Not much was around except a few Killdeer and a single Spotted Sandpiper so we scanned the skies for raptors turning up a single immature Red-tailed Hawk. We soon got word that the rest of the group had been held up by the viewing of an Olive-sided Flycatcher that a new birder named Dodie had spotted. I shrugged my shoulders as the group was moving on for Lark and Grasshopper Sparrows ahead. Once we found the sparrows, though, we were encouraged by the group to head back and make an attempt to find the Olive-sided. It was a good thing we took their advice, because the bird cooperated well, and made its U-shaped sorties from its perch, returning back each time. As we left the Olive-sided Flycatcher (*quick three beers!*), we heard a drive-by Eastern Phoebe (*fee-bee, bee-fee*), leaving me a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher short of the flycatcher slam.

Having ended a great outing with the Goss bird club, I was completely satisfied with the birds we had seen/heard for the day. Paula and I were tired and hungry, and I had dinner plans with friends back home. Besides, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, although being a late

migrant, would still be a tough find, as there is nowhere in the area one would expect to find this species. Accidentally tripping onto one would be my only hope, and I was far too tired to continue birding all day in hopes of *maybe* finding one, so we called it a day.

Later, around dinnertime, I was grilling out with beer in hand and relaxing with my cousin Aaron and his wife Lisa on their deck, which has a nice second-story view of a marshy area in the Pewaukee River basin. And since a birder is never not-birding, I kept myself aware of my surroundings, keeping an eye and ear on the birds. As Willow and Least Flycatchers sang from the marsh, a Common Nighthawk flew overhead, and about twenty or so American Goldfinches made such a raucous noise that even my non-birding friends took notice. I was standing by the grill flipping burgers when I heard what sounded like "*kill-it*," so I took notice and listened intently. I heard it again—"kill-it." I wasn't 100% convinced that I wasn't forcing the ID to fit what I wanted to hear so I kept listening. Most often when I hear empids I am not immediately sure of the ID, and I need to hear them a number of times to be sure. This time was no different and I listened again for the singing flycatcher. The song didn't repeat, but I heard what sounded like the "*tuee*" contact call of the Yellow-bellied, and then nothing. Shoot! I resigned myself to leaving it as an unknown empid. Sp. and moved on to finally eating dinner and chatting with friends. About fifteen minutes passed and suddenly "*kill-it*" came from the marsh again. And then again "*kill-it*," this time louder and much closer. I quickly scanned the marsh and there it was, a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher perched in a tree on the

edge of the marsh, not more than 75 feet away from the deck. A FLYCATCHER SLAM! This last flycatcher of the day couldn't have been easier! I almost couldn't believe it, so I had to share it with anyone who would listen. My friends had no concept of what had just happened, so I logged onto my cousin's computer and shared it with my bird-

ing friends on the listservs. Surely a flycatcher slam in Wisconsin is not something that requires outstanding skill, but it certainly doesn't happen every day. So after today, I have my flycatchers checked off for the year, and I can now concentrate on filling my list of sparrows . . . or shorebirds . . . or gulls. Ugh . . . gulls.



Red-eyed Vireo on Nest by David Franzen



Common Yellowthroat by Cynthia Bridge

## About the Artists

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**Amar Ayyash** lives in Frankfort, Illinois where he teaches math for a living. Most of his time in the field is spent watching and photographing gulls. His fascination with this family has resulted in the most well-known gull website in North America, <[anythingglarus.com](http://anythingglarus.com)>. Amar serves on the Board of Directors of the Illinois Ornithological Society and he also coordinates the annual IOS Gull Frolic.

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**Cynthia Bridge** has been an avid birder for the past 22 years ever since taking Ornithology at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. In recent years she has taken up amateur photography and digiscoping to complement her birding passion. Cynthia also serves as a member of the Wisconsin eBird review team.

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

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**Alyssa DeRubeis**, a Minnesota native, has been spending the past year hopping from one field job to the next. She has worked in Arkansas, Iowa, South Dakota, and Wisconsin, where the work varies from wildlife (mostly bird) surveys to environmental education. She hopes to pursue a Master's Degree in wildlife conservation in the near future. Alyssa graduated from UW-Stevens Point in May 2013 with Bachelor's Degrees in Wildlife Ecology and Biology. She has been birding since 1996 as a five-year old and started snapping photos in 2011. The natural world never ceases to amaze her, whether it's a bird, a bug, or simply a nice vista.

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



in the wonderful Wisconsin outdoors, and lifelong learning.

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**Janet Flynn** is best known for her watercolor paintings of Sandhill and Whooping cranes. She has had numerous exhibitions of her work at The International Crane Foundation in Baraboo, Wisconsin. Through The International Crane Foundation and various conservation groups she uses her art to help protect the wild creatures of Wisconsin and their habitat. She paints with watercolor, gouache, acrylic and other watermedia to create personal interpretations of her life in rural Wisconsin. "Life experience and observation are my teachers and the connection between art and nature my passion. I have always sought out nature and looked upon her with a loving artist's eye and understood that I was simply a part of life's delicate tapestry. I have learned that the ache in my heart at the call of the crane on its southward migration, the loneliness of the winter landscape and unbounded joy at the stirrings of spring are a result of a knowledge that the unraveling of nature's tapestry would in all certainty wash me away with all her lovely sounds, smells and wondrous sights. I simply wish to spend my earth journey wandering nature's paths and communicate through imagery the treasures I have found."

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**David Franzen** and his wife June have lived in Phelps, Wisconsin since 1969. He worked for 34 years in the woods of northern Wisconsin, retired from the U.S. Forest Service in 2001 and from a private forestry consulting business in

2004. After retirement he took up bird photography with most of his work being shot within 100 yards of his house. His primary interest is in photographing bird behavior. He does not use blinds, but quietly waits in a chair for a bird to strike an interesting pose within close range. During 34 years of forestry work, he captured with the mind, many images that far surpass what he has captured with the camera. The most beautiful nature scene he ever viewed was encountered while trout fishing a small stream surrounded by maple forest that had sparse understory prior to spring leaf emergence. On that misty morning, a huge timber wolf glided over a hill across the stream and came toward him to stream's edge. When a wolf moves slowly, it kind of glides effortlessly, and this big guy was more like a spirit than a real animal. A real magical moment. David does occasional slide programs for local groups.

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**Sunil Gopalan** moonlights as a nature photographer and birding enthusiast. His primary focus with wildlife photography is to capture nature in its raw form in the least intrusive manner possible. His other photography interests lie in macro and landscape imagery, as well as pictures of his family. He currently lives and works in the Madison area with his family and credits his wife Heidi for allowing this father to indulge in his passion. His work from Wisconsin and beyond can be viewed at: [www.sunilsimages.com](http://www.sunilsimages.com)

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**Davor Grgic** is an avid birder and amateur nature photographer. He and his wife Patti live in rural Elkhart Lake.

When his “day job” in IT and sustainability permits, he also enjoys travelling and exploring nature. In addition to birds, Davor’s photography interests include other wildlife, landscape and occasional macrophotography. Beyond Wisconsin, many of his photographs reflect bird and nature explorations across the U.S. and international locations. You can find more of his work at: [www.flickr.com/photos/dgrgic](http://www.flickr.com/photos/dgrgic)

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**Bob Larson**, who lives in Kaukauna, is an advanced amateur photographer who concentrates his photography in the Fox Valley area. All nature centers and Haunts areas are fair game. Outagamie, Winnebago, Calumet, Brown,

and Waushara Counties get the most attention. He switched to digital just before it became affordable and has been learning ever since.

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

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Red-necked Grebe by David Lund



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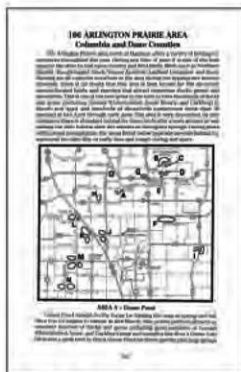
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Red-headed Woodpecker by Dennis Connell

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