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The Passenger Pigeon



Fall, 1985 — Volume 47, No. 3



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Cover Photo: Common Mergansers by Paul Blanchard

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Common Goldeneyes Nesting in Wisconsin

By Bruce Bacon and Sam Moore

Evidence of Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*) nesting in Wisconsin is very limited even though Minnesota and Michigan goldeneye breeding range borders northern Wisconsin. Bellrose (1976) estimated Minnesota's Common Goldeneye breeding population at 1,000 and Michigan's at 4,000. M. Zicus (pers. comm.) indicates Minnesota's current breeding goldeneye population is probably around 14,000.

Because of Northern Wisconsin's close proximity to these two populations, it would seem probable that goldeneyes should nest there. Common Goldeneye breeding habitat is described as large sand-bottomed fish lakes with a fringe of hardstem bulrush (Johnson 1962, M. Zicus pers. comm.). Because of the large number of lakes across northern Wisconsin, there are probably many lakes that fit such a description.

Common Goldeneyes nest in tree cavities of similar size to those used by Wood Ducks (*Aix sponsa*), and they also use artificial nest boxes. Since breeding Wood Ducks are common throughout northern Wisconsin, nest cavities are probably not a limiting factor to Common Goldeneyes there.

Jahn and Hunt (1964) reported no Common Goldeneye broods in Wisconsin from 1947 through 1963. Kumlien and Hollister (1903) referred to "several breeding records for northern Wisconsin", but did not elaborate on them. More recent surveys in 1965-66 and 1968-70 (March, Martz, and Hunt 1973) did not report rare breeding waterfowl such as goldeneyes and a search of their field notes found no Common goldeneye breeding recorded. R.A. Hunt (pers. comm.) reported the lack of goldeneye breeding records despite many years of contact with Wisconsin D.N.R. field personnel to establish breeding duck records.

Wisconsin Society for Ornithology records (Ray Anderson, pers. comm.) were searched for goldeneye breeding records. There were several records of broods seen along Door County in Lake Michigan. Tom Erdmann (pers. comm.) also reports broods seen near Toft's Point in Lake Michigan and on Mud Lake in Door County since 1980. These reports suggest a local breeding population of Common Goldeneyes exists in Door County. This population is probably nesting in natural cavities.

Three brood sightings in Nelson Lake, Sawyer County during the summer of 1984 were reported to the junior author. Nelson Lake fits Johnson's (1962) definition of Common Goldeneye brood habitat. Approximately 12 houses have been put up on Nelson Lake by private individuals. An effort was made to contact owners and obtain permission to check the houses for evidence of Common Goldeneye nesting. On February 20th, 1985 the junior author found the remains of a goldeneye nest in a wooden wood duck house. The house contained bluish-green egg chips identified as Common Goldeneye eggs (Harrison 1978, M. Zicus, pers. comm.) and grayish-white down and narrow white breast feathers with a dark shaft which key out to Common Goldeneye feathers (Broley 1950). The house had an entrance slightly larger than the standard three by four inch opening. M. Zicus reports goldeneyes are able to enter the standard entrances but sometimes with much difficulty. No effort was made to evaluate the availability of natural cavities, but it can be assumed there are some present in the area.

During the winter of 1984-85, nest boxes for Wood Ducks and goldeneyes were put up on Nelson Lake. The local Wisconsin Conservation Corps

Crew built and erected 75 with the standard entrance size. A lesser number of houses were also put up by lake property owners who contacted the junior author beforehand and were advised to enlarge the entrances of the boxes. All the new houses will be closely watched in order to document use by Common Goldeneyes.

These reports from Nelson Lake and Door County are the only evidence of Common Goldeneye breeding in Wisconsin that we could find. Wisconsin is at the southern edge of their breeding range and it is probable that there are few records in the state since the original forests were logged off. Anyone having evidence of Common Goldeneyes breeding in Wisconsin is requested to send that information to one of the authors.

Thanks to R.A. Hunt and J.O. Evrard for their review and comments on this article.

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Great Blue Heron Killed by Kite String

By James O. Evrard

Accidental bird deaths are caused by a variety of man-made objects and materials. Some birds have become entangled in fishing line (McMullen 1984), string (Foreman et. al. 1978), and even hair from horses (Hendricks and Martin 1972, Knight and Ryan 1980), and humans (Fillmore and Titman 1977, Brittingham 1984).

On 9 April 1984, I discovered a dead Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) entangled in a kite string in a roadside pool of the outlet of Wagon Landing Springs (SENW of Section 20, T32N, R17W, Town of Alden, Polk County). The bird was suspended at the water surface by the string which was twisted and knotted around 4 primary feathers on the right wing and entangled in a tree on one side of the stream and a clump of Alder (*Alnus rugosa*) on the other side (Fig. 1). The thin kite string appeared to have been made of cotton and although easily stretched, broke readily when I pulled on it.

Evidently when someone was flying a kite in the area, the string broke or the kite went out of control. When the kite came down, the string tangled in the vegetation along the road and was simply left there. The Great Blue Heron apparently became entangled in the string when it flew to the pool to feed. A large number of minnows which I saw in the pool just below a road culvert may have attracted the heron. The bird apparently could not free itself due to the elasticity of the string and the vegetation in which it was entangled. The Heron apparently had drowned, as only the right wing was held above the water when I found the bird.

People should be made more aware of the potential danger to wildlife of seemingly innocuous materials such as kite string, fishing line, hair, and other materials that are discarded in the environment.

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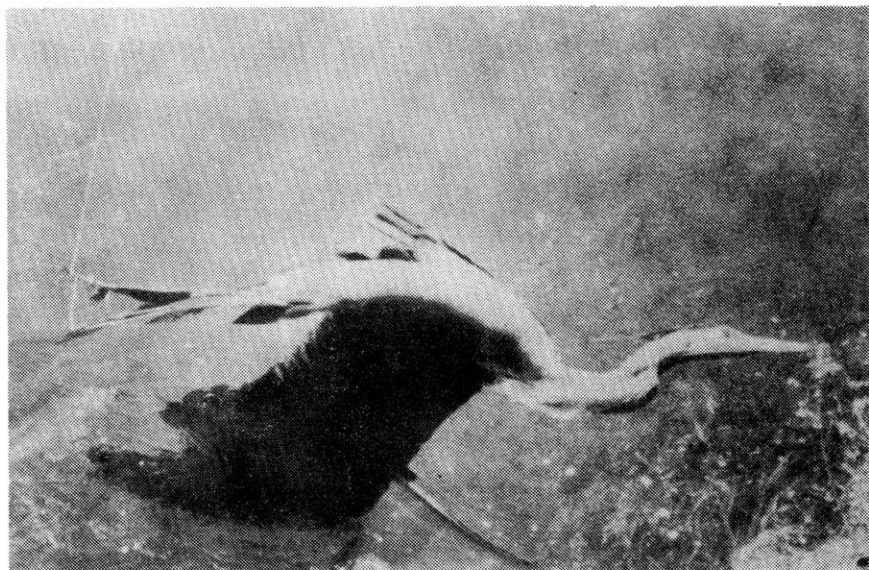
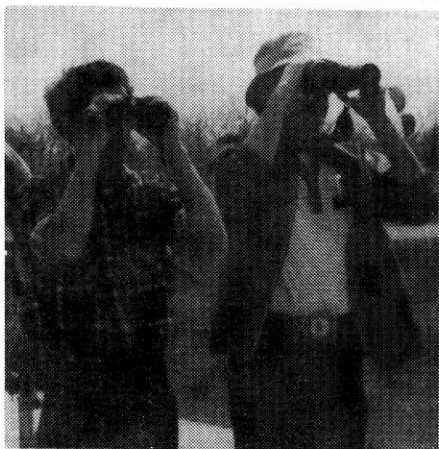


Figure 1. Great Blue Heron entangled in kite string.



FIND THIS BIRD ONLY IN RACINE

W.H. PUGH OIL CO., Racine, WI

Procedures and Policies of the WSO Records Committee

The WSO Records Committee was formed by the Society in 1979 to evaluate the validity of sight records of rare birds in Wisconsin. The Committee published a review of its purposes and policies at that time (**Passenger Pigeon** 41:150-154, 1979) but an update is needed after five years' experience in evaluating reports. This article describes the procedures, policies, and outlook of the Committee. It also gives some guidelines on the kind of evidence that serves best in corroborating sight identification of rare and out of season birds.

COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The WSO Records Committee is charged with evaluating written accounts or other evidence (photographs, tape recordings, etc.) of observations of all species (1) not previously recorded in Wisconsin, (2) so far recorded only on a hypothetical basis in the state, (3) recorded in the state 10 or fewer times, or (4) reported at extraordinary dates of arrival, departure, or other unseasonal occurrence.

The Committee now reviews about 50-70 observations each year. Reports of species never previously seen in Wisconsin (most recently the Hermit Warbler in 1982) are obviously infrequent, and rarities from the state's hypothetical list turn up only a few times a year. Most seasons do produce one or two sightings of commoner birds at extraordinary dates -- a Sandhill Crane in mid February, for example -- but the bulk of the Committee's work ordinarily involves birds from the third category, those with 10 or fewer confirmed records in the state. Table 1 lists species in this category as well as hypothetical species.

Table 1. Rare and hypothetical (*) birds automatically reviewed by the WSO Records Committee (October 1984).

Arctic Loon	Ivory Gull
Brown Pelican	* Roseate Tern
Anhinga	Arctic Tern
Magnificent Frigatebird	Least Tern
Tricolored Heron	White-winged Tern
* White Ibis	Dovekie
Glossy Ibis	Ancient Murrelet
* White-faced Ibis	Common Ground-Dove
Roseate Spoonbill	Groove-billed Ani
Wood Stork	Burrowing Owl
Trumpeter Swan	Chuck-will's-widow
Ross' Goose	* Rufous Hummingbird
White-cheeked Pintail	Lewis' Woodpecker
Common Eider	* Western Wood-Pewee
King Eider	Say's Phoebe
Barrow's Goldeneye	* Vermilion Flycatcher
Masked Duck	* Cassin's Kingbird
Black Vulture	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
American Swallow-tailed Kite	Fork-tailed Flycatcher
Black-shouldered Kite	Clark's Nutcracker
Mississippi Kite	Brown-headed Nuthatch
Ferruginous Hawk	* Northern Wheatear
* Prairie Falcon	Mountain Bluebird
Willow Ptarmigan	Sage Thrasher
* Black Rail	Curve-billed Thrasher
Whooping Crane	* Sprague's Pipit
Snowy Plover	Gray Vireo
Black-necked Stilt	Black-throated Gray Warbler
* Spotted Redshank	Hermit Warbler
Eskimo Curlew	Kirtland's Warbler
Long-billed Curlew	* Painted Redstart
Black Turnstone	Lazuli Bunting
Purple Sandpiper	Painted Bunting
Curlew Sandpiper	Green-tailed Towhee
Red Phalarope	Black-throated Sparrow
Pomarine Jaeger	Baird's Sparrow
Long-tailed Jaeger	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Laughing Gull	Smith's Longspur
Common Black-headed Gull	Chestnut-collared Longspur
* Thayer's Gull	Rosy Finch
Lesser Black-backed Gull	* House Finch
Sabine's Gull	Eurasian Tree Sparrow

WSO requires documentation for about 40-50 other species, too, but sightings of rare birds known from Wisconsin by many records are usually examined by the Society's associate and seasonal editors, not the Records Committee. When the first version of Table 1 was drawn up in 1980, ten was arbitrarily chosen as the number of records that would separate extraordinarily rare and accidental species from "ordinary" rarities. Nevertheless, there are some borderline cases that don't fit cleanly into these

categories. For instance, the Committee customarily sees reports of a few birds considered to be difficult identifications, at least in some plumages, even though they had occurred more than 10 times. Also, any other report may be referred to the Committee at the discretion of the associate editor. For these reasons, the Committee has more or less regularly evaluated reports of eight more species not included in Table 1:

Gyr Falcon	Northern Hawk-Owl
Ruff	Great Gray Owl
Iceland Gull	Boreal Owl
Great Black-backed Gull	Black-headed Grosbeak

As acceptable records accumulate, Table 1 will be revised. The Western Tanager and Lark Bunting are two recent deletions. Documentations will still be needed but mandatory Committee review will not, although the associate editor might sometimes want to ask the Committee to evaluate sightings of birds other than spring males. New species will certainly be seen in the state. Changes in the list of reviewable species are natural as more fieldwork gives better and better information on rarities' status in Wisconsin.

COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Five Records Committee members appointed by the WSO Board serve staggered five-year terms. The Board chooses new Committee members from a list of two or more candidates nominated on the basis of their skills and experience in field identification, including at least five years of fieldwork in Wisconsin, as well as their editorial experience in evaluating rare bird reports. Some experience in other parts of North America is also desirable, and the Committee tries to include at least one member with overseas experience in identification.

Each Committee member, on the basis of the literature and his personal knowledge of a reported species and similar species, makes an independent judgment to accept or reject each report sent to the Committee. The basic criteria applied to this judgment are two. First, the bird must be seen and/or heard under conditions that make positive identification possible. Second, there must be written documentation or other evidence so complete and accurate that a critic, reviewing the evidence many years later, could still conclude that the description perfectly fits the identified species and conclusively rules out all other species.

After each member has made his independent judgments on a season's reports, he sends a copy of these decisions to the other Committee members. Decisions in this first part of the evaluation process usually include a brief explanation in support of each vote. When a member receives the others' opinions he's free to be swayed by their arguments and to switch his original vote. (A member who was also an observer of a reported rarity abstains from all discussion and voting on the report.) Changes in votes in this second step of the process are not very frequent but the Committee has found that this two-step method is sometimes useful in sharing subtle points of field experience or uncovering crucial references in the huge literature on identification. When no member has personal field experience with a reported species, the Committee seeks outside advice from people familiar with the bird. While such advice is obviously valuable, the actual decision on the report still lies with the Committee itself.

In the final vote after review of other members' opinions, a 5-0 or 4-1 majority (3-1 in case of absention) is required for acceptance of a report. Ac-

cepted reports are sent to WSO's associate editor for publication in the **Passenger Pigeon**, the journal of record for Wisconsin sightings. Observers involved in rejected reports are notified of rejection by personal letter from the Committee. Since 1983, a list of accepted reports has also been published annually in the **Passenger Pigeon** in collected form.

While Wisconsin's rare bird reports are also likely to be mentioned in the seasonal summaries in **American Birds (AB)**, publication there doesn't necessarily mean that the report has been accepted by the WSO Records Committee. Because of publishing deadlines, **AB's** regional editors must sometimes use their own judgment and accept a report before the WSO Committee is able to reach a final vote. This scheduling problem occasionally results in rejection of a report that's already seen print in **AB**.

COMMITTEE POLICIES

Standards for determining the status of a species in Wisconsin were discussed in detail in the Committee's 1979 article in the **Passenger Pigeon**. There have been no changes in those standards. In brief, a report of a bird never before recorded in Wisconsin (or previously recorded only on a hypothetical basis) will be considered a valid state record if accompanied by specimen, recognizable photograph or tape recording, or acceptable written accounts by two or more independent observers who saw and described the bird on separate occasions at the same general time and place. Reports of species new to Wisconsin or previously hypothetical will join or remain on the hypothetical list if one acceptable written account is provided but independent and acceptable corroboration by another observer on a separate occasion is lacking. There must also be, in all cases, a reasonable likelihood that a bird was not a release or escape from captivity.

Valid records depend on "acceptable" evidence. Deciding what's acceptable and what's not, most often in the form of written accounts, is the purpose of the Records Committee. The Committee's policies in judging acceptability are the ones most likely to arouse interest -- and sometimes dismay -- among observers.

There can be hard and fast rules to apply mechanistically to every rare bird report. Each observation entails a unique set of circumstances. The kind of description that's adequate for one species in terms of field marks and observational conditions may be insufficient for another species, or for the same species under different conditions. As noted, Committee members are free to use their experience, and to argue their case with other members, in deciding to accept or reject. There's inevitably an element of judgment in these decisions. A photograph is "objective evidence" but it still requires an opinion about the clarity of all necessary field marks. Written description is inherently less objective because observers can only describe in words what they believe they saw. Committee members try to treat written accounts as faithfully reported "pictures" but each member must use his judgment: does the description cover every essential feature? would the same features fit another species? were conditions good enough to be absolutely sure of all marks? We can't evade these judgments. Nevertheless, in the attempt to make its decisions as objectively and impartially as possible, the WSO Records Committee has adopted some basic policies to guide its work.

Descriptive Evidence Is Essential

The first and strictest of the Committee's policies has already been mentioned: evidence must be so complete and accurate that it rules out all other species and stands up under scrutiny many years later. The Committee was

established to try to give sight records as much value as specimens, insofar as that's possible, in verifying the occurrence of rare birds in Wisconsin. If that goal is to be achieved observers must provide evidence of lasting documentary worth in support of sight identifications. Short of recognizable photographs the best evidence is a thorough written description of the bird.

It's this point -- the nature of solid descriptive evidence -- that seems to be overlooked more often than any other part of the verification process. Assurances that a rare bird was "well seen" or "easily identified" or "unquestionable" can't substitute for careful description of all key features of the bird. An account that doesn't actually describe the bird itself fails on the face of it to meet the need for documentation that conclusively rules out other species. A critic looking at such an account years later would quickly and rightly conclude that it's unsupported by any real evidence.

It's sometimes said that familiarity with a species, long field experience, and a reputation for skill and accuracy in identification ought to be enough to validate rare bird reports, or at least enough reason to accept meager descriptions of "easy" species. The Committee disagrees. Future analysts will want factual descriptions of rarities from all observers. To base the Committee's decisions on reputation is to make them purely personal conclusions rather than evaluations of evidence. How should we determine whose reputation is strong enough and whose isn't? Whose identifications should be taken on faith and whose shouldn't? Where's the line to be drawn between good and not-so-good observers?

Past experience with a species and longstanding ability in identification are certainly desirable in support of rare bird sightings but they're not sufficient to verify reports. The Committee has rejected reports from highly reputable observers because there was little or no description of the bird. In a similar way, inexperience with a species can be a drawback but it's not decisive. Comprehensive accounts of rarities from people who've never before seen the species are often accepted.

Immediate Documentation Is Important

The basic need for complete and accurate evidence has led to a second policy: descriptions should be written immediately. If possible, on-the-spot notes should be made while a bird is under observation, and field notes should be transcribed to WSO's "exceptional record documentation form" on the same day. If on-the-spot notes can't be taken, or if there's a delay in getting copies of the WSO report form, all particulars of the sighting should be written out in the greatest possible detail on the same day and transferred to the "exceptional record" form (available from the associate editor) at the first opportunity.

In any case, every bit of detail about the bird should be put on paper as quickly as possible. Memories of an observation weeks or months after the fact are simply no match for on-the-scene or next-day descriptions. It's important, too, to use the WSO report form because it might ask for some detail that wasn't jotted down earlier. In the Committee's experience, accounts that don't use the WSO form are more likely to leave out some key point and a bit less likely to be accepted. Documentation of rarities needn't be submitted until the end of a season but it should be prepared -- and dated -- promptly. If description is based on on-the-spot notes, say so. Accounts written long after the observation certainly won't be rejected out of hand but the Committee will probably be more cautious about accepting reports that rely heavily on memory.

Decisions Are Usually Final

The Committee usually makes its decision on the basis of the observer's first account of a bird, and this is ordinarily its final decision. Only in unusual circumstances will it reconsider a rejected report on the basis of additional later description by the same observer. It's fair to ask that the facts of what was seen in the field be fully described when a report is first submitted. To invite added description much later is to run a risk of getting unsure memories (or even wishful recollections) rather than thoroughly reliable evidence.

One possible exception to this policy involves new observers who aren't familiar with the needs of the documentation process. Another exception is photographs that weren't included with the written account of a bird. Whenever the Committee is aware of the existence of photos or other independent evidence, it defers a decision until the extra evidence is available. Rejections may be reconsidered, too, if additional documentation was made at the time of the sighting without the Committee's knowledge. In one example, Minnesota and Wisconsin observers had sent separate accounts of a simultaneously seen jaeger at Duluth-Superior to their respective state organizations. It was right in this case to seek a copy of the Minnesota account and re-examine the rejection of the Wisconsin report.

However, it's good practice to double-check to make sure that everything is covered and explained in the original report of a rarity. Published descriptions of other unusual sightings are often good models. Write in your own words -- don't echo the language of the field guides -- and remember that simple straightforward language is best. The Committee always looks for intended meanings in a report, not fine points of style and grammar, but confusing grammar can weaken an observation. If a description says that "legs and bill were black and length was about the same as robin," there's no way except guesswork to know whether "length" means length of bill, length of legs, or maybe length of the whole bird. Proofread your own report and ask a friend to read it critically to see if everything's understandable.

COMMITTEE OUTLOOK

For most observers rare birds are exciting and for many people there's a competitive challenge in finding and identifying rarities. The possibilities of out of range and out of season birds seem endlessly remarkable, as exemplified by the Black Turnstone at Oshkosh in 1971 or the White-eyed Vireo at Madison in December 1979. Extravagant rarities like these two won't soon repeat themselves, a fact that makes them all the more interesting to many observers.

Biologically more significant are rare bird reports that do repeat themselves. A pattern of exceptional sightings may signal range expansion and population change. One classic North American case of recent years is the Cattle Egret, which has now been seen in all 50 states. Reports of the bird as a rarity have let us trace its spread and to some extent its population growth over the past four decades. The burst of records of the Mississippi Kite in Wisconsin and other northern states is a newer example of range expansion in progress. Sight records have made it obvious, too, that some sort of change is underway in the status of the Tricolored (formerly Louisiana) Heron. Before 1976 Wisconsin had only a single record (in 1955); since 1976 there have been about 13 acceptable observations.

Well documented sight records can also outline short term invasions that must have some biological importance for the species involved, though in most cases we can only guess about causes and effects. Rarities from the west (Townsend's Solitaires in the Great Plains and eastward in the winter of 1975-76), from the north (Northern Hawk-Owls in the winter of 1962-63), and from the south (Groove-billed Anis in Illinois, Ohio, Kentucky, and Wisconsin in the fall of 1981) can all stage "invasions" of varying strength and scope. Fall and winter appearances of the Varied Thrush in the eastern US -- annually in Wisconsin since 1963 -- are a phenomenon whose regularity has been confirmed by sight records. Weather is often invoked as a possible cause of vagrancy but only occasionally is there a really clear connection between weather systems and rare birds, as in the fallout of Hooded Warblers over southern Wisconsin and elsewhere in late March of 1950.

Detailed reports are still needed to clarify the status of some rare but probably regular visitors to the state. Iceland and Thayer's Gulls and Arctic Terns are particularly knotty problems. Other birds once considered surprising rarities -- the Great Gray Owl, for instance -- have now been shown or suspected to nest in Wisconsin. For species like this (and many lesser local rarities) breeding limits and especially breeding habitats are poorly known despite the implications for conservation of rare breeders.

Public Claims and Practical Problems

Whatever an observer's own interests may be, there's a common need for definitive reports. Anyone's entitled to make private note of a bird that's identified to his own satisfaction but observers should recognize the difference between a convincing personal experience and a public claim to an observation. The public needs evidence, and a records committee in Wisconsin or anywhere else is set up to apply reasonable standards of evidence and make sure that published reports are as accurate as can be.

The WSO Records Committee has accepted more than 60 percent of the 300+ records sent to it over the past five years. Identification and evaluation of some rarities are easy. The Purple Gallinule is a good example. It often overflies its normal range limits in spring and Wisconsin records of this spectacular bird have numbered at least 12 since 1930. Corroboration of rarities is much harder in other cases. Pocket-sized field guides can't describe all the variations on "typical" plumages. The distinctive juvenal plumages of shorebirds, for example, are scarcely treated in most guides. Protracted or individually variable molts add more difficulties in some hawks and gulls that take two to three years or more to reach adult plumage. Dark ibises, immature jaegers, female eiders, and other birds are intrinsically difficult identifications.

There can also be a noticeable degree of individual as well as subspecific variation in size, plumage, etc. in many birds, even though these effects may be hard to differentiate from those connected to age and sex. Some Glaucous Gulls can be as small as some Iceland Gulls. Some Rusty Blackbirds (old males?) show almost none of the rusty feathering in winter, even in a very close look, and might easily be mistaken for Brewer's Blackbirds. Some Mourning Warblers netted at Cedar Grove in spring have retained partial or even complete eye rings of fall birds and could be confused with Connecticut or MacGillivray's Warblers (Mueller, **Passenger Pigeon** 35:183, 1973). Also, some male Mournings have almost none of the black bib on the hood.

Every active field observer has seen individual birds that don't match the textbook example. Think of the differences among individuals in an abundant bird such as the Yellow-rumped Warbler; then think of the careful observation and description that would be needed to distinguish some Yellow-rumps from some Cape May Warblers in late autumn or winter. Further problems with hybrids and albinistic individuals are especially troublesome among the white-winged, black-backed, and herring-type gulls. Waterfowl, grosbeaks, and others can also be difficult because of hybridization.

Probabilities

The chance of hybrids or aberrant plumages in common birds might seem too remote to give any real reason to question reports of similar-looking rarities. But rarities, out of range or out of season, are also unlikely events. Who can say what's more improbable? Even a 1-in-1000 chance of atypical plumage could add up to a substantial number of birds in a species that occurs in Wisconsin by tens or hundreds of thousands.

In the same way, the chance of confusing an out of range or out of season bird with some other rarity can't be downplayed simply because one of them seems less likely on the basis of previous reports, normal range limits, etc. In late fall and winter, western strays sometimes turn out to be more frequent in the eastern US than late-lingering birds of their local counterparts. Western Kingbirds (rather than Eastern) are an annual example on the Atlantic coast in winter. Mountain Bluebirds might be a case in point in northern parts of Wisconsin. Newfield (**Passenger Pigeon** 43:163-164, 1981) for still another example, discusses the uncertainties of identifying winter hummingbirds in the northern and eastern states. Is there any obvious logic in Wisconsin sightings of Dovekies (two records, January and March, 800-900 miles from the nearest Atlantic wintering grounds) vs. Ancient Murrelets (five records, October-April, 1800 miles from the Pacific coast)?

Escapes and Exotics

Probabilities are a key point in the case of escaped birds. Geese, ducks, hawks, parrots, and some others are often kept in captivity. Escapes and releases are rather common. Nobody imagines that the roadside Chukar, the (Australian) Black Swan in Dane County in 1974, or the Red-crested (Brazilian) Cardinal at Rice Lake in 1974-75 had somehow reached Wisconsin on their own power. These birds and most of the other exotics seen here do not qualify for the state list, although it is useful to keep track of them because some, like the Mute Swan, could become established as breeding birds.

The problem of escapes gets more confusing, however, when native North American birds and a few possible stragglers from Eurasia are involved. In the winter of 1981-82, a Gray-breasted Jay (then known as the Mexican Jay) was discovered near Milwaukee. Its identity was documented beyond question by several observers but checks with authorities in New Mexico showed that this jay is very sedentary, almost never straying anywhere north or east of its usual limits in the southwestern US. The Committee decided that there was not a "reasonable likelihood" of natural vagrancy. The jay was classed as a possible or probable escape. From time to time, similar doubts have applied to other birds, particularly waterfowl. The number of obvious escapes (and the continuing chance of illegal captives) demands a good deal of caution. The Committee

looks into each case but it's often impossible to demonstrate that a questionable bird is truly likely to be wild.

GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENTING RARITIES

None of the preceding cautions means to imply that problems of identification are overwhelming, and given a good look at the bird, most observers will be able to identify most species. Identifying a rarity, however, is only the first step in establishing an acceptable record. Observers are also responsible for the second step of providing firm evidence in support of their identifications.

The following guidelines should help to write a rare bird report that can be accepted and published as a valid sight record for Wisconsin.

1. *Describe the bird itself.* Too often an account of some rarity will head off on tangents of time, place, circumstance, and general delight in seeing the bird without ever getting 'round to detailing crucial features of identification. Such accounts can be entertaining but they're apt to miss the main point of the report: to describe the bird and give direct evidence of careful and accurate identification.
2. *Be meticulous in describing the bird.* Most people have trained themselves to use a systematic approach to identification. They look at an unexpected bird piece by piece and make note of every feature. In checking the underparts, for example, they'll examine chin, throat, breast, belly, sides, and undertail and catalog colors, streaks, spots, and other marks in each area. The same system should carry over to written descriptions of a bird. The need for feather by feather descriptions will vary among species but it's safest to put everything you saw into the report of a rarity. Some species do require minute descriptions. Gulls are notorious problems. Almost every North American species has now been found in the Midwest, including such unlikely birds as Ross' and Heermann's Gulls. Both Common Black-headed and Lesser Black-backed Gulls have been added to the Wisconsin list in the past six years. No group of birds is better illustration of the principle that rarities must be unequivocally distinguished from all possibilities (including hybrids) and not just local species apt to be present at the same time of year.
3. *Be explicit.* If a bird was seen in flight, for example, as well as at rest, say so outright. Choose your words for maximum descriptive value: the Black-throated Sparrow (five state records) has a "striking black and white head pattern" or even "a black bib and a striped appearance of black and white above and below the eye," but so for that matter do some other species. It would be better to specify the exact distribution of black and white on crown, face, throat, etc.
4. *Describe the bird's behavior.* Flight and feeding behaviors, postures, wing and tail flicks, and so on are often distinctive enough to carry their own significance as field marks. Again, be explicit "Soaring," for example, would not give any detail about the useful behavioral differences between the flight of Black and Turkey Vultures.
5. *Make sketches or if possible, take photos.* In-the-field sketches ought to be used much more often, especially in diagramming patterns that are hard to put into words. You needn't be an artist to make a useful drawing. Photos are even better, especially in showing shape and proportions. Long shots are valuable if the focus is sharp enough to allow magnification; slides are obviously better than prints for this purpose. Photos and sketches should supplement written descriptions, not replace them.

6. *Contrast a rare bird directly to other more familiar species* on the scene in terms of size, shades of color, etc. Be as precise as you can: comparative body size or bill size, for example, is best estimated as proportional length or bulk -- say, 2/3 that of another species -- rather than simply "smaller." Estimates in terms of inches are treacherous.
7. *Make full use of the chance for "comparison with similar species"* on the back page of the documentation form. This section is the place to list other species with which the identified bird might be confused, and to re-emphasize those features that preclude all similar birds.

Several small grassland birds, for example, show similar sizes, various amounts of white in the tail, and more or less streaked appearances for much of the year in one or both sexes. An account of a midwinter Water Pipit -- to choose just one of the many possible examples in this group -- would want to use the "similar species" section to rule out not only Sprague's Pipit but also longspurs, sparrows (especially Vesper), Lark Bunting, and immature Horned Lark. A very thorough comparison might even want to consider the remote chance of the several Old World pipits that occur casually in arctic America.

Many comparative eliminations are easy. In this case, bill shape quickly separates pipits from longspurs, sparrows, and buntings. Some reporters are content to let the "narrative" section of the form imply these comparisons: bill shape is described so it's supposed to be assumed, though it's never said so forthrightly, that longspurs etc. were considered and ruled out. Why depend on the narrative for an implied comparison, however, when one short sentence under "similar species" could make the comparison explicit? Alternative identifications should be clearly examined and dismissed.

8. *Don't neglect a short description of habitat, weather, lighting, and optical equipment.* Pace off the distance to the bird, or measure it in some other way. The field marks that readily identify a bird through binoculars at 200 feet in good over-the-shoulder light are not always so obvious through a high-powered scope on a bleak day or wind-tossed lake at a vaguely guessed distance of 300 yards.
9. *Don't rely too much on one or two popular field guides* in identifying difficult species. Neither space nor design really lets the standard guides handle the intricate problems of some rarities. The National Geographic and Audubon "master" guides are often but not always better. Observers who expect to see and report rare birds will want to find a way to keep up with the periodical literature in **American Birds** and **Birding** as well as the state and regional journals and (for some species) the excellent British sources. A private library soon becomes expensive but public libraries can obtain photocopies of special items at cost. Among books, Harrison's **Seabirds** (Houghton Mifflin 1983) and Grant's **Gulls** (1982, available in the US from Buteo Books) are important.

These guidelines may seem to exaggerate the difficulties of identifying rare birds. In most cases that's true. The Committee firmly believes, as noted earlier, that most rarities are readily identified by observers who get a decent look at the bird. However, the real emphasis in these guidelines is not the problem of identifying rarities but rather the problem of describing them completely and convincingly to other people, present and future.

Committee members find no joy in rejecting reports, particularly because they suspect that most identifications are probably accurate. But "pro-

bably'' is not enough and the Committee's intuitions are not enough. Once a record appears in print in the **Passenger Pigeon**, it becomes an established part of the literature on Wisconsin birds, and a reliable literature can't deal in probabilities.

Rejection of a rare bird report obviously doesn't mean to malign the observer's ability, or to suggest that the bird was necessarily misidentified. Rejection does mean, however, that a report was judged insufficient to corroborate the identification beyond doubt. Some birds are simply not seen well enough to identify with certainty. A few species may at times be unidentifiable in the field. Also, misidentifications do occur and nobody is infallible. No less a field authority than George M. Sutton described his own mistakes in sight identification (**American Birds** 37:230, 1983). New knowledge of plumages and identification, too, sometimes puts previous reports in doubt.

Evaluation of rare bird reports by a committee using fair and clear standards of evidence is one way to try to determine the validity of sight records. Equally important in the long run are documentation files that allow re-examination of reports if the need arises. Observers should be ready to invest as much care in describing their observations as they did in making them, because documentary evidence is vital to the value of a report. Otherwise those who are skeptical of the worth of sight records will have good reason for skepticism.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We want to thank earlier Committee members -- Bill Foster, Joe Hickey, Bill Hilsenhoff, Sam Robbins, and Daryl Tessen -- for their fundamental service in beginning and developing the Committee's work, as well as the many individual observers who've taken the time to send thoughtful comments on the Committee's operations. Foster, Robbins, and Charles Sontag also gave much help with earlier versions of this paper.

John Bielefeldt, Chairman
Eric Epstein
John Idzikowski
Fred Leshner
Roger Sundell

WSO RECORDS COMMITTEE

FIELD **NOTES**



The Fall Season

August 1 to November 30, 1984

By Mark Peterson

After two relatively quiet fall seasons, the Fall of 1984 provided more excitement in both bird activity and changeable weather. After a warm and wet beginning of the period, the temperatures began to change from one extreme to the other in early September and continuing through the end of the period. August began with warm, wet weather in the north and warm, dry weather in the south. The temperatures continued to be warm to hot through the end of the month, with most of the rain in the northern part of the state. Many lawns and gardens in the southern part of the state were brown during August. A significant migration occurred on the night of August 30-31 with many chips heard.

September began with very warm temperatures, then cooled off at the end of the first week. The low was 32 at Phillips on the 6th. A light frost occurred on the 16th. The growing season ended in most of the state, except the extreme southeast on the 29th. The lowest temperatures recorded were at Harrison and Lake Thompson where it dropped to 19 degrees. It was a wet month in most of the state.

October was again a wet month. A warm, foggy period occurred during the 2nd week and lasted for several days. Some snow flurries were seen in the north on the 23rd. It was below freezing throughout the state on the 25th. 2-4" of snow fell in the extreme northwest on the 30th and 31st.

November began with cold temperatures with a low of 5 above on the 3rd in Lake Thompson. Temperatures warmed to the 60's on the 8th in the south. Up to 6" of snow fell in the extreme north on November 10-11. Most of the state's deer season was warm and dry with little snowcover. A light snowcover was noted in parts of the state at the end of the month.

A total of 81 observers found 286 species. Wisconsin's first record of a Sooty Tern was found in Columbia County, but had expired before it was found. Wisconsin's first hypothetical record of a Lesser Goldfinch was seen at a feeder in Superior for 3 days. Other rare sightings during the period included: an Arctic Loon, Eared Grebes, Western Grebes, American White Pelicans, a Plegadis Ibis, a King Eider, a Harlequin Duck, Swainson's Hawks, Golden Eagles, American Avocets, Whimbrels, Western Sandpipers, a Purple Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpipers, a Reeve, Jaegers

Sp., Little Gull, a Common Black-headed Gull, a Lesser Black-backed Gull, a Least Tern, a Three-toed Woodpecker, Black-backed Woodpeckers, Townsend's Solitaires, Varied Thrushes, Northern Mockingbirds, a Summer Tanager, a Western Tanager, and a Sharp-tailed Sparrow.

THE SEASONAL SUMMARY

Red-throated Loon: Reported in Ozaukee County by Jeff Baughman and Tessen on October 20. Also reported by Polk in Douglas County on November 12.

Arctic Loon: Eckert found one in Superior on October 29, and Johnson and Polk found one in Superior on November 4. Both of these sightings were approved by the Records Committee. See By the Wayside.

Common Loon: Reported at the beginning of the period south to Door, Sauk, Taylor, and Barron Counties. Hale reported 16 in Jefferson County on October 31. Reported at the end of the period in Brown, Dane, Jefferson, and Oneida Counties.

Pied-billed Grebe: Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. 500 were reported in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge by the refuge staff on September 30. Reported at the end of the period in Dane County by Ashman.

Horned Grebe: First reported on September 5 in Oneida County by the Engbergs. Tessen found 25 in Ozaukee County on October 20. Last reported on November 25 in Dane and Milwaukee Counties.

Red-necked Grebe: Reported at the beginning of the period in Columbia County by Mueller. Broerman found 50 in Ozaukee County on October 27. Freese found the last one in Dane County on November 25. Also reported in Iron and Winnebago Counties.

Eared Grebe: First reported in Wood County on September 3 by Swengel. Last reported on November 18 in Columbia and Milwaukee Counties. Also reported in Juneau County.

Western Grebe: First reported on November 11 in Dane/Sauk Counties by Thiessen. Bontly and Woodmansee found 4 in Milwaukee County on November 24. Last reported on November 25 in Milwaukee County by Williams. Also reported in Chippewa and Ozaukee Counties.

American White Pelican: First reported in early September in Trempeleau County by Polk. Verch reported 17 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on October 25. Last reported in Price County on October 27 by Hardy. Also reported in Burnett and Manitowoc Counties.

Double-crested Cormorant: Reported at the beginning of the period in scattered areas throughout the state. Leshar reported 850 in LaCrosse County on September 3. Last reported in Brown and Sheboygan Counties on November 25.

American Bittern: Reported at the beginning of the period in scattered areas throughout the state. 200 were reported in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge by the refuge staff on August 30. Hoefler found the last one in Burnett County on October 31.

Least Bittern: Reported at the beginning of the period in Dodge, Jefferson, and Marinette Counties. 300 were found in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge by the refuge staff on August 30. Sontag found the last one in Manitowoc County on October 1.

Great Blue Heron: Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. 750 were found in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge by the refuge staff on August 1. The Luepkes found the last one in Marathon County on November 21.

Great Egret: Reported at the beginning of the period in scattered areas throughout the state. 600 were found in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge by the refuge staff on August 1. Wilda found the last one in Buffalo County on October 22.

Cattle Egret: Reported from the beginning of the period to August 30 in Brown County by Cleary and Columban. Tom Schultz and Jeff Baughman found 3 in Bayfield County on November 9.

Green-backed Heron: Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. The Luepkes found 65 in Marathon County on August 25. Polk found the last one in Eau Claire County on October 22.

Black-crowned Night Heron: Reported at the beginning of the period in scattered areas throughout the state. The refuge staff found 700 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 1. The last one was seen in Milwaukee County on November 17 by Frank and Williams.

Plegadis ibis: Coward found one in Ozaukee County on October 20. This record was approved by the Records Committee. See By the Wayside.

- Tundra Swan:** Leshner found the first one in LaCrosse County on October 27. 15,000 were reported by Leshner in LaCrosse County on November 6. Reported at the end of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Buffalo, Price, and Trempealeau Counties.
- Mute Swan:** Reported throughout the period in Ashland and Bayfield Counties. Verch reported 25 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on October 16. Also reported in Columbia County by Swengel on November 13.
- Greater White-fronted Goose:** First reported by Jeff Baughman in Dodge County on September 16. Hoffman found 17 in Columbia County on October 13. Last reported in Sheboygan County on November 23 by Koopmann.
- Snow Goose:** Cowart found the first one in Ozaukee County on September 13. Hoefler found 500 in Burnett County on October 22. Reported at the end of the period in Barron County by Goff.
- Canada Goose:** Reported at the beginning of the period in scattered areas throughout the state. The refuge staff reported 120,900 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on November 14. Reported at the end of the period in scattered areas north to Door, Marathon, Barron, and Burnett Counties.
- Wood Duck:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. The refuge staff reported 2500 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on October 5. Reported at the end of the period in Eau Claire County by Polk.
- Green-winged Teal:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Manitowoc, Dodge, and Dunn Counties. The refuge staff found 2000 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on October 10. Cleary and Columban found the last one in Brown County on November 25.
- American Black Duck:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Door, Brown, Dodge, Dunn, and St. Croix Counties. 800 were found by the refuge staff in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on October 25. Reported at the end of the period in scattered areas throughout the state.
- Mallard:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. The refuge staff reported 25,000 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on October 10, and Leshner reported 15,000 in LaCrosse County on November 6. Reported at the end of the period throughout the state.
- Northern Pintail:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Brown, and Dodge Counties. The refuge staff found 4000 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on October 10. Cleary and Columban reported the last one in Brown County on November 12.
- Blue-winged Teal:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. 5000 were seen by the refuge staff in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on October 1. The Kuhns found the last one in Sheboygan County on November 4.
- Northern Shoveler:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Barron, Brown, Chippewa, Dodge, and St. Croix Counties. The refuge staff found 600 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on October 10. Reported at the end of the period in Dane, Jefferson, and Milwaukee Counties.
- Gadwall:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Brown and Dodge Counties. 3000 were reported by the refuge staff in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on October 25. Reported at the end of the period in Chippewa, Dane, Green Lake, and Milwaukee Counties.
- American Wigeon:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Chippewa County by Polk. The refuge staff reported 5000 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on October 10. Reported at the end of the period in Jefferson and Milwaukee Counties.
- Canvasback:** First reported by Polk in Dunn County on September 28. Leshner reported 75,000 in LaCrosse County on November 6. Reported at the end of the period in Dane, Green Lake, Jefferson, and Milwaukee Counties.
- Redhead:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Dodge and Dunn Counties. The refuge staff reported 6000 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 1. Reported at the end of the period in Green Lake, Manitowoc, and Winnebago Counties.
- Ring-necked Duck:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Barron, Burnett, Columbia, Dunn, and St. Croix Counties. 300 were found by the refuge staff in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on November 30. Reported at the end of the period in Dodge, Eau Claire, Jefferson, and Sauk Counties.
- Greater Scaup:** Polk found the first one in Dunn County on September 28. Bontly and Woodmansee found 2500 in Milwaukee County on November 13. Reported at the end of the period in Chippewa, Door, Milwaukee, Polk, and Sheboygan Counties.

- Lesser Scaup:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Manitowoc County by Sontag. Verch reported 622 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on November 13. Reported at the end of the period in scattered areas throughout the state.
- King Eider:** A female was found and photographed by David and Margaret Brasser at North Point in Sheboygan on November 25. This sighting was accepted by the Records Committee. See By the Wayside.
- Harlequin Duck:** A female was seen by Sontag in Manitowoc County on September 28.
- Oldsquaw:** First reported by Johnson in Douglas County on October 17. Woodmansee found 60 in Milwaukee County on November 13. Reported at the end of the period in Door, Manitowoc, and Milwaukee Counties.
- Black Scoter:** Cowart reported the first one in Ozaukee County on September 26. Tessen found 40 in Ozaukee County on October 20. Last reported by Frank in Milwaukee County on November 17. Also reported in Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas and Manitowoc Counties.
- Surf Scoter:** First reported by Cowart in Ozaukee County on September 26. Verch found 37 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on October 22. Last reported by Hoffman in Ozaukee County on November 4. Also reported in Fond du Lac and Shawano Counties.
- White-winger Scoter:** First reported by Hoffman in Sheboygan County on September 15. Hoffman found 42 in Ozaukee County on November 4. Last reported in Milwaukee and Ozaukee Counties on November 17. Also reported in Ashland, Bayfield, Chippewa, and Douglas Counties.
- Common Goldeneye:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Iron County by Butterbrodt. Hale found 91 in Jefferson County on November 28. Reported at the end of the period in scattered areas throughout the state.
- Bufflehead:** First reported on September 30 in Brown and Chippewa Counties. Bontly and Woodmansee found 700 in Milwaukee County on October 29. Reported at the end of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Chippewa, Door, Jefferson, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, and Sheboygan Counties.
- Hooded Merganser:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Iron, Manitowoc, and St. Croix Counties. Hale found 34 in Jefferson County on November 25. Reported at the end of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Brown, Dane, Eau Claire, Jefferson, and Milwaukee Counties.
- Common Merganser:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Iron and Vilas Counties. Evrard found 63 in St. Croix County on November 14. Reported at the end of the period in scattered areas throughout the state.
- Red-breasted Merganser:** First reported by Cowart and Zehner in Ozaukee County on September 9. Woodmansee found 100 in Milwaukee County on October 29. Reported at the end of the period in Barron, Dane, Door, Green Lake, Jefferson, Kenosha, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, and Sheboygan Counties.
- Ruddy Duck:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Chippewa, Columbia, Dodge, Dunn, and Winnebago Counties. The refuge staff found 950 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on November 1. Reported at the end of the period by Tessen in Milwaukee County.
- Turkey Vulture:** Reported at the beginning of the period in scattered areas throughout the state. Lange found 150 in Sauk County on October 19. Last reported on November 12 in Sauk County by Lange and Swengel.
- Osprey:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Manitowoc, Shawano, Marathon and Trempeleau Counties. Epstein found 8 in Monroe County on September 13. Last reported by Hardy in Price County on November 7.
- Bald Eagle:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Dunn, Eau Claire, Oneida, and Marinette Counties. Leshner found 70 in LaCrosse County on November 6. Reported at the end of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Marinette, Oneida, and Vilas Counties.
- Northern Harrier:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. 43 were reported at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on November 5. Reported at the end of the period in Barron, Burnett, Chippewa, Door, Green Lake, Marathon, and Sauk Counties.
- Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Door, Outagamie, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. 269 were reported at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on October 17 and October 21. Reported at the end of the period in Chippewa, Door, Dunn, Eau Claire, Sauk, and Trempeleau Counties.

- Cooper's Hawk:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Green Lake, St. Croix, and Sauk Counties. Cowart found 14 in Ozaukee County on October 20. Reported at the end of the period in Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Green Lake, Sauk and Trempeleau Counties.
- Northern Goshawk:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Burnett, Dunn, Marinette, Polk, and Vilas Counties. 7 were reported at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on October 30, November 4, and November 11. Reported at the end of the period in Brown, Burnett, Chippewa, and Polk Counties.
- Red-shouldered Hawk:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Fond du Lac, Sauk, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. 29 were reported at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on November 2. Last reported by Tessen in Waukesha County on November 25.
- Broad-winged Hawk:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Door, Fond du Lac, Sauk, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Epstein found 579 in Monroe County on September 16. Jeff Baughman found the last one in Ozaukee County on October 21.
- Swainson's Hawk:** One was seen at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on August 30, and Polk found one in Eau Claire County on September 19.
- Red-tailed Hawk:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Epstein found 142 in Monroe County on October 30. Reported at the end of the period north to Brown, Marathon, Barron and St. Croix Counties.
- Rough-legged Hawk:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Barron County by Goff. Cowart found 18 in Ozaukee County on November 5. Reported at the end of the period north to Brown, Shawano, Taylor, Barron, and Burnett Counties.
- Golden Eagle:** First reported at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on October 23. Last reported in Ozaukee County by Jeff Baughman on November 21. Also reported in Douglas, Monroe, and Winnebago Counties.
- American Kestrel:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. The refuge staff found 30 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 30. Reported at the end of the period north to Marinette, Marathon, Barron, and Burnett Counties.
- Merlin:** First reported by Spahn in Vilas County on August 5. 43 were found at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on October 20. Last reported at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on November 17.
- Peregrine Falcon:** First reported by Lange in Sauk County on September 2. 15 were reported at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on September 25. Lange found the last one in Sauk County on November 3. Also reported in Burnett, Chippewa, Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Douglas, Grant, Milwaukee, Monroe, and Ozaukee Counties.
- Gray Partridge:** Reported during the period in Brown, Burnett, Dodge, Marinette, Ozaukee, St. Croix, and Shawano Counties. Cleary and Columban found 35 in Brown County on November 1.
- Ring-necked Pheasant:** Reported during the period north to Marinette, Shawano, Marathon, Chippewa, Barron, and Burnett Counties. Cleary and Columban found 10 in Brown County on November 6.
- Ruffed Grouse:** Reported during the period south to Sheboygan, Washington, Green Lake, Sauk, Monroe, and Trempeleau Counties. The Luepkes found 26 in Marathon County on September 22.
- Greater Prairie Chicken:** Reported throughout the period in Burnett County by Hoefler, and in Marathon County by the Luepkes. The Luepkes found 23 in Marathon County on November 11.
- Sharp-tailed Grouse:** Reported throughout the period in Burnett County by Hoefler. The Luepkes found 3 in Price County on September 2.
- Wild Turkey:** Reported throughout the period in Marinette County by the Lindbergs. Harmer found 16 in Jackson County on October 29. Also reported in Monroe County by Swengel.
- Northern Bobwhite:** Reported during the period in Burnett, Columbia, Dunn, Eau Claire, Green Lake, and Jackson Counties.
- King Rail:** Reported from the beginning of the period until September 1 when 10 were seen by the refuge staff in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge.

- Virginia Rail:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Brown, Chippewa, Dodge, Dunn, Eau Claire, Marinette, and Vilas Counties. The refuge staff found 750 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 15. Kemper found the last one in Chippewa County on October 23.
- Sora:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. 1500 were reported by the refuge staff in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 15. Frank found the last one in Milwaukee County on November 17.
- Common Moorhen:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Brown, Columbia, Dodge, and Shawano Counties. The refuge staff found 150 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 30. Jeff Baughman found the last one in Dodge County on November 3.
- American Coot:** Reported at the beginning of the period north to Marinette, Shawano, Marathon, Chippewa, and Barron Counties. Leshner found 46,000 in LaCrosse County on November 6. Reported at the end of the period in Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Brown, Dane, Eau Claire, Jefferson, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, and Winnebago Counties.
- Sandhill Crane:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Door, Dodge, Columbia, Sauk, and Eau Claire Counties. Swengel reported 1258 on October 8, and he reported that Lisa Hartman found 1312 on October 12 in a staging area at Sandhill Wildlife Demonstration Area in Wood County. The Luepkes reported one at the end of the period in Marathon County that was injured.
- Black-bellied Plover:** First reported by Leshner in LaCrosse County on August 2. Swengel reported over 200 in Columbia County on September 8. Hoffman found the last one in Dane County on November 11.
- Lesser Golden Plover:** First reported by Frank in Dodge County on August 9. Tessen found 200 in Dodge County on October 8. Last reported by Johnson in Douglas County on October 25.
- Semipalmated Plover:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Chippewa, Dane, LaCrosse, Manitowoc, and Vilas Counties. Sontag found 12 in Manitowoc County on August 27. Last reported by Polk in Eau Claire County on October 17.
- Killdeer:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. The refuge staff found 500 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on August 15. Reported at the end of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Brown, LaCrosse, and Sauk Counties.
- American Avocet:** First reported on October 20 in Burnett, Douglas, and Milwaukee Counties. Hoeffer reported 60 in Burnett County on October 20. Last reported by Hoeffer in Burnett County on October 28. Also reported in Brown, Chippewa, and Manitowoc Counties.
- Greater Yellowlegs:** Reported at the beginning of the period in scattered areas throughout the state. 300 were found by the refuge staff in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 1. Last reported by Polk in Dunn County on November 13.
- Lesser Yellowlegs:** Reported at the beginning of the period in scattered areas throughout the state. Broerman found 250 in Dane County on September 11. Reported at the end of the period by Leshner in LaCrosse County.
- Solitary Sandpiper:** Reported at the beginning of the period in scattered areas throughout the state. Thiessen found 38 in Dane County on August 5. Last reported by Thiessen in Dane County on October 27.
- Willet:** Reported by Swengel in Columbia County on September 8, and Sontag Found 2 in Manitowoc County on September 8.
- Spotted Sandpiper:** Reported at the beginning of the period in scattered areas throughout the state. The refuge staff found 50 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 1. Sontag found the last one in Manitowoc County on November 27.
- Upland Sandpiper:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Brown, Dane, Dodge, Door, Iron, Marathon, and Winnebago Counties. Mueller found the last one in Milwaukee County on September 26.
- Whimbrel:** Sontag found on in Manitowoc County on August 27, and Frank found one in Milwaukee County on August 30.
- Marbled Godwit:** Leshner found on in LaCrosse County on August 21.
- Ruddy Turnstone:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Manitowoc County by Sontag. Sontag found 7 in Manitowoc County on September 3. Last reported on October 12 in Douglas and Manitowoc Counties.

- Red Knot:** First reported by Sontag in Manitowoc County on August 8. Sontag found 4 in Manitowoc County on August 31, Leshner found 2 in LaCrosse County on September 3, and Hoffman found 2 in Ozaukee County on September 16. Last seen by Sontag in Manitowoc County on September 17.
- Sanderling:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Manitowoc and Marinette Counties. Frank saw 56 in Milwaukee County on September 6. Last reported by Sontag in Manitowoc County on November 5.
- Semipalmated Sandpiper:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Dane, Dodge, Douglas, Fond du Lac, LaCrosse, Manitowoc, Shawano, and Vilas Counties. Broerman found 52 in Washington County on August 2. Tessen found the last one in Dodge County on October 20.
- Western Sandpiper:** Reported by Tessen in Dodge County on August 14; by Tessen in Outagamie County on August 25; and by Broerman in Washington County on August 30.
- Least Sandpiper:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Chippewa, Dane, LaCrosse, Manitowoc, Oneida, and Vilas Counties. 300 were reported by the refuge staff in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 30. Last reported on October 21 in Dane and Kewaunee Counties.
- White-rumped Sandpiper:** First reported by Sontag in Manitowoc County on August 7. Last reported by Tessen in Dodge County on October 14.
- Baird's Sandpiper:** First reported by Thiessen in Dane County on August 12. Thiessen found 13 in Dane County on September 8. Last reported by Thiessen in Dane County on November 10.
- Pectoral Sandpiper:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Chippewa, Dane, Dodge, Fond du Lac, LaCrosse, Manitowoc, Marathon, Oneida, and Shawano Counties. 300 were found by Broerman in Dane County on September 11, and 300 were found by the refuge staff in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 30. Thiessen found the last one in Dane County on November 10.
- Purple Sandpiper:** Gustafson found one in the Juneau Park Landfill in Milwaukee on November 10. It was also seen later that day by Cowart and Sundell. These sightings were approved by the Records Committee. See By The Wayside.
- Dunlin:** First reported by the refuge staff in Horicon National Wildlife on August 15. Polk found 74 in Chippewa County on October 25. Last reported by Sontag in Manitowoc County on November 18.
- Stilt Sandpiper:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Dane, Dodge, Fond du Lac, LaCrosse, and Manitowoc Counties. Leshner found 20 in LaCrosse County on September 3. Thiessen found the last one in Dane County on October 21.
- Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** First reported by Mueller in Dodge County on September 2. Leshner found 11 in LaCrosse County on September 3. Last reported by Tessen in Dodge County on September 22. Also reported in Dane County.
- Reeve:** One was found by Donald in Dodge County on September 9. See By The Wayside.
- Short-billed Dowitcher:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Dane, Dodge, LaCrosse, Manitowoc, and Vilas Counties. Sontag found 46 in Manitowoc County on August 1. Tessen found the last one in Dodge County on September 22.
- Long-billed Dowitcher:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Dodge County by Jeff Baughman. The refuge staff found 300 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 30. Last reported by Hoffman in Dodge County on November 4.
- Common Snipe:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. The refuge staff found 150 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 30. Reported at the end of the period in Ashland/Bayfield Counties by Verch.
- American woodcock:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Fond du Lac, Sauk, and St. Croix Counties. 100 were found by the refuge staff in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 30. Verch found the last one in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on October 27.
- Wilson's Phalarope:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Taylor County by Robbins. The refuge staff found 25 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on September 30. Last reported in Brown County by Cleary and Columban on October 1.
- Red-necked Phalarope:** First reported by Thiessen in Dane County on September 8. Broerman found 4 in Dane County on September 11. Robbins found the last one in Taylor County on October 5.

- Jaeger Sp.:** One was seen in Manitowoc County by Sontag on September 28, and another found in Ozaukee County by Broerman on October 17.
- Franklin's Gull:** Reported at the beginning of the period in LaCrosse County by Leshner. Johnson found 6 in Douglas County on October 17. Tessen found the last one in Milwaukee County on November 25. Also reported in Dodge, Dunn, Fond du Lac, and Winnebago Counties.
- Little Gull:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Manitowoc County by Sontag. Frank found 10 in Manitowoc County on August 24. Last reported in Milwaukee County on November 17 by Jeff Baughman, Bontly, Frank, Williams, and Woodmansee. Also reported in Kewaunee County.
- Common Black-headed Gull:** Tom Schultz found one in Fond du Lac on August 11. This sighting was accepted by the Records Committee. See By The Wayside.
- Bonaparte's Gull:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Manitowoc, Oneida, and Sheboygan Counties. Frank found 1000 in Milwaukee County on November 25. Reported at the end of the period in Milwaukee and Sheboygan Counties.
- Ring-billed Gull:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Frank found 1000 in Milwaukee County on September 6, and Woodmansee found 1000 in Milwaukee County on November 13. Reported at the end of the period in scattered areas throughout the state.
- Herring Gull:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Sheboygan, Green Lake, and LaCrosse Counties. Cleary and Columban found 1200 in Brown County on September 30. Reported at the end of the period throughout the state.
- Lesser Black-backed Gull:** One was seen by Johnson off Wisconsin Point on October 20. This was accepted by the Records Committee as the state's 2nd confirmed record. See By The Wayside.
- Glaucous Gull:** Swengel found one in Manitowoc County on August 27.
- Caspian Tern:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Brown, Dodge, LaCrosse, Manitowoc, Marinette, Sheboygan, and Winnebago Counties. Sontag found 200 in Manitowoc County on August 2. Hoefler found the last one in Burnett County on October 4.
- Common Tern:** Reported at the beginning of the period in scattered areas throughout the state. Sontag found 46 in Manitowoc County on August 2. Swengel found the last one in Manitowoc County on October 22.
- Forster's Tern:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Brown, Dane, Dodge, Green Lake, LaCrosse, Manitowoc, Marinette, and Winnebago Counties. The refuge staff found 100 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on August 1 and Sontag found 100 in Manitowoc County on September 24. Last reported by Broerman in Milwaukee County on October 5.
- Sooty Tern:** One individual apparently got caught in the circulation of Hurricane Diana and was blown to Wisconsin before apparently starving. It was found by Peter McCormick in Columbia County on September 10. This is the state's first record of this species and has been accepted by the Records Committee. Its remains are now preserved at the Milwaukee Public Museum.
- Least Tern:** One that was found in LaCrosse County during the summer was last seen by Leshner on August 2.
- Black Tern:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Dodge, Columbia, and LaCrosse Counties. The refuge staff found 600 in Horicon National Wildlife Refuge on August 15. Polk found the last one in Dunn County on September 20.
- Rock Dove:** Reported during the period throughout the state.
- Mourning Dove:** Reported during the period throughout the state. Cleary and Columban found 75 in Brown County on October 15.
- Black-billed Cuckoo:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Columbia, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Peterson found 4 in Shawano County on August 12. Bontly found the last one in Milwaukee County on October 17.
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Buffalo, Fond du Lac, Iron, Marathon, Pepin, Trempealeau, and Washington Counties. Sontag found 3 in Manitowoc County on September 19. The Luepkas found the last one in Marathon County on October 22.

- Eastern Screech Owl:** Reported during the period in Barron, Brown, Green Lake, Jefferson, Marathon, Marinette, Milwaukee, Monroe, Outagamie, St. Croix, and Winnebago Counties.
- Great Horned Owl:** Reported during the period throughout the state.
- Snowy Owl:** First reported on November 6 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties by Verch. Reported at the end of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Chippewa, Manitowoc, and Winnebago Counties. Also reported in LaCrosse and Wood Counties.
- Barred Owl:** Reported during the period south to Sheboygan, Washington, Jefferson, Dane, Sauk, and Trempeleau Counties.
- Long-eared Owl:** Reported by the Luepkes in Marathon County on August 25. Seen at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on October 21. The Luepkes found 10 in Marathon County on November 20.
- Short-eared Owl:** First seen in Milwaukee County on September 10 by Bontly and Woodmansee. Reported at the end of the period in Marathon County by the Luepkes. Also found in Burnett, Chippewa, Manitowoc, and Monroe Counties.
- Northern Saw-whet Owl:** First reported in Winnebago County by Clark Schultz on September 29. 10 were found at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on October 21 and October 22. Last reported in Burnett County by Hoefler on November 8. Also reported in Brown and Monroe Counties.
- Common Nighthawk:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Lange found several thousand in Sauk County on August 29, and Leshner found several thousand in LaCrosse County on September 10. Last reported at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on October 28.
- Whip-poor-will:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Cleary and Columban found the last one in Brown County on September 28.
- Chimney Swift:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the period. Hardy found 500 in Price County on August 10. Anderson and Prickett found the last one in Outagamie County on October 22.
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Brown, Green Lake, Sauk, and Trempeleau Counties. Cowart found 40 in Ozaukee County on September 9. Last reported in Outagamie County by Anderson and Prickett on October 19.
- Belted Kingfisher:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Reported at the end of the period in Oneida County by the Engbergs.
- Red-headed Woodpecker:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Cowart found 104 in Ozaukee County on October 17. Reported at the end of the period in scattered areas north to Marinette, Chippewa, and Barron Counties.
- Red-bellied Woodpecker:** Reported during the period north to Door, Marinette, Shawano, Price, and Burnett Counties.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Door, Outagamie, Waupaca, Marathon, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Reported at the end of the period in Chippewa, Oneida, Outagamie, and Sauk Counties.
- Downy Woodpecker:** Reported during the period throughout the state. Spahn found 10 in Vilas County on August 2.
- Hairy Woodpecker:** Reported during the period throughout the state. Spahn found 6 in Vilas County on August 2.
- Three-toed Woodpecker:** One was found by Spahn in Vilas County on August 4. Accepted by the records committee. See By the Wayside.
- Black-backed Woodpecker:** Reported in Forest County by Soulen on August 2, by Tessen on August 22, by Polk on August 26, and by Reardon on October 18. Reported in Oneida County by Tessen on August 17. Found in Sauk County by Lange on November 10. Spahn found 2 in Vilas County on August 7 and Jim Baughman found on in Vilas County on August 8.
- Northern Flicker:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Lindberg found 15 in Marinette County on August 23, and Sontag found 15 in Manitowoc County on September 19. Reported at the end of the period in Chippewa, Dunn, Green Lake, Milwaukee, Outagamie, Sauk, and Winnebago Counties.
- Pileated Woodpecker:** Reported during the period south to Washington, Sauk, and LaCrosse Counties.

- Olive-sided Flycatcher:** First reported by Soulen in Forest County on August 2. Hale found the last one in Jefferson County on September 29.
- Eastern Wood-Pewee:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. The Luepkes found 14 in Marathon County on September 9. Swengel found the last one in Sauk County on October 9.
- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** First reported by Soulen in Forest County on August 2. Woodmansee found the last one in Milwaukee County on October 16.
- Acadian Flycatcher:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Fond du Lac and Sauk Counties. Swengel found the last one in Sauk County on August 20. Also reported in Monroe County.
- Alder Flycatcher:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Shawano, Taylor, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Woodmansee found 8 in Milwaukee County on August 28. Bontly and Woodmansee found the last one in Milwaukee County on September 10.
- Willow Flycatcher:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Chippewa, Dane, Dunn, Eau Claire, and Green Lake Counties. Thiessen found 4 in Dane County on August 5. Swengel found the last one in Juneau County on September 3.
- Least Flycatcher:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Shawano, Sauk, Eau Claire, Dunn, and Polk Counties. Spahn found 3 in Vilas County on August 10. Polk found the last one in Eau Claire County on September 26.
- Eastern Phoebe:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Fond du Lac, Columbia, Sauk, and Trempeleau Counties. Thiessen found 6 in Dane county on September 29. Woodmansee found the last one in Milwaukee County on November 4.
- Great Crested Flycatcher:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Woodmansee found 4 in Milwaukee County on August 27. Bontly found the last one in Milwaukee County on September 23.
- Eastern Kingbird:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Sontag found 32 in Manitowoc County on August 28. Butterbrodt found the last one in Iron County on September 23.
- Horned Lark:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Dodge, Eau Claire, and Buffalo Counties. Woodmansee found 8 in Milwaukee County on August 29. Reported at the end of the period north to Door and Burnett Counties.
- Purple Martin:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Frank found 1000 in Milwaukee County on August 9. Goff found the last one in Barron County on October 20.
- Tree Swallow:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. The Luepkes found 300 in Marathon County on September 3. Last seen by Hoffman in Dane County on November 16.
- Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Dodge, and Trempeleau Counties. Sontag found 30 in Manitowoc County on August 1. Last seen by Cowart in Ozaukee County on October 21.
- Bank Swallow:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Manitowoc, Dodge, and Trempeleau Counties. Sontag found 80 in Manitowoc County on August 27. Tessen found the last one in Walworth County on September 15.
- Cliff Swallow:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Dodge, Eau Claire, Dunn, and St. Croix Counties. Soulen found 30 in Langlade County on August 1, and Ziebell found 30 in Winnebago County on August 7. Last reported on September 15 in Walworth and Waukesah Counties.
- Barn Swallow:** Found throughout the state at the beginning of the period. Ziebell found 300 in Winnebago County on August 2. Last reported by Ziebell in Winnebago County on October 16.
- Gray Jay:** Reported during the period in Ashland, Douglas, Forest, Iron, Oneida, Price, and Vilas Counties. Tessen found 15 in Forest County on October 6.
- Blue Jay:** Found throughout the state during the period. The Engbergs found 30 in Oneida County on August 4, and Ziebell found 130 in Winnebago County on October 16.
- American Crow:** Reported throughout the state during the period. The Luepkes found 300 in Marathon County on October 3.
- Common Raven:** Reported during the period south to Door, Shawano, Adams, Monroe, and Eau Claire Counties. Tessen found 8 in Forest County on October 6.

- Black-capped Chickadee:** Found throughout the state during the period. The Luepkes found 45 in Marathon County on November 25.
- Boreal Chickadee:** Reported during the period in Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties. Soulen found 12 in Forest County on August 2.
- Tufted Titmouse:** Found during the period in Chippewa, Dane, Eau Claire, Monroe, and St. Croix Counties.
- Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Door, Shawano, Taylor, and St. Croix Counties. Soulen found 22 in Forest County on August 2. Found throughout the state at the end of the period.
- White-breasted Nuthatch:** Found throughout the state during the period. Spahn found 6 in Vilas County on August 2, and Ziebell found 6 in Trempeleau County on November 17.
- Brown Creeper:** Found at the beginning of the period in Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Door, Douglas, Polk, Shawano, Vilas, and Washington Counties. Tom Schultz found 15 in Green Lake County on October 13. Reported at the end of the period throughout the state.
- House Wren:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Woodmansee found 8 in Milwaukee County on August 17. Clark Schultz found the last one in Winnebago County on October 28.
- Winter Wren:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Sauk, and Eau Claire Counties. Woodmansee found 8 in Milwaukee County on October 22. Reported at the end of the period in Ashland/Bayfield Counties by Verch.
- Sedge Wren:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Dodge, Columbia, Sauk and Monroe Counties. Spahn found 10 in Vilas County on August 3. Kemper found the last one in Chippewa County on October 22.
- Marsh Wren:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Dodge, Columbia, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Kemper found 47 in Chippewa County on September 21. Kemper found the last one in Chippewa County on October 23.
- Golden-crowned Kinglet:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Douglas, Forest, Iron, Langlade, and Vilas Counties. Kemper found 74 in Chippewa County on October 22. Found at the end of the period in scattered areas throughout the state.
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** Found at the beginning of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Dunn, and Iron Counties. Woodmansee found 12 in Milwaukee County on September 27. Reported at the end of the period by Verch in Ashland/Bayfield Counties.
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Dodge, Dunn, Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, Sauk, Shawano, Trempeleau, and Washington Counties. Swengel found the last one in Sauk County on September 11.
- Eastern Bluebird:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Ozaukee, Washington, Dodge, Columbia, Sauk, and LaCrosse Counties. Frank found 22 in Waukesha County on October 7. Last reported by Frank in Milwaukee County on November 14.
- Townsend's Solitaire:** Swengel found 2 on November 6, November 12, and November 20 in Devil's Lake State Park in Sauk County. See By The Wayside.
- Veery:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Brown, Taylor, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. The Engbergs found 3 in Oneida County on August 6. Bontly and Woodmansee found the last one in Milwaukee County October 1.
- Gray-cheeked Thrush:** First reported by Clark Schultz in Winnebago County on August 30. Polk found 3 in Eau Claire County on September 14, and Sontag found 3 in Manitowoc County on September 19. Last reported by Jeff Baughman in Fond du Lac and Washington Counties on October 13.
- Swainson's Thrush:** First reported by Woodmansee in Milwaukee County on August 17. Woodmansee found 13 in Milwaukee County on August 31. Reardon found the last one in Forest County on October 20.
- Hermit Thrush:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Iron, Langlade, Shawano, Taylor, and Vilas Counties. Spahn found 30 in Vilas County on August 1. Last reported by Zehner in Milwaukee County on November 7.
- Thrush, Sp.:** Jeff Baughman found an unidentified thrush in Douglas County on November 11.
- Wood Thrush:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Green Lake, Columbia, Sauk, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Woodmansee found the last one in Milwaukee County on October 10.

- American Robin:** Found throughout the state at the beginning of the period. Epstein found 2064 in Monroe County on October 20. Reported in scattered areas throughout the state at the end of the period.
- Varied Thrush:** One was banded at Cedar Grove Ornithological Station on October 26. One reported by Gaylord in Vilas County from October 31 to November 9.
- Gray Catbird:** Found at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Epstein found 10 in Monroe County on September 9. Last reported by Sontag in Manitowoc County on November 7.
- Northern Mockingbird:** Reported throughout the period in Door County by the Lukes. Thiesen reported one in Dane County on August 19 and August 21.
- Brown Thrasher:** Found at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Spahn found 3 in Vilas County on August 7. Reported at the end of the period in Dane County by Ashman.
- Water Pipit:** First reported by Swengel in Bayfield County on September 19. Tessen found 35 in Dodge County on October 14. Polk found the last one in Chippewa County on November 11.
- Bohemian Waxwing:** First reported by Polk in Douglas County on November 4. Johnson found 35 in Douglas County on November 17. Reported at the end of the period in Vilas County by Jim Baughman.
- Cedar Waxwing:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Ziebell found 160 in Winnebago County on October 16. Found in scattered areas throughout the state at the end of the period.
- Northern Shrike:** First seen by Tom Schultz in Green Lake County on October 14. Reported at the end of the period in Brown, Chippewa, Door, Forest, Green Lake, Marathon, and Milwaukee Counties.
- Loggerhead Shrike:** Found from the beginning of the period until August 10 in Door County by the Lukes.
- European Starling:** Found throughout the state during the period. Cleary and Columban found 2000 in Brown County on September 24.
- Solitary Vireo:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Forest, Iron, and Vilas Counties. Sontag found 3 in Manitowoc County on October 12. Last seen by Bontly in Milwaukee County on November 6.
- Yellow-throated Vireo:** Found at the beginning of the period in Chippewa, Columbia, Dunn, Eau Claire, Green Lake, Shawano, and Taylor Counties. Cederstrom found the last one in Dane County on September 27.
- Warbling Vireo:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Manitowoc, Green Lake, Jefferson, Sauk, and LaCrosse Counties. Last reported by Epstein in Monroe County on September 19.
- Philadelphia Vireo:** First reported by Hardy in Price County on August 20. Lange found the last one in Sauk County on October 23.
- Red-eyed Vireo:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Sheboygan, Columbia, Sauk, and Monroe Counties. Spahn found 50 in Vilas County on August 2. Broerman found the last one in Waukesha County on October 23.
- Blue-winged Warbler:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Dunn, Fond du Lac, Monroe, Sauk, Shawano, Trempealeau, and Washington Counties. Cowart found the last one in Ozaukee County on October 17.
- Golden-winged Warbler:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Fond du Lac, Sauk, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Tom Schultz found 4 in Green Lake County on August 31. Last reported by Bontly in Milwaukee County on September 19.
- Brewster's Warbler:** Polk found one in Eau Claire County on August 19.
- Tennessee Warbler:** Found at the beginning of the period in Burnett, Chippewa, and Outagamie Counties. Kemper found 16 in Chippewa County on September 28. Last reported by Koopman in Sheboygan County on October 21.
- Orange-crowned Warbler:** Tom Schultz found the first one in Green Lake County on August 30. Epstein found 3 in Monroe County on October 1. Last reported by Kemper in Chippewa County on October 28.

- Nashville Warbler:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Door, Shawano, Sauk, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Spahn found 25 in Vilas County on August 7. Kemper found the last one in Chippewa County on October 25.
- Northern Parula Warbler:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Door, Douglas, and Vilas Counties. Goff found the last one in Barron County on October 2.
- Yellow Warbler:** Found throughout the state at the beginning of the period. Spahn found 17 in Vilas County on August 5. Last reported by Lindberg in Marinette County on September 29.
- Chestnut-sided Warbler:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Door, Fond du Lac, Sauk, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Spahn found 20 in Vilas County on August 7. Kemper found the last one in Chippewa County on October 21.
- Magnolia Warbler:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Douglas and Iron Counties. Kemper found 18 in Chippewa County on September 3. Last reported on October 21 in Chippewa and Sauk Counties.
- Cape May Warbler:** First reported by Spahn in Vilas County on August 7. Kemper found 6 in Chippewa County on September 2. Hunter reported one at his feeder in Trempeleau County from November 4 to the end of the period.
- Black-throated Blue Warbler:** First reported by Spahn in Vilas County on August 2. Hoffman found the last one in Ozaukee County on October 14.
- Yellow-rumped Warbler:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Door, Langlade, Taylor, and Burnett Counties. Johnson reported hundreds in Douglas County on September 29. Bishop found the last one in Kenosha County on November 21.
- Black-throated Green Warbler:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Fond du Lac, Sauk, and Barron Counties. Tom Schultz found 8 in Green Lake County on September 11. Bontly reported the last one in Milwaukee County on November 6.
- Blackburnian Warbler:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Douglas, Iron, Marinette, Sauk, Shawano, Taylor, and Vilas Counties. Kemper found 9 in Chippewa County on September 2. Hoffman found the last one in Ozaukee County on October 14.
- Pine Warbler:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Door, Marinette, Eau Claire, Dunn, and Polk Counties. Spahn found 6 in Vilas County on August 7. Sontag reported the last one in Manitowoc County on October 26.
- Palm Warbler:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Douglas and Vilas Counties. Sontag found 12 in Manitowoc County on September 28. Last reported by Sontag in Manitowoc County on November 8.
- Bay-breasted Warbler:** Reported by Butterbrodt in Iron County at the beginning of the period. Kemper found 37 in Chippewa County on September 2. Kemper found the last one in Chippewa County on October 15.
- Blackpoll Warbler:** First reported by Epstein in Monroe County on August 19. Sontag found 8 in Manitowoc County on September 24. Last reported by Kemper in Chippewa County on October 30.
- Cerulean Warbler:** Bontly and Woodmansee found one in Milwaukee County on August 31.
- Black and White Warbler:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Door, Fond du Lac, Sauk, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Jeff Baughman found the last one in Washington County on October 13.
- American Redstart:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Dodge, Sauk, and Polk Counties. The Luepkes found 28 in Marathon County on August 31. Polk found the last one in Eau Claire County on October 31.
- Ovenbird:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Dodge, Sauk, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Kemper found 35 in Chippewa County on September 2. Last reported on October 11 in Chippewa and Vilas Counties.
- Northern Waterthrush:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Washington and Dodge Counties. Sontag found 3 in Manitowoc County on October 5. Kemper found the last one in Chippewa County on October 23.
- Louisiana Waterthrush:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Washington County by Jeff Baughman.
- Connecticut Warbler:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Douglas, Price, and Vilas Counties. Kemper found 12 in Chippewa County on September 2. Last reported by Kemper in Chippewa County on October 22.

- Mourning Warbler:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Sheboygan, Fond du lac, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Kemper found 16 in Chippewa County on September 2. Polk found the last one in Eau Claire County on September 22.
- Common Yellowthroat:** Found at the beginning of the period throughout the state. The Luepkes found 27 in Marathon County on August 31. Cederstrom found the last one in Dane County on October 26.
- Wilson's Warbler:** First reported by Kemper in Chippewa County on August 22. The Luepkes found 4 in Marathon County on August 31. Sontag found the last one in Manitowoc County on September 24.
- Canada Warbler:** Found at the beginning of the period in Burnett, Douglas, Forest, Polk, Sauk, and Taylor Counties. Kemper found 9 in Chippewa County on September 2. Last reported by Lange in Sauk County on September 20.
- Summer Tanager:** Polk heard one in Eau Claire County on August 22.
- Scarlet Tanager:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Columbia, Sauk, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Polk found the last one in Eau Claire County on October 6.
- Western Tanager:** A female was seen by Boehmer at Necedah Wildlife Refuge in Juneau County on August 1. See By The Wayside.
- Northern Cardinal:** Reported during the period north to Door, Shawano, Marathon, Taylor, Price, and Douglas Counties.
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Columbia, Sauk, and Trempeleau Counties. Broerman found 6 in Milwaukee County on October 5. Last seen by Broerman in Waukesha County on October 10.
- Indigo Bunting:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. The Luepkes found 30 in Marathon County on August 31. Kemper found the last one in Chippewa County on October 19.
- Rufous-sided Towhee:** Found at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Spahn found 5 in Vilas County on August 7. Last reported by Verch in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on November 11.
- American Tree Sparrow:** First reported on October 6 in Chippewa and Menominee Counties. Tessen found 15 in Menominee County on October 6. Reported at the end of the period throughout the state.
- Chipping Sparrow:** Found at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Spahn found 40 in Vilas County on August 1. Lindberg found the last one in Marinette County on November 11.
- Clay-colored Sparrow:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Door, Brown, Shawano, Columbia, Marathon, Eau Claire, Dunn, and St. Croix Counties. The Lukes found the last one in Door County on October 10.
- Field Sparrow:** Reported at the beginning of the period north to Burnett, Barron, Chippewa, Shawano, and Door Counties. Epstein found 13 in Monroe County on September 28. Bontly and Woodmansee found the last one in Ozaukee County on October 24.
- Vesper Sparrow:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Washington, Dodge, Columbia, Sauk, and Trempeleau Counties. The Engbergs found 15 in Oneida County on August 31. Jim Baughman found the last one in Vilas County on October 26.
- Lark Sparrow:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Dunn and Eau Claire Counties by Polk.
- Savannah Sparrow:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Ozaukee, Washington, Jefferson, Monroe, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. The Luepkes found 48 in Marathon County on August 31. Kemper found the last one in Chippewa County on October 24.
- Grasshopper Sparrow:** Found at the beginning of the period in Chippewa, Door, Dun, Eau Claire, Iron, St. Croix, Sauk, and Shawano Counties. Kemper found the last one in Chippewa County on October 7.
- Henslow's Sparrow:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Dodge, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Langlade, Shawano, and Washington Counties. Broerman found the last one in Waukesha County on August 14.
- LeConte's Sparrow:** Spahn found 2 in Vilas County on August 3, and Swengel found one in Wood County on September 3.
- Sharp-tailed Sparrow:** Kemper banded one in Chippewa County on October 3.

- Fox Sparrow:** Sontag found the first one in Manitowoc County on September 20. Sontag found 6 in Manitowoc County on October 22. Jeff Baughman found the last one in Vilas County on November 23.
- Song Sparrow:** Found throughout the state at the beginning of the period. Woodmansee found 20 in Milwaukee County on August 29. Reported at the end of the period in Brown, Dane, Green Lake, Milwaukee, Rock, and Vilas Counties.
- Lincoln's Sparrow:** Found at the beginning of the period in Barron, Forest, and Vilas Counties. Soulen found 5 in Forest County on August 2. Polk found the last one in Eau Claire County on November 27.
- Swamp Sparrow:** Reported at the beginning of the period south to Ozaukee, Washington, Jefferson, Sauk, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties. Thiessen found 200 in Dane County on October 30. Bontly found the last one in Milwaukee County on November 8.
- White-throated Sparrow:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Door, Shawano, Taylor, Chippewa, and Polk Counties. Frank found 100 in Milwaukee County on October 5. Reported at the end of the period in Milwaukee, Monroe, Outagamie, and Trempeleau Counties.
- White-crowned Sparrow:** First reported by Verch in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on September 7. Hardy found 15 in Price County on October 6. Last reported by Lange in Sauk County on November 2.
- Harris' Sparrow:** Jim Baughman found the first one in Vilas County on September 17. Hardy found 6 in Price County on October 8. Last reported on October 28 in Ashland, Bayfield, and Price Counties. Also found in Burnett, Chippewa, Douglas, Eau Claire, Marathon, Monroe, Shawano, and Taylor Counties.
- Dark-eyed Junco:** Found at the beginning of the period in Chippewa, Forest, and Vilas Counties. Hardy found 200 in Price County on October 22. Found throughout the state at the end of the period.
- Lapland Longspur:** First reported on September 22 in Douglas and Eau Claire Counties. The Luepkes found 60 in Marathon County on November 19. Reported at the end of the period in Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Marathon, and Winnebago Counties.
- Snow Bunting:** First reported by Johnson in Douglas County on October 12. Leshner found 200 in LaCrosse County on November 30. Found at the end of the period in scattered areas throughout the state.
- Bobolink:** Found at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Evrard found 40 in St. Croix County on August 7. Epstein found the last one in Monroe County on September 19.
- Red-winged Blackbird:** Found at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Ziebell found 5000 in Winnebago County on September 22. Found at the end of the period in Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Brown, Chippewa, Green Lake, Marathon, and Winnebago Counties.
- Eastern Meadowlark:** Reported at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Clark Schultz found 13 in Winnebago County on October 14. Found at the end of the period in Brown County by Cleary and Columban.
- Western Meadowlark:** Found at the beginning of the period throughout the state. Kemper found the last one in Chippewa County on October 29.
- Yellow-headed Blackbird:** Found at the beginning of the period in Brown, Chippewa, Columbia, Dodge, Dunn, Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, St. Croix, and Shawano Counties. Clark Schultz found 45 in Winnebago County on September 9. Last reported by Cleary and Columban in Brown County on September 30.
- Rusty Blackbird:** First reported by Swengel in Bayfield County on September 19. Thiessen found 40 in Dane County on November 4. Clark Schultz reported the last one in Winnebago County on November 25.
- Brewer's Blackbird:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Brown, Columbia, and Trempeleau Counties. Hardy found 500 in Price County on October 7. Reported at the end of the period in Oneida County by Engbergs.
- Common Grackle:** Found at the beginning of the period throughout the state. The Luepkes reported 35,000 in Marathon County on October 8. Found at the end of the period in Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Brown, Buffalo, Green Lake, Marathon, Outagamie, St. Croix, and Winnebago Counties.

- Brown-headed Cowbird:** Found throughout the state at the beginning of the period. Sontag found 16 in Manitowoc County on August 21. Reported at the end of the period in Marathon County by the Luepkes.
- Orchard Oriole:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Eau Claire and Dunn Counties by Polk. Also reported by Broerman in Waukesha County on September 2.
- Northern Oriole:** Found throughout the state at the beginning of the period. Woodmansee found 5 in Milwaukee County on August 7. Last reported by Hunter in Trempeleau County on November 11.
- Pine Grosbeak:** First reported by Robbins in Taylor County on November 5. Fuller found 9 in Burnett/Polk Counties on November 10. Found at the end of the period in Eau Claire, Iron, Price, Taylor, and Vilas Counties.
- Purple Finch:** Found at the beginning of the period south to Door, Shawano, Taylor, Chippewa, and Barron Counties. Cleary and Columban found 8 in Brown County on October 18. Found throughout the state at the end of the period.
- Red Crossbill:** Found at the beginning of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, and Vilas Counties. Mueller found 200 in Milwaukee County on November 18. Found in scattered areas throughout the state at the end of the period.
- White-winged Crossbill:** First reported on August 2 in Forest and Vilas Counties. Woodmansee found 18 in Milwaukee County on November 7. Reported at the end of the period in Taylor County by Robbins.
- Common Redpoll:** First reported on November 4 in Forest and Milwaukee Counties. Ziebell found 6 in Trempeleau County on November 17. Found at the end of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, and Fond du Lac Counties.
- Pine Siskin:** Found at the beginning of the period in Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Douglas, Iron, Langlade, and Price Counties. Peterson found 100 in Shawano County on November 28. Found at the end of the period throughout the state.
- American Goldfinch:** Reported throughout the state during the period. Clark Schultz found 40 in Winnebago County on September 30.
- Lesser Goldfinch:** One was reported by Stephan at her feeder in Superior from November 11-13. This was accepted by the Records Committee as the first hypothetical record for Wisconsin. See *By The Wayside*.
- Evening Grosbeak:** Reported at the beginning of the period in Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Iron, Oneida, Price, Taylor, and Vilas Counties. The Engbergs found 20 in Oneida County on August 31. Found at the end of the period south to Shawano, Taylor, Sauk, Dunn, and Polk Counties.
- House Sparrow:** Found throughout the state during the period. Cleary and Columban found 1500 in Brown County on September 22.

CONTRIBUTORS

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By the Wayside...



Three-toed Woodpecker in Vilas County

Driving east on CTH KK from Conover to Phelps in Vilas County, I noticed a "finch-type" at the tip of a dead black spruce as I passed a small bog. I slammed on the brakes and backed up. In the scope the bird proved to be a heavily striped juvenile Red Crossbill. Before turning the scope to that bird, I had noted a group of three woodpeckers on a nearby dead black spruce. All three were flickers. One of these flew over and flushed away the crossbill. As I was putting the scope away, I looked back and spotted a new, smaller "hairy-sized" woodpecker on a second stub. In the glasses it was obviously a Three-toed or a very scudgy looking hairy. In the scope I could make out cross barring on the white up the center of the back, heavy barring on the sides, barring on the outer tail feather (spread a bit as the bird braced against the tree), little white in the wings, and only a single white stripe through the side of the head running back from the eye. All of this added up to a Three-toed Woodpecker, a life bird. Unfortunately, the lighting and position of the bird was such that I did not have a good look at the top of the head to check for a yellow area. From the guide descriptions of the amount of yellow on the Three-toed, I suspect that this was a female. It finally just flew off into the bog area.

Robert G. Spahn

Lesser Goldfinch at a Backyard Feeder in Superior

On November 11, 1984, with a change in the weather from mid-30's to low 20's with sunshine, a small flock of goldfinches came to my feeding tray which sits atop a picnic table in my back yard. The tray, which contains black oil sunflower seeds, cracked corn, and water, is directly outside my window - perhaps a 4-foot distance. The birds came every morning between 7:45 and 8:30 a.m. to feed on the sunflower seeds. The last morning I saw them was Nov. 13th. The weather changed on the 14th and they did not reappear. Unfortunately, I did not realize what the bird was until the morning of the 13th when I immediately called Robbeye Johnson and described it to her. In comparison to the other goldfinches, the Lesser Goldfinch was brighter and more definite in color. His breast and belly, from under his chin to the tail was yellow, whereas the other goldfinches had more of a dull yellowish-green breast that became buff to white at the belly and then white

to the tail. A definite black cap extended from the beak to the back of the head (well beyond the crown). In fact, this is what first alerted me as none of the other birds had a cap. The back and rump of the Lesser Goldfinch was olive-green and appeared slightly streaked. The other birds were mottled rather than streaked and had white rumps. The Lesser Goldfinch had very black wings with a lot of white, not faded or mottled as the other birds.

Jane Stephan

Arctic Loon off Wisconsin Point in Douglas County

From the Wisconsin Point bluff, I saw three loons close to shore, but down the beach. Two looked like Common Loons, but the other looked smaller so I decided to try from the first pullover on the point. On the way, I found Janine Polk at the landfill looking for gulls. When we found the loons, they had gone back toward the bluff and were much too far away to tell species. We hurried back to the bluff and quickly set up scopes. Janine watched through her scope while I set up my camera on a large celestron scope loaned to me by UW-Superior Chemistry Department, and noticed the following field marks while taking pictures: The smaller loon was immediately recognizable as an Arctic. My first impression was that the bird had a smoother, cleaner, much thicker necked look than winter Red-throated Loons. It didn't have the "snake-like" appearance of a Red-throated. The bill was slender, straight, not up-curved, and was held horizontally, not up-tilted. A clean black line ran from the eye down the neck between the smooth medium gray head and neck and the bright white underparts. A small hint of a necklace was noticeable on the throat. The back was dark gray with some spots resembling spring plumage. We watched for several minutes, then tried again from the point. We parked at the first spot and found the loon only a few feet off shore. It dived almost immediately and came up further away. The same field marks were observed at close range.

Both an immature and a winter adult Arctic Loon had been seen in the Duluth-Superior area. I believe this was the adult seen earlier at Wisconsin point by Kim Eckert and others.

Robbeye Johnson

Female Western Tanager at Necedah National Wildlife Refuge

On August 1 at about 3 p.m. while slowly driving one of the roads in Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, I noticed several birds along the edge of the road. As my two companions and I approached them, two could be identified as robins. A third bird was crouched at the road's edge and was noticeably smaller. As we got closer, all three of the birds flew, the smallest one flying straight up into the branches of the tree that was closest to the roadside. We stopped the car and I focused by 7x26 field glasses on the smallest bird. I could see immediately that it was a tanager: the thicker beak, greenish-yellow body plumage, darker wings and tail. But also very distinctive were two prominent, lightly-colored bars or stripes on the wings. I knew that neither the Scarlet nor the Summer Tanager females had wing bars. I realized that it was a female Western Tanager. I spent the past 10 months in California and on the spring migration I had the opportunity to see dozens of female Western Tanagers. The bird remained in the near branches of the same tree for about 10 more seconds and flew deeper into the woods.

Ray F. Boehmer

King Eider in Lake Michigan at Sheboygan

In scanning the Lake Michigan shoreline, on the rocks off North Point, I first observed Common Goldeneyes and Ring-billed, Herring, and Bonaparte's Gulls. Then I noticed a large brown duck in the shallow water 25 feet from shore. When viewed with the naked eye it appeared to be a female mallard or similar dabbling. But when observed through binoculars, the bill was noticeably different from ducks commonly seen here. The combinations of the greyish-colored bill and feathering extending along the sides of the bill indicated a species unfamiliar to me. Other features observed at this time were the sloping profile of the head and crescent-shaped barring on the flanks. Moving a bit further out, the duck began diving to feed.

At this point, I consulted Peterson's **A Field Guide to the Birds** and National Geographic's **Birds of North America**. I had previously observed all ducks common to our area. Slowly paging through the field guides, I eliminated all species until I came to the Eider page. The illustrations and notes concerning the facial profile, bill-feathering, and crescent-shaped barring on the sides convinced me that I was observing a female King Eider.

I quickly drove home and told my wife Margaret that there was a King Eider feeding at North Point. We grabbed our spotting scope and camera and returned to the lake. We observed the bird through binoculars and 20x spotting scope for an hour, and took two pictures. When Margaret observed the bird, she had the same initial reaction (doubts) that I did. But through her own process of elimination and identification, she arrived at the same conclusion. In addition to the above marks, she noted the short dark tail and very dark primaries.

Upon close inspection with the spotting scope, we could see that the bill-feathering came only half way to the nostril. This, along with the crescent-shaped barring, distinguished it as a female King Eider.

David Brasser

Lesser Black-backed Gull at Wisconsin Point

While birding Wisconsin Point on October 20, 1984, I ran into some Minnesota birders looking for a Lesser Black-backed Gull that had been seen on park Point earlier in the week for Minnesota's first state record. We decided to try the dump and the bluff. Several cars full of people at the dump had not seen the gull. I pulled up to the bluff about 2 minutes before the Minnesota birders, set up my scope and scanned the gulls in the water below. I found a dark gull immediately. Following are field marks observed in the next half hour or so.

The gull appeared to be smaller and slighter built than the herring gulls it swam with and had a narrowing "pointed" appearance to the rear. The mantle and visible part of the wing were very dark gray - darker than the field guides show. Primary tips were black. No white spots were visible at that distance. We watched for a long time before the bird stretched its wings. The underwing pattern was different than that of any gull I had seen before. The underwing linings were light, the primaries and most of the secondaries were dark gray, forming a continuous dark trailing edge from the body to the primary tips. The head was white, slightly "dirty" toward the back of the head and neck. The bill was yellow. No spots were visible from that distance. The tail was white. The bird flew up and was visible in

flight for about 30 seconds. Its wings were noticeably long and slender. Once again the dark trailing edge was noticeable. Leg color could not be seen at this range.

Robbeye Johnson

Common Black-headed Gull at Lakeside park in Fond du Lac

While looking through a large flock (150-200 birds) of Ring-billed Gulls and a few herrings, which were standing atop a small grassy hill, my attention was drawn to a slightly smaller "hooded" gull. At first glance, I thought the bird to be a Bonaparte's Gull with a faded black hood, and I almost didn't give it a second look. The light was fairly poor due to the lateness of the hour and also because of heavy dark clouds hanging in the western sky, so I didn't notice as quickly as I might have that the hood was actually a dark brown and not black! I continued to study the bird further, even though the possibility of finding this species hadn't even entered my mind, only because I sensed that something about it seemed odd. It just didn't look like a Bonaparte's

I noticed that the mantle color was a fairly pale gray, that the bill seemed longer and slightly heavier than one might expect in Bonaparte's, and especially that the bird was too large overall, being only slightly smaller than the Ring-billeds standing all around.

Then as I was watching, the bird did a wing stretch movement of the furthest wing away from me and showed a dark underside to the primaries. It took a few seconds to register in my mind, but I suddenly realized why this bird had looked odd -- it was a Common Black-headed Gull! In the poor light, I hadn't seen the dark red coloration of the bill, but now when I looked for it, I could see it.

I handed the binoculars to my wife, Wendy, and she found and studied the bird, confirming my observations. Unfortunately, before I had a chance for a second look at the standing bird, something spooked the entire flock and they rose upward, wheeled around us for a short time, then gradually dispersed out over the lake. We both had no trouble finding the bird flying with the flock, and had good opportunities to observe the blackish undersides of the primaries, which contrasted noticeably from the rest of the pale underwing. The bird was in the middle stages of wing molt, with the 3rd, 4th, and 5th primaries missing or shortened. The outermost primaries were white margined and tipped in black, while the inner ones were dark below in varying degrees - darkest on the 6th, and getting less dark toward the secondaries.

Thomas Schultz

Reeve near Pond in Dodge County

While looking for shorebirds in Dodge County at the north pond of W south of Breezy Point, we noticed a bird about the size of a Lesser Yellowlegs which seemed different. It walked into the water and fussed, and drank, and limped when walking, but stood straight. It was browner than the Yellowlegs in the area and had little, if any streaking on a buffy breast. The bill was thicker and mainly light colored. The legs were dull yellowish and the back mottled. It suddenly flew up and over the car and landed in a

plowed field on the east side of W. I pursued it and it flew once more straight ahead and the oval patches on either side of the rump area were distinct. We could not flush it again. It was probably an immature bird.

Mary Donald

Townsend's Solitaire at Devil's Lake State Park in Sauk County

At about 9:00 a.m. on 6 November, 1984, I heard two birds giving a call that I did not recognize. The call was high pitched and disyllabic, with the second syllable accented and slurred upward, much like the first note of the red-eyed vireo's song. The birds were near the northwest corner of Devil's Lake. They were calling alternately, as if in a duet. I searched for the birds, but failed to find them.

At about 9:55 a.m. I heard a warbling song above me just as I began to descend the Balanced Rocks Trail at the southwest corner of Devil's Lake. As I climbed up the trail to look for the singing bird, the warbling stopped and I heard two birds making the same calls I mentioned above. They were in separate trees. I soon saw one of them about 1.5 meters up on a Red Cedar. It was a Townsend's solitaire and was eating berries on the cedar. It quickly jumped down to a mountain ash and looked at me. I looked up to confirm that the other bird, which was still calling, was a Townsend's solitaire, and it was. I then watched the first bird for more than a minute from a distance of about 4 meters. It was facing to my left, so I had a perfect side view. The sun was directly in its face, so its colors did not show up ideally.

The bird was about the length of an eastern kingbird. It had a long tail, a short bill, and a slimmer build than those of other thrushes. Its head was smoothly rounded like that of a phoebe or kingbird. It had a yellowish-white eye ring that was quite conspicuous. The upper parts were gray. The wings were darker and had a tan-colored patch. The underside was uniformly light gray and had no markings. The tail was dark gray with a white outer edge. Both birds abruptly flew away at once. Their exit was much quicker than any thrush I have seen.

I listened to the Townsend's solitaires abruptly flew away at once. Their exit was much quicker than any thrush I have seen.

I listened to the Townsend's solitaire songs on a record later that day and confirmed that the warbling song was that of the Townsend's solitaire.

Scott Swengel

Plegadis Ibis near Concordia College in Ozaukee County

On October 20, David Sabee and I observed an adult Plegadis ibis flying south along the lakefront. The day was overcast, but with clear visibility and a SSW wind just ahead of a cold front. The bird, in glossy, solid dark plumage, was observed at a distance of about 100 yards. The basic plumage, characteristic shape, and long decurved bill make all but the "specific" identification very easy.

Bill Cowart

Purple Sandpiper at the Juneau Park Landfill in Milwaukee

I noted the strong northeasterly winds Saturday and decided to check the Juneau Park landfill in Milwaukee for any birds which may have been blown in from Lake Michigan. I was especially hoping for a purple sandpiper, which I had searched for so many times before in fall, always without results. I heard a fairly loud, somewhat musical call note coming from some bird over the lake, but try as I might, I could not pick it out. Suddenly, I heard the note once again, almost below me, and observed a shrebird landing on a large, algae-covered rock at the water's edge. I had seen dunlins here before, but never with that unusual call note, so different than the grating call of a dunlin. As I observed the shore bird, my suspicions were confirmed. Although, superficially this looked like a dunlin, one field mark after another confirmed my hope, a purple sandpiper! The size was slightly chunkier than a dunlin, but with about the same bill shape, although with a less pronounced droop, than a dunlin. Color was diagnostic. The terminal half of the bill was blackish, but the basal half and legs were dark pinkish, with only a hint of yellow (more similar to others I had seen on the east coast). While the entire back half of the sandpiper was much like a dunlin, the head and breast were much darker, and with far more streaking on the back and sides. The white eye ring was noted, but the head color, even though more uniform than the dunlin, was more brown than purple. Its very tame behavior contrasted with dunlins, which rarely allow people to approach as closely. When flushed it flew maybe 40 feet and landed again on wave-washed rocks, searching for food while I again approached closely. The flight pattern was much like a dunlin, with a thin, white inner wing stripe, but a darker rump and a larger, chunkier appearance also noted in flight.

Dennis Gustafson

Bald Eagles at Eau Claire Lakes

A mature Bald Eagle was observed diving on a group of uninjured Common Mergansers in the early morning of September 21, 1985, on the Middle Eau Claire Lake in northwestern Wisconsin. The area is about 25 miles north of Hayward and consists of a chain of 11 lakes just west of Chequamegon National Forest. Each time the eagle made a pass the mergansers disappeared under the surface of the water. After about ten dives the eagle came in low over the water causing the ducks to dive sooner than before. At this point he dropped into the lake where he folded his wings and floated on the surface for a couple of minutes. During this time he did not flap his wings or appear to be struggling. There was no sign of any activity in the water beneath him. He then lifted himself out of the lake, carrying the duck he had caught from below the surface of the water. The takeoff from the water was nearly vertical for the first five feet, with no apparent difficulty. He carried his catch to a nearby tree on shore.

Several years ago in March I observed a mature Bald Eagle eating a muskrat on the ice of this same lake. He was surrounded by five or six Common Crows. There were bits of flesh and blood scattered around his kill which the crows were apparently trying to get. The eagle had his wings spread trying to cover up as much of his kill as he could. Each time the crows closed in the eagle would drive them back over the ice with short charges and much wing flapping. I wasn't sure if the wing flapping was for the benefit of the crows or necessary to keep his balance on the slippery ice. At no time during

the 30 minutes the eagle was feeding did any of the birds fly more than a few feet. When the eagle grew tired of the hassle or had had his fill he moved off the muskrat and allowed the crows to move in.

Over the past 15 years our family has had many opportunities to observe Bald Eagle hunting and feeding behavior around the Eau Claire Lakes.

Leland Hansen
2309 Beverly Road
St. Paul, Minnesota 55104

White-winged Scoter in Polk County

At 0730 on 16 April 1985, I observed an adult male White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta deglandi*) with a group of 7 Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*) and 3 Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*) on a 0.1 ha wetland in the federal Flater's Waterfowl Production Area in the NWNE of Section 33, Township of Alden, Polk County. The ducks were actively diving in the center of the small wetland. A pair of Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) were seen along the shoreline. I observed the Scoter at a distance of 40m with the aid of a 6 x 30 binoculars and a 20X scope and noted the following field marks: overall blackish duck slightly larger than the Scaup, white speculum on the folded wing, yellow eye and small orange bump on the upper mandible. The bird was seen on the same wetland the following day at 1710 hours in company with a group of 24 Lesser Scaup and 1 Ring-necked Duck by DNR Technician Bruce Bacon.

James O. Evrard
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Sigurd T. Olson Common Loon Research Award

Wisconsin Project Loon Watch is accepting applications for its first annual award for research on Common Loons in the Lake Superior - Lake Michigan region of the United States and Canada. To apply for the \$1,000 award, a brief description (maximum 10 pp.) of the proposed research program and curriculum vitae should be submitted by the principal investigator to Dr. Paul I.V. Strong, Director, Wisconsin Project Loon Watch, Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute, Northland College, Ashland, Wisconsin 54806 no later than 1 March, 1986. Proposals by students should be accompanied by 2 letters of recommendation. The award will be granted on the basis of the project's potential to better understand and manage Upper Great Lakes populations of Common Loons.

Save the Wetlands for the Cranes

**Mary and
Charlie Nelson**



The Twelve Birds of Christmas

**By William E. Studwell
Northern Illinois University**

Christmas is a season with many traditional symbols. Mangers, angels, shepherds, stars, candles, evergreen trees, mistletoe, holly, Santa Claus, and reindeer are among the items most associated with the holiday in the United States. Birds, however, are not usually regarded as especially representative of Christmas, despite their common appearance on greeting cards. Yet members of the class Aves have appeared fairly frequently in Christmas carols over the years. Illustrative of this is the inclusion of twenty songs involving birds in a recent comprehensive reference book on Christmas carols.¹ In these twenty songs, twelve categories of birds are touched upon in some manner or another, sometimes fleetingly, sometimes extensively.

Of course the best known bird in a Christmas song is the famous pear tree partridge in **The Twelve Days of Christmas**. That 17th or 18th century English folk song also includes five other categories -- two turtle doves, three French hens, four calling birds, six geese, and seven swans. Some of these categories are also found in other carols. Figurative doves are in the 19th century Alsatian song **Dors, Ma Colombe** (Sleep, Little Dove) and the ca 1800 Austrian folk song **O Heilig Kind** (We Greet Thee, Heavenly Dove). In addition to the French hens, there are other variations of chickens in carols: "**Chickens a-Crowin' for Midnight**" is the first line of Huddie Ledbetter's twentieth century American song **Almost Day**; and roosters are a part of four songs -- the 17th century English song **Chanticleer**, the 15th or 16th century English folk song **King Herod and the Cock**, the somewhat later English folk song **The Miracle of the Cock**, and the 17th century folk song from Provence, France, **Touro-Louro-Louro!** Other generic references to birds besides "calling birds" are in: John Jacob Niles' twentieth century American song **The Carol of the Birds**; the twentieth century Australian song **The Carol of the Birds**; the medieval folk song from Catalonia, Spain, **El Cant Des Ocells** (Carol of the Birds); the early modern folk song from southern France, **Le Noel Des Oiseaux** (Carol of the Birds); the 16th century folk song from southern France, **Noel Des Ausels** (Carol of the Birds); and the 15th century English folk song **Nowell, Nowell: In Bethlem**, one of whose variations has the first line "In Bethlem This Bird of Life".

Besides the variety of birds in **The Twelve Days of Christmas**, there are six other categories in the literature of carols. We in the United States are familiar with the "bluebird" in **Winter Wonderland**. Less known is the recent Canadian song **Snowbird**. In England, there are the 15th or 16th century folk carol **The Carnal and the Crane** and the folk carol from about the same period, **The Miraculous Harvest**, which has the variant title **The Carnal and the Crane**. (In these two instances, "carnal" means "crow"). On the European continent, there are the modern Czech folk song **Zezukla z Lesa Vylitla** (From Out of the Forest a Cuckoo Flew), one of the better-known carols from that country, and the very fine 17th century folk song from Germany, **Lieb Nachtigall, Wach Auf!** (The Christmas Nightingale).

This multi-century, multi-country, and multi-faceted association of birds with Christmas songs definitely suggests a positive long-term symbiotic relationship in the minds of many throughout western civilization.

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William E. Studwell
Associate Professor
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DeKalb, Illinois 60115

A Hundred Redwings

*Snowflakes scatter across the marsh lightly
where once in spring a hundred redwings sang
with familiar notes from cattails
swaying in breeze...
a hundred redwings
all gone south,
now only a lonely marsh,
snowflakes,
my boots crunching over dry stalks
the only sound...
but in mind's eye a hundred redwings take flight
once again flocking over cattails,
everywhere the flutter of wings,
my heart pounding in rhythm
with their lively flight,
the redwings,
back home for spring!*



By Joe Trueblood
6320 Pheasant Lane
#D8
Middleton, WI 53562



(Drawings by Carol Rudy)



Female Snowy Owl, hiding in willows at Baileys Harbor Beach, sitting on top of her kill — a Green Heron. Photographed April 14, 1981. It was a late spring that year, and the Snowy Owl behaved as though she was going to remain for the summer! Photograph by Roy Lukes.

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