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# The *Passenger* **PIGEON**



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**EDITORS**

Bettie R. and Neil A. Harriman  
5188 Bittersweet Lane  
Oshkosh, WI 54901  
920. 233. 1973  
[bettie@new.rr.com](mailto:bettie@new.rr.com)  
[harriman@uwosh.edu](mailto:harriman@uwosh.edu)

**BIRD REPORTS COORDINATOR**

Randy Hoffman  
305 Fifth Street  
Waunakee, WI 53597  
608. 849. 4502  
[ecurlew@hotmail.com](mailto:ecurlew@hotmail.com)

**ASSISTANT EDITOR (Art)**

David Kuecherer  
726 Harvard Drive  
Neenah, WI 54956  
920. 725. 7915  
[dkuecherer@new.rr.com](mailto:dkuecherer@new.rr.com)

**FIELD NOTE COMPILER (Spring)**

Marilyn Bontly  
901 E. Fairy Chasm Road  
Bayside, WI 53217-1818  
414. 228. 0314  
[mbontly@wi.rr.com](mailto:mbontly@wi.rr.com)

**FIELD NOTE COMPILER (Summer)**

Randy Hoffman  
305 Fifth Street  
Waunakee, WI 53597  
608. 849. 4502  
[ecurlew@hotmail.com](mailto:ecurlew@hotmail.com)

**FIELD NOTE COMPILER (Autumn)**

Ted Gostomski  
11860 Leonard School Road  
Cable, WI 54821  
[gostomski545@msn.com](mailto:gostomski545@msn.com)

**FIELD NOTE COMPILER (Winter)**

Kay L. Kavanagh  
712 Lakeview Lane  
Niagara, WI 54151-9021  
715. 589. 2299  
[kkav@uplogon.com](mailto:kkav@uplogon.com)

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

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*Front Cover: Male Scarlet Tanager on old mullein stalk by David Kuecherer.*

## **A Big “Thank You” to the Convention Committee**

**O**ne of the biggest events in the WSO year is our annual convention, a four-day birding extravaganza held in late May. The annual convention features Thursday/Friday full-day field trips, local Saturday/Sunday morning field trips, paper sessions, workshops, exhibits, the WSO bookstore, and a banquet with a featured speaker. Over the years, there have been many outstanding conventions full of birding, camaraderie, educational activities, great food, and, generally, too little sleep. While we have a convention every year, it should not be assumed that organizing and conducting such an event is easy, and we should not take it for granted.

If you think about all of the puzzle pieces that must fit together to achieve a successful convention, this committee, and the local volunteer base that works with them, is nothing short of amazing. Prior to each convention, they visit and select the venue, arrange accommodations and meals, organize field trips, solicit speakers, brainstorm and select workshops, put together convention packets, and the list goes on. At the convention, these committee members are the smiling faces at the welcome table making sure that everyone gets registered and has a name tag and welcome packet. Through the weekend, they run the show making sure that all goes as planned. After the convention, they review all of the comments submitted to build on strengths and correct shortcomings for the next convention.

So, with all of this in mind, I would like to recognize past and present Convention Committee members Jeff Baughman, Scott Baughman, Marilyn Bontly, Margaret Brasser, Penny Fish, Charlie Geiger, Christine Reel, Joan Sommer, Christine Zimmerman, and Jeff Zimmerman for all of their efforts throughout each year to make sure that our WSO Convention is a great birding experience. They perform their duties with a smile, and we all benefit greatly from their work.

As you might guess, the committee is always looking for new ideas to make future conventions even more enjoyable and welcomes new committee members to give some long-standing members a chance to rotate off. If you have ideas and/or are interested in joining the Convention Committee, please contact Committee Chair Scott Baughman (his contact information can be found on the inside back cover of this issue). He would welcome your input and participation.

In the next month, you will be receiving registration information for the 2010 WSO Convention in Sturgeon Bay. As you read about the field trips, speakers, and workshops, take some time to think about all of the effort that goes into preparing for and conducting the event. I encourage you to attend



and, while you are there, please take the time to thank the Convention Committee members. I am sure they would appreciate it. See you in Sturgeon Bay in May!

*Jesse Pate*

President



Northern Parula *by Denny Malueg*

# **The Response of Nesting Ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*) to Maintenance Activities along Transmission Lines in Central Wisconsin**

***Joshua M. Kapfer***

*Department of Environmental Studies  
Elon University  
Elon, North Carolina, 27244  
jkapfer@elon.edu*

***William P. Mueller***

*Wisconsin Society for Ornithology  
1242 S. 45th St.  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53214  
iltlawas@earthlink.net*

***Brian R. Bub***

*Natural Resources Consulting, Inc.  
209 Commerce Parkway  
Cottage Grove, Wisconsin, 53527  
bbub@nrc-inc.net*

***James W. Engelhardt***

*Natural Resources Consulting, Inc.  
610 B West Avenue  
Rice Lake, Wisconsin, 54868  
jengelhardt@nrc-inc.net*

## **ABSTRACT**

Wisconsin's Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) population has increased in recent decades, in part due to their adaptation to using artificial nest supports (e.g., power line structures and communications towers), as well as the provision of artificial

nesting platforms. The response of nesting Ospreys to human disturbance varies in context with timing and the type of activity. Between the 2006 and 2008 breeding seasons, we evaluated the behavioral response of four pairs of nesting Ospreys to electric transmission line maintenance activities at three nests in Adams and Wood Counties

and one nest in Marquette County, Wisconsin. All observations were conducted during unscheduled emergency maintenance at electrical transmission line H-frame structures. One Osprey nest occurred on the actual H-frame structure being maintained, and the other three nests were on adjacent structures to those being maintained (<300 m away). In each case, Ospreys showed temporary distress during maintenance activities, but resumed normal activities upon completion of work. Our observations suggest that in some cases, Ospreys are tolerant of temporary disturbance during the nesting period.

## INTRODUCTION

The Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) is a diurnal, fish-eating raptor that nests throughout Wisconsin often in proximity to large lakes and rivers, although nesting is decidedly more uncommon in the southern three tiers of counties (Cutright et al. 2006). The traditional location for nest placement was in trees (live or dead), usually on or near the top, or where large branches form a crotch (Poole et al. 2002). In 2008, there were 484 active Osprey territories in Wisconsin (Eckstein et al. 2008). The Osprey was recently proposed for de-listing as a threatened species in Wisconsin (WDNR 2009).

Various management techniques have been implemented over several decades across North America to conserve this species, and all have played a role in the rebound of Osprey populations. For example, the shooting and trapping of Ospreys was made illegal by the provincial government of Ontario as early as 1936 (Poole et al. 2002). In addition, organochlorine

pesticides, which can reduce Osprey hatching success, were banned in Wisconsin as of 1969 (Eckstein et al. 2008). More recently, nest platforms mounted on transmission and distribution line structures have been built, positioned, and erected by various conservation groups, state resource agencies, electrical utility companies, and private landowners (Gieck 1991, Poole et al. 2002, Postupalsky 1978). The goal of these platforms was to create alternative nest-building locations for breeding Ospreys that might otherwise nest directly on transmission structures. Such platforms were implemented due to observations of mortality and electrical outages due to Ospreys perching or nesting directly on transmission structures (Van Daele 1980). This technique has been very successful and has led to a large percentage of the statewide Osprey population now nesting on human-made platforms (many built on transmission structures) and towers. However, utility structures with nesting platforms occasionally require maintenance or replacement, and the effect of disturbance to actively nesting Osprey due to maintenance activities is largely unknown.

The disturbance of wildlife as a result of human activity is well established (Gutzwiller et al. 1994, Larkin 1996, Rabin et al. 2003). However, studies focused specifically on how Ospreys are affected by human disturbance have yielded variable results; for example, in southern New England, reproductive success of Ospreys was not negatively impacted by brief (10–20 minutes in length) visits to active nests during the breeding season (Poole 1981). In addition, some reports indicate that continuous human

disturbance (which the birds have been acclimated to) is better tolerated by nesting Ospreys than novel or sporadic disturbance (Levenson and Koplin 1984). Trimper et al. (2002) found that nesting individuals are not usually displaced due to aircraft noise. Swenson (1979) also reports that Ospreys in isolated locations are more susceptible to timber harvest activities than are acclimated individuals. Van Daele and Van Daele (1982) found that nests located more than 1,500 m from human disturbance are more productive than nests that are closer. However, the effects of disruption due to construction or utility maintenance activities are not well known for Osprey in Wisconsin. Concern still exists regarding the effect of human activities on nesting Ospreys, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has closely regulated all activity within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of active nests in the past (WDNR 2003).

Certain circumstances may require anthropogenic activity to occur within the vicinity of active Osprey nests. For instance, maintenance of old or damaged transmission structures may require immediate replacement to avoid significant power loss to Wisconsin citizens. Should these structures exist close to active Osprey nests, the maintenance required may result in a level of disturbance that would cause Ospreys to abandon eggs or fledglings. However, to our knowledge, no attempt has been made to create *a priori* hypotheses and objectively observe the response of Ospreys nesting in this situation to such activity.

We attempted to determine how Ospreys on utility-pole-mounted nest platforms respond to disturbance associated with transmission line main-

tenance. We accomplished this by observing active nests in the vicinity of maintenance activities and documenting the behavior of the attending Ospreys, to determine if egg/fledgling abandonment would result. This opportunity was made possible through a joint effort between Natural Resources Consulting, Inc., the WDNR-Office of Energy, and American Transmission Company (ATC).

## METHODS

*Background*—Maintenance oversight was conducted at three locations in Wisconsin along two separate ATC transmission lines in 2006 and 2008. These lines were the “X-10” transmission line in northeast Marquette County and the “X-43” transmission line spanning portions of Wood and Adams Counties. The maintenance activities at these locations included either repair to a structure where an active Osprey nest already existed or replacement of transmission structures located adjacent to structures that housed active Osprey nests.

Along the X-10 transmission line (17 May 2006), minor maintenance (as opposed to structure replacement) occurred on a structure that housed an active Osprey nest. In this case, two bucket trucks with cranes and one accompanying ground vehicle were present on-site during maintenance. The repairs conducted were relatively short in duration (roughly 2 hours). Adjacent land was primarily active agriculture to the north and wooded or shrubby wetland to the south. This nest was comparatively less remote than the nests observed along X-43, with a country road located

roughly 450 m to the north and active agricultural fields located adjacently.

In the other two instances (two structures and three active Osprey nests along the X-43 transmission line; 14 & 16 May 2008), structure removal and replacement occurred, which required substantially more time. This involved the use of one boom truck with an auger, two trucks with buckets and cranes, a smaller truck with gravel for back-fill, and a fifth truck hauling a compressor. Structure replacement required holes to be augered into the ground immediately adjacent to existing structures. Once the new structure had been erected in the augered hole and backfilled, the conductor wires were transferred and the old structure removed via chainsaws. The maintenance activities at this location took more time (roughly 2 days) but resulted in only temporary, minimal impacts to the immediately surrounding habitat. All vehicles involved in structure maintenance accessed the site via the transmission line right-of-way (ROW) or access roads and remained on existing tire tracks within the ROW as much as possible during maintenance (Fig. 1). Neither of the two focal structures along the X-43 transmission line housed active Osprey nests. Instead, two Osprey nests existed on either side of one structure being replaced (STR-6) located within the Petenwell Wildlife Area. These two nests were each two structures removed (in either direction) from the focal structure. The adjacent landscape consisted of a large open water body to the immediate north (Lake Petenwell) associated with the Petenwell Dam and a mix of river (Wisconsin River), floodplain wetland, and floodplain forest to the immediate

south. These nests were comparatively remote, with the nearest sources of potential disturbance associated with maintenance activity of the dam, the transmission ROW, or recreational water craft on Lake Petenwell. The second structure being replaced along the X-43 transmission line (STR-175) had one Osprey nest positioned on the crossbar of the immediately adjacent structure. This structure was located along a ROW running through northern dry forest-type habitat and the active Osprey nest seemed somewhat isolated from the presumably more suitable habitat to the west associated with the Wisconsin River. This nest also appeared to be relatively remote, with the most likely source of disturbance being maintenance activity along the ROW.

*Quantification of Osprey responses to activity*—We were interested in determining the number of times birds were incited to completely leave (or “flush” from) the nest as a result of maintenance activities. Birds that have been flushed from the nest may abandon eggs or fledglings, which could lower Osprey production. To accomplish this, we created an *a priori* list of activities that could potentially cause birds to “flush,” which included: loud noises (brief or prolonged), horizontal movement by maintenance equipment in the vicinity of nests, vertical movement by maintenance equipment (such as raising of crane arms, etc.) in view of nesting birds, and manipulation of transmission pole or wires associated with nesting birds. We identified a “flush” as a result of anthropogenic activities as birds completely leaving the nest for any



Figure 1: (A) crew conducting maintenance on structure adjacent to active Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) nest on the X-43 transmission line, (B) active osprey nest on the same structure being maintained along the X-10 transmission line.

amount of time apparently due to maintenance.

While maintenance occurred within the ROW, a surveyor was present monitoring Osprey behavior at all times. During this time, we recorded all maintenance activities that we observed, which were on our *a priori* list. We also recorded the number of times nest-attending birds were incited to “flush” from the nest, apparently due to these activities. On the day that activities were scheduled, we entered the project area along the ROW on-foot 10–15 min. prior to maintenance crews and began recording observations of Osprey behavior. This also allowed nesting birds some time to acclimate to the presence of observers, so that responses to maintenance activity were less likely to be confused with responses to observers. During maintenance activity, we observed birds via binoculars approximately once every 30 seconds or when conditions associated with maintenance activity suddenly changed. The number of maintenance activities from our *a priori* list and responses by Ospreys to each activity were recorded and summarized for all three locations where structure maintenance occurred.

## RESULTS

*X-10 Transmission Line*—We spent 2 hours monitoring construction activities at the structure on the X-10 transmission line. The Osprey attending the nest (which was built on the same structure that maintenance occurred) flushed almost immediately at the approach of construction vehicles. This individual remained in flight above

the nest or perched on an adjacent structure for the entire observation period during which maintenance occurred. The Osprey returned to the nest within 10 minutes of construction crews leaving the area and apparently did not abandon the eggs.

*X-43 Transmission Line*—Over the course of two days, 16 hours (8.5 hours the first day and 7.5 hours the second day) were spent monitoring construction activities at the two focal structures near active nests along the X-43 transmission line. During this time, activities that we identified on our *a priori* list, which we believed could potentially incite birds to flush occurred on 44 occasions at structure 6 (STR-6). Of these, birds at both nests were incited to flush on only 3 of the 44 occasions associated with STR-6 (6.8%). In all three of these examples, Osprey that flushed due to activity usually circled the area once and returned to the nest after approximately 10 to 30 seconds. At STR-175, activities that we believed may incite birds to flush occurred on 25 occasions. Although birds were observed leaving the nest, this appeared to be when adults rotated positions as the nest-attending individual, and was not due to disturbance from maintenance activities (0%).

## DISCUSSION

Osprey attending nests that were monitored along the X-43 transmission line did not appear to be unduly affected by construction activities, which is of interest given the more remote nature of these nests. While birds flushed on a few occasions, they



rarely left for more than 30 seconds. On the other hand, the Ospreys monitored along the X-10 transmission line, which we presumed would be subjected to disturbance on a more regular basis and were perhaps better acclimated, flushed and remained away from the nest for a longer period of time. However, this nest was located on the same structure that was receiving maintenance. This disturbance was temporary and adult Ospreys did return to the nest almost immediately following maintenance.

All Osprey nests that we monitored produced nestlings in the year that maintenance occurred. With regards to the X-43 transmission line, the two nests associated with STR-6 produced three and two young respectively in 2008, and the single nest adjacent to STR-175 produced one young in 2008 (G. Dahl, WI-DNR, pers. comm.). The nest monitored along the X-10 transmission line produced two young in 2006 (S. Easterly, WI-DNR, pers. comm.). These observations, in combination with the results of our study, indicate that Ospreys in these instances were not sufficiently disturbed to cause nest abandonment. However, past reports have indicated significant variation in how individual birds respond to activity and because our sample size was small (4 nests in 3 disturbance cases) and our results are mostly observational, we recommend caution in extrapolating these findings to other Ospreys, even in similar settings. It is encouraging to report that, based on our observations, there seemed to be little impact to nesting Ospreys due to the maintenance conducted. It is possible that longer periods of disturbance may have resulted in a different reaction by the nesting

Osprey. Our observations represent baseline information for future work, which should include a larger array of observations and, perhaps even manipulative behavioral experiments focused on how Ospreys respond to various levels of disturbance.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank Terrence Yakich, Rita Hayen, and other American Transmission Company employees who helped make this monitoring project possible and commented on earlier versions of this manuscript. Shari Koslowsky (WI-DNR), Noel Cutright (We Energies, Retired), Scott Storlid (NRC) provided critical review of this report. Greg Dahl and Stephen Easterly (WI-DNR) graciously provided Osprey nest productivity results for the monitored nests.

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- Joshua M. Kapfer** has been involved in field research on the ecology of upper Midwestern vertebrates (principally amphibians and reptiles) for over a decade. His primary research interests include habitat selection, spatial ecology, population ecology, and conservation of rare species. He received a B.S. (1999) and M.S. (2002) in Biology from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. In 2007 he completed his doctoral degree in Ecology and Evolution at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His dissertation research focused on the ecology of Bullsnares (*Pituophis catenifer sayi*) in upper Midwestern prairies. Josh has worked as a state herpetologist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and as a wildlife biologist with Natural Resources Consulting, Inc. He has recently been hired as an assistant professor in the Environmental Studies Department at Elon University (North Carolina).
- William P. Mueller** is Conservation Chair for the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, and Project Coordinator for the Milwaukee County Avian Migration Monitoring Partnership (MCAMMP). He completed a master's degree at UW-Milwaukee, where his thesis research focused on the biogeography and decline of the Red-Headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*). He works as the Ornithologist/Conservation Biologist for Cedarburg Science LLC. His current research focuses on the use of migratory stopover habitat by birds in an urbanizing landscape, and avian distribution in the upper Midwest.
- Brian R. Bub** is a Senior Avian Ecologist at Natural Resources Consulting, Inc. He has a BS in Biology from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, and an MS in Forestry from Michigan Tech University where he researched forest songbird communities. Since 1995, he has conducted nest

searches, territory mapping, trapping and banding, behavioral observations, point count surveys, transect surveys, and broadcast call surveys. He has studied birds for graduate research, other academic research projects, inventory and monitoring projects for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, as well as professional service projects for transportation, utility clients, and wind energy clients.

**James W. Engelhardt** has been involved in many aspects of avian field studies includ-

ing broadcast call surveys, raptor nest searches, behavioral observations, and point count surveys for a variety of bird species in the upper Midwest. He received his B.S. (1997) in both Biology and Environmental Geology from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Jim has worked as a fisheries technician specializing in fish entrainment studies for Great Lakes Environmental Center and more recently as an environmental scientist for Natural Resources Consulting, Inc.



Magnolia Warbler by Denny Malueg

## Prairie Grouse (Ghost Dance)

Buena Vista.

Soothing sweeps of wild meadows  
blown in endless waves before the wind.

Now stiff stubble  
of man and plough,  
a page taken out of context.

But still they come,  
like whispered primal words,  
following maps  
etched in their blood.

Out in the cold stillness,  
ghostly cooing and eerie cackles  
drift, like mist draped over fertile fields.  
The prairie voice grows weaker.

In the failing darkness,  
filmy shadows float and turn,  
bump,  
jump,  
wings flap,  
barred feathers flutter to the ground.

Stiff pinnae rise to attention.  
Yellow neck sacs swell.  
Feathered feet,  
in blurred cadence,  
drum the ancient black soil.  
Males draw imaginary  
lines in the turf.

Hens huddle quietly  
among courting chaos,  
waiting to choose their mates.

Having fanned the flame,  
the elegy ends as it began,  
as they wander off,  
wanting to dissolve,  
to disappear, into  
that endless sea of grass.

—*Jim Steffen, November 2006*

# Unpublished Bird Records from Waukesha County, Wisconsin, by S. Paul Jones and Others, 1890–1953

*John Bielefeldt*

*Eagle, Wisconsin 53119*

Scott (1959), as well as Matteson and Bielefeldt (1988), have reviewed the many services to Wisconsin bird study by S. Paul Jones (1886–1959), especially his work in the 1920s and '30s when professional ornithologists and skilled amateurs like Jones were few in the state. They've also reported some of his early and otherwise unpublished records—mostly from Waukesha County—such as nesting Cerulean Warblers in 1925, breeding Brewer's Blackbirds in 1933, and declining numbers of the now state-endangered Loggerhead Shrike in 1922–53. Other observations from Jones' notebooks, housed in the Wisconsin State Historical Society archives and excerpted here, have not been published.

Jones may have had unmet plans for a longer work on the birds of his home ground in Waukesha Co., but he published only four brief distributional notes from Wisconsin plus a privately printed checklist (ca. 1935) for the county. He was an avid compiler of historical data and other observers' local sightings as well as his own records during 40 years of personal fieldwork. For some of the 15 species discussed below, Jones' notes provide

minor amendments in the timing of first or last local reports of newly appearing or now extirpated birds. Others involve unrecognized breeding or distributional records in one small piece of the state, or insight on the changing numbers of some species in southeastern Wisconsin over the past century.

Confidence in Jones' unpublished catalog of personal records, second-hand reports, and lost specimens must rest upon his reputation as a painstaking observer, insistent on questioning informants, and seeing the bird itself—dead or alive—whenever possible (Scott 1959, Matteson and Bielefeldt 1988). One of his most dependable sources for specimen and sight records in western Waukesha Co. was I. J. Perkins, a taxidermist and collector at the Milwaukee Public Museum and a companion of O. J. Gromme and other museum staff on many local, state, and overseas expeditions (e.g., Gromme 1930, Robbins 1991: 10). Perkins lived near Golden Lake on the edge of the Dousman Marsh, then 2000+ acres of wet meadow, shallow marsh, and tamarack-hardwood swamp with islands of upland forest.

For perspective, I have added a few published reports and a few historical and current references to adjacent counties as a complement to Jones' work. Unless otherwise stated, all records pertain to Waukesha County.

**Ruffed Grouse**—Robbins' (1991) map of "resident" range in southeastern Wisconsin extended to much of northwestern Waukesha and part of northeastern Jefferson Counties (compare Walker 2006), but re-introductions in the southern Kettle Moraine in the 1970s had only temporary success (WDNR 1991, pers. obs.) and in fact this grouse has long been extirpated as a native bird in Waukesha Co. Leopold (1931) said that a few persisted in the county's northeastern corner about 1930. The last reported remnant of a native population elsewhere, at Dousman Marsh, was three on 23 April 1922 (Jones with O. J. Gromme and H. L. Stoddard), 14 May 1922 (Jones), and five in December 1923 (H. L. Stoddard and I. J. Perkins).

**Sharp-tailed Grouse**—Although small numbers were still said to be present in Iowa, Green, and Dane Counties in 1900, 1934, and 1940, respectively, Sharp-tails disappeared in southeastern counties as early as 1856 (Schorger 1943) and in Jefferson and Rock Counties by 1869–74 (Matteson and Highsmith 2003). However, I. J. Perkins told Jones that he shot one in "Bert Tinus' field near Golden Lake" on 10 October 1918. Plat maps of that time put this site in Section 32, Town of Summit, Waukesha Co., on Perkins' later landholdings near Dousman. His care in noting date and site suggests that he knew the bird's rarity. As a taxidermist (and hunter) with an in-

hand specimen, he would not have confused it with prairie-chickens, still numerous on the same site in the 1920s and '30s.

**Greater Prairie-Chicken**—Decline and extirpation of the prairie-chicken in Waukesha Co. was precipitous in 1936–42. Gross (1930) and Leopold (1931), apparently using the same data, estimated (but probably underestimated) countywide numbers at 50 birds at two known sites in west-central townships. Robbins (1991) gave 1939 as the final county record, as presumably based on wardens' reports in Scott (1939): about 30 birds both winter and summer 1937–39 at Dousman Marsh (T6N R17E S4–5) by F. Stiglbauer, when W. Laesch was simultaneously finding an uncertain number a few miles westward at an unstated spot in the Palmyra Marsh in Jefferson Co. I. J. Perkins, also at Dousman Marsh, told Young (1940) that "I fed a flock that varied from 75 to 150 birds" in the winter of 1936–37, before extensive drainage by other landowners began a year or two later, when there were still "50 to 75 chickens that frequent my farm now" ca. 1938–39. Jones saw one bird on 27 April 1941 at an unspecified site near Eagle, where local farmers—about 6–8 miles southeast of the Dousman/Palmyra sites—recalled winter flocks = 50 birds in the late 1930s or early '40s (KMNHA and WDNR 2002, R. Kurowski pers. comm.). Perkins' last record at Dousman was four birds in February 1942 (Passenger Pigeon 4: 24). Winter movements and observational overlap among Eagle and Dousman sites are possible, but it seems likely that 150–200 or more chickens

still existed in western Waukesha Co. as late as 1937.

**Horned Grebe**—Oologist S. R. Hartwell told Jones that he collected five eggs and a “female . . . taken to Capt. Goss” (see Schorger 1944) to confirm identification at Phantom Lake, Mukwonago, on 27 May 1890. Kumlien and Hollister (1903) included Hartwell in their acknowledgments and may have drawn upon this record, in part, in stating that this grebe “formerly” bred in the state’s southern counties.

**Golden Eagle**—Not included in Schorger’s (1945) list of early Wisconsin records is a well-described adult seen by Jones near Waukesha on 17 February 1937.

**Yellow Rail**—The undated “Elm Grove” record in Kumlien and Hollister (1903) is presumably the bird taken there on 1 May 1891 and examined at Milwaukee Public Museum by Jones, who also inspected the specimen from Muskego by C. Brandler on 18 October 1908 (Robbins 1991). Jones’ notebooks report other specimens (\*) or sightings from Waukesha Co. on 29 September 1925 (\*) and 12 May 1929 near Dousman (I. J. Perkins) plus personal records 8 May 1932 (\*) near Waukesha, 14 August 1932 at Delafield, and 30 April 1933 near Mukwonago (with J. T. Curtis, V. Rossman, and P. Gale).

**King Rail**—Jones had 35 personal observations in the county on May–August dates in 18 years during 1922–53, including 5 unpublished records of adults with chicks: 3 July 1925 east of Marcy in or near T8N R20E S34,

23–25 July 1925 at City of Waukesha, 18–23 July 1939 at an unspecified site in New Berlin township (with H. Philip), 8 August 1948 at unspecified locale, and 3–12 August 1951 along Fox River near Waukesha, possibly at same site reported 10 August 1951 by T. Soulen (*Passenger Pigeon* 14: 44). Other breeding season sites in Jones’ notes are [Big?] “Muskego Lake” (30 May 1922), Pewaukee Lake (24 May 1943), T6N R18E S36 near Saylesville (20 August 1953), and T6N R19E S27 south of Waukesha (30 May 1940).

**Sandhill Crane**—Jones had no personal records in Waukesha Co. until 1950 but noted that I. J. Perkins saw two on 25 March 1935 and two on 5 May 1937 at Dousman Marsh, where Perkins had earlier collected one on 2 September 1923 (Evans 1940) and later seen four on 30 March and two on 14 April 1940 (*Passenger Pigeon* 2: 84). Some of these dates suggest that a few summering or nesting birds may have persisted in the Dousman/Palmyra marshes in Waukesha and Jefferson Cos.—as “reported” in 1898 (Kumlien and Hollister 1903)—at a time when other breeding season records were lacking in southeastern Wisconsin.

**Barn Owl**—Matteson and Petersen (1988) have listed Wisconsin nest records in 1899–1984, including four reports of breeding birds in Waukesha Co. (1924, 1929, 1948, 1957) by Jones and colleagues. In addition, Jones cataloged two county specimens in Milwaukee Public Museum, taken 3 October 1914 (at Dousman?) by F. Southcott and 9 August 1917 at Lake Keesus by “Boys Busy Life Club” as well as unpublished personal sightings



near city of Waukesha on 12 May 1936 and (at separate sites) 7 May and 7 August 1951.

**Northern Hawk-Owl**—In both his notebook and county checklist, personal inspection of the specimen ca. 1917 was presumably responsible for Jones' confidence in "one bird in collection of A. C. Stark . . . shot by Otto Werner in November 1908 in black ash swamp one mile south of Menomonee Falls."

**Red-bellied Woodpecker**—Robbins (1991) mapped all of Waukesha and other southeastern counties as "resident range in 1910" but Jones' experience in 1916–1946 did not agree. He had no personal or other reports from the county in those years except a single bird seen, with J. T. Curtis, on 9 May 1931.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**—Robbins (1991) called the sapsucker an "uncommon" breeder in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in southern Wisconsin, where Kumlien and Hollister (1903) found it "sparingly" in summer, although King (1882) counted 7 birds in total on three (of four) walking routes covering 15 miles in central Jefferson Co., 31 July–7 August 1877. By the late 1940s or before—perhaps much before—it was absent in summer in southeastern counties (Robbins 1991) within a former breeding range that has not been regained (Temple 2006). In earlier years, "occasionally a summer resident" in Waukesha Co., said Cahn (1913), who gave no supporting dates or locales to show that "breeding records are very few at present." Jones' personal observation of a sapsucker "at nest feeding young" at Pe-

waukee on 12 June 1917 appears to be the last confirmed breeding record in southeastern Wisconsin.

**Black-backed Woodpecker**—Perkins informed Jones of a specimen, uncited elsewhere, taken 8 November 1924 at Dousman Marsh, only a mile or two away from the contiguous "Sullivan Marsh" (Jefferson Co.) where R. McCabe found a dead bird 23 December 1942 (Passenger Pigeon 5: 3).

**Tufted Titmouse**—Jones and others saw one 24 December 1947–8 January 1948 (Passenger Pigeon 10: 82). Robbins (1991) mapped this published report as the earliest available sighting in Waukesha Co., but Jones had previously found or confirmed other birds on 12–14 January 1935 (G. Schwarting, H. Young, R. Adams), 3 November 1936, and 10 March–30 April 1939, a set of dates more consonant than 1947 with first known occurrences elsewhere in southern Wisconsin.

**Brewer's Blackbird**—Apart from published reports of three nests (or fledged broods) in 1933 (Curtis 1933) and three more in 1947 (Robbins 1947), Jones and co-workers including R. Adams had unpublished records of eight additional nests in Waukesha Co., 1947–52, mostly at Saylesville in or near T6N R18E S36 in pastured remnants of lowland prairie. There and elsewhere between Waukesha and Mukwonago, after the initial nests of 1933, Jones himself saw adults on 65 May–July dates (and 96 total dates) in 19 of his subsequent 23 years of fieldwork in the county through 1958. Breeding season observations have since been rare in the state's south-

eastern corner (Robbins 1991, Gostomski 2006).

### AFTERWORD

Old bird records ought to give historical perspective, or maybe a sense of continuity, as well as a dry list of dates and places. While walking the same ground, I like to think that Jones would be especially pleased by Irv Perkins' foresight in acquiring and bequeathing a 700 acre preserve at the Dousman Marsh, which yielded many of the unpublished data reported here. Jones' notebooks, and his own work at Perkins' farm with Stoddard and Gromme in the 1920s, are testimony to times and conservation opportunities (seized or missed) that were poised midway between the present and the earliest written account of the Dousman Marsh by Lt. Meriweather Lewis Clark, namesake of his father's co-captain. He led US troops there in an unsuccessful pursuit of Sauk forces during the Blackhawk War of 1832.

The Sauk had known the lay of the land, and its military advantages, for almost 200 years. Clark made an excellent map but no bird records. Biological fieldwork by Jones and others including A. Leopold and J. T. Emlen, who recommended a federal refuge at the Dousman and Bark River marshes (Pirnie 1934), would wait another 100 years—four centuries of fine company indeed at a marsh where cranes still nest.

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- John Bielefeldt is a semi-retired naturalist whose current work focuses on the numbers of stopover migrants as well as grassland and other breeding birds in the Kettle Moraine State Forest.*



Chestnut-sided Warbler by Denny Malueg

# 2009 Breeding Bird Blitz at Prince's Point State Wildlife Area, Jefferson County, Wisconsin

*John Bielefeldt and Terri Beth Peters*

*Kettle Moraine Natural History Association*

*S91 W39091 Hwy 59*

*Eagle, Wisconsin 53119*

A part from state parks and state forests, Wisconsin has approximately 200 units and more than 460,000 acres of state wildlife areas (SWA) and state fishery areas. Even if bigger and better studied sites such as Horicon, Bong, Mead, and others are set aside, there are still about 400,000 acres of state-owned SWA lands with scant data on presence and populations of breeding nongame birds. For perspective, those 400,000 acres are collectively, in round numbers, about 10 times the size of Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, 150 times the size of Wyalusing State Park, or 1000 times the size of Chiwaukee prairie.

SWA lands serve public hunting and fishing, wildlife watching, and other recreational purposes, but management plans for recreation (and potential timber harvests) may at times proceed with little knowledge of possible impacts on nongame wildlife. Basic bird inventories to inform WDNR resource managers are needed at many SWA sites.

Public or other monies to support bird surveys on thousands of SWA acres throughout the state are not cur-

rently available. In 2008–09, the Kettle Moraine Natural History Association organized volunteer one-morning breeding bird counts at Rome Pond SWA and Prince's Point SWA in Jefferson County with two objectives: (1) to provide WDNR with new and reliable information on breeding birds, especially species of conservation need, at two little-studied sites, and (2) to show that one-day "rapid sampling" by skilled volunteers is a practical step in aiding habitat management and bird conservation on SWA lands.

Results of the count at Rome Pond SWA in 2008 were briefly reported in the Badger Birder and also distributed to local, regional, and state offices of WDNR and other agencies. Here we report the 2009 count at Prince's Point SWA and describe what we see as a sufficiently but not overly rigorous protocol for obtaining useful counts of breeding birds on large areas of diverse habitats.

## METHODS

From past personal contacts, we enlisted local persons known to be ex-

perienced and skilled in bird identification and bird counts as individual observers or group leaders. Less experienced persons were invited to team with group leaders. We fielded 8 leaders plus 8 other participants in both 2008 and 2009, including one canoe party in the latter year. Count date was proposed or adjusted, at least two months in advance, among participants who often had other commitments on weekend dates in June.

We used online WDNR maps, USGS 7.5 minute topographic maps, and one day's reconnaissance to delineate separate survey sites within the study area while taking account of roadside access, traversable upland habitats, and known trails or dikes that provide vantage points on the wetland habitats that dominate these and many other SWA. We sent color copies of USGS maps and survey sites to lead observers at least one month before count date, and asked for prompt voluntary choices of survey sites best suited to their abilities; other sites were assigned by default to late responders and count organizers.

Counts were conducted on a single day between sunrise and 1000 hrs CDT. We required that all counts be made on foot except for incidental roadside observations on the perimeters of the study area. Observers were instructed to tally all individual birds excluding young of the year but including overflying birds, and to avoid counts (or trespass) on adjacent private lands or private inholdings. We also gathered 6–9 years of prior breeding season records within public lands on the study areas by same or other observers, the Wisconsin breeding bird atlas, WDNR staff, etc. for species not listed on count day.

## RESULTS

On 6 June 2009 at Prince's Point SWA, 16 observers in 8 parties spent 61 person-hours in counting 2577 birds of 87 species (Table 1) within a mix of shallow and deep marsh, wet meadow, shrub swamp/lowland thicket, floodplain forest (silver maple, swamp white oak, and/or green ash), restored upland grasslands, and minor amounts of other habitats. Other breeding season observation in 2004–09 detected 11 additional species and so yielded a six-year total of 98 species. That total—largely based on one morning's fieldwork by 16 people—includes 2 state-threatened species (Great Egret, Acadian Flycatcher) plus 21 additional species of conservation need (Table 1).

The seven most numerous species in descending order (Mallard, Red-winged Blackbird, Tree Swallow, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Song Sparrow, Yellow Warbler) were an unsurprising list in wetland-dominated habitats, except perhaps for the count of 119 Wood Ducks, not known or likely to include hatching-year birds at this date. However, we did not anticipate the minimal tallies of 38 Great Blue Herons, 42 Great Egrets, and 26 Double-crested Cormorants, which may suggest that an undetected heron/cormorant rookery exists or might soon exist at or near Prince's Point, which seems at least to provide an important foraging site. Counts of 40 gnatcatchers, 32 Warbling Vireos, 6 Prothonotary Warblers, and 1 Bald Eagle were also unexpected.

Although it does emphasize counts as well as species' presence, this approach to quick surveys is not new. Lichenologists, entomologists, bota-

nists, ornithologists, and others have made a weekend or one-day “foray” or “blitz” at little-studied sites for many years. Similar volunteer summer bird surveys have been conducted at Turtle Valley SWA, Bong State Recreation Area, and elsewhere in southern Wisconsin. The concept is also akin to weekend “block busting” in the Wisconsin breeding bird atlas (British butterfly watchers, perhaps still averse to “blitz,” call it “square-bashing”).

One-time counts give a crude index of relative abundance. Corrections for species’ varying detectabilities (at varying distances) were not feasible in this survey. Thorough and proportional coverage of a large area of diverse habitats was not achieved, especially in wetland habitats. In most cases, counts should be treated as minimal estimates of actual numbers on Prince’s Point SWA, and as tentative comparisons of relative numbers among vocally conspicuous species. Nevertheless, for resource planning and management purposes, it is well to know that several bird species of conservation need—such as Willow (32 males) and Least (18 males) Flycatchers—were not merely present but also relatively numerous in a one-day count.

For wildlife perspectives on a landscape scale, it is possible to see Prince’s Point and other nearby state wildlife areas as valuable satellites that complement a core conservation area in the South Unit (SU) of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. Moreover, breeding-season lists from Rome Pond (1999–2008) and Prince’s Point (2004–2009) supplement the SU in different ways. The Rome list distributed in 2008 held 27 species not included on the Prince’s Point list compiled in 2009, bringing the cumulative breeding-season total

for both areas to 125 species. Both of these SWA also have extensive shallow and deep marsh habitats not widely available within the SU.

By design, the volunteer surveys at Rome in 2008 and Prince’s Point in 2009 used locally knowledgeable persons to enlist skilled group leaders who needed no additional training to produce reliable results at assigned sites. These results suggest that similar “rapid sampling” or “rapid estimation” methods, with modest but necessary rigor, could provide resource managers with useful data on breeding birds in one-day efforts at other state wildlife areas.

We think that one-day locally organized volunteer surveys can be effective, as a beginning measure, in assembling data from the many SWA lands where breeding bird presence and populations are poorly known. At smaller SWA such as Clover Valley and Beulah Station in Walworth Co., or Karcher Marsh in Racine Co., one to three experienced observers would be enough to survey the entire site in one morning. We also suggest that one-time counts using proficient observers, at as many SWA sites as possible, are a preferable and informative prelude to annually repeated counts at a few selected sites. Volunteer surveys are feasible: nearly all of the observers at Rome and Prince’s Point in 2008–09 were afield in both years, and the commonest question was “where we going next year?”

## PARTICIPANTS

J. Bielefeldt, C. Chybowski, S. Feitel, M. and Y. Fort, D. and M. Gross, J. Herrmann, E. Howe, J. Jacyna, M. Jones, E. Krzyston, A. Moretti, M.

Table 1. Counts of summer birds at Prince's Point State Wildlife Area, 6 June 2009. Bracketed numbers are minimal counts excluding possible duplication. X = other 2004–09 breeding bird observations. SGCN = species of greatest conservation need, THR = state-threatened species (WDNR 2005).

Species	Number Counted	Conservation Status	Minimal Counts
Canada Goose	122		
Wood Duck	119		
Mallard	423		
Blue-winged Teal	16	SGCN	
Green-winged Teal	x		
Redhead	6	SGCN	
Ring-necked Pheasant	x		
Wild Turkey	1		
Pied-billed Grebe	9		[6]
Double-crested Cormorant	26		
American Bittern	2	SGCN	
Least Bittern	x	SGCN	
Great Blue Heron	60		[38]
Great Egret	48	THR	[42]
Green Heron	4		
Black-crowned Night-Heron	x	SGCN	
Turkey Vulture	x		
Bald Eagle	1	SGCN	
Cooper's Hawk	1		
Red-tailed Hawk	10		[7]
Sora	5		
Common Moorhen	3	SGCN	
American Coot	9		
Sandhill Crane	49		[29]
Killdeer	39		
Black-necked Stilt	x	SGCN	
Spotted Sandpiper	5		
Wilson's Snipe	x		
American Woodcock	4	SGCN	
Wilson's Phalarope	1	SGCN	
Ring-billed Gull	1		
Black Tern	40	SGCN	[26]
Mourning Dove	19		
Great Horned Owl	2		
Barred Owl	x		
Chimney Swift	5		
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2		
Red-bellied Woodpecker	10		
Downy Woodpecker	12		
Hairy Woodpecker	7		
Northern Flicker	1		
Eastern Wood-Pewee	25		
Acadian Flycatcher	3	THR	
Alder Flycatcher	4		
Willow Flycatcher	32	SGCN	
Least Flycatcher	18	SGCN	
Eastern Phoebe	1		
Great Crested Flycatcher	25		
Eastern Kingbird	13		
Yellow-throated Vireo	4		
Warbling Vireo	32		
Red-eyed Vireo	21		
Blue Jay	6		
American Crow	17		
Horned Lark	x		



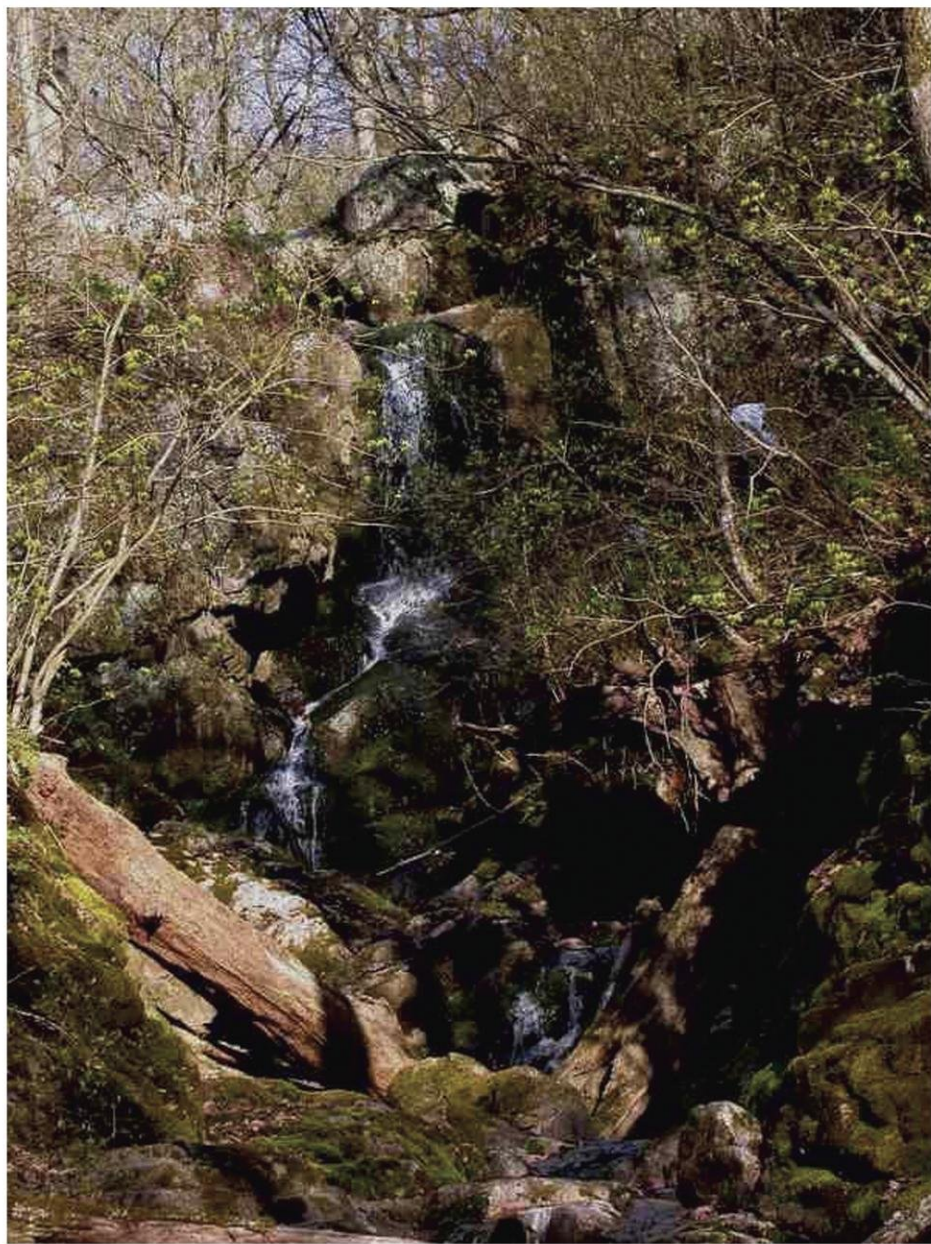
Species	Number Counted	Conservation Status	Minimal Counts
Purple Martin	4		
Tree Swallow	124		
Bank Swallow	1		
Cliff Swallow	2		
Barn Swallow	35		
Black-capped Chickadee	11		
White-breasted Nuthatch	5		
House Wren	36		
Sedge Wren	1		
Marsh Wren	27		
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	40		
Eastern Bluebird	x		
Veery	1	SGCN	
American Robin	61		
Gray Catbird	21		
Brown Thrasher	1	SGCN	
European Starling	17		
Cedar Waxwing	33		
Yellow Warbler	90		
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1		
Black-and-white Warbler	1		
American Redstart	13		
Prothonotary Warbler	6	SGCN	
Louisiana Waterthrush	x	SGCN	
Common Yellowthroat	43		
Scarlet Tanager	1		
Eastern Towhee	1		
Savannah Sparrow	4		
Grasshopper Sparrow	4	SGCN	
Song Sparrow	110		
Swamp Sparrow	28		
Northern Cardinal	13		
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5		
Indigo Bunting	13		
Dickcissel	2	SGCN	
Bobolink	3	SGCN	
Red-winged Blackbird	389		
Eastern Meadowlark	4	SGCN	
Yellow-headed Blackbird	33		
Common Grackle	57		
Brown-headed Cowbird	47		
Baltimore Oriole	4		
American Goldfinch	22		

Nowak, T. Peters, R. Suhr. E. Epstein, and R. Kurowski contributed personal observations from other years. We thank Kincaid Farms for allowing easy access to part of the study area.

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The waterfall at the head of Honey Creek valley.

# Honey Creek Birdathon/Bandathon— 25 Years and Counting

*Noel J. Cutright*

*3352 Knollwood Road*

*West Bend, Wisconsin 53095*

*262. 675. 2443*

*Noel.Cutright@we-energies.com*

“**Y**ou want to do what?” I can still plainly hear that question posed by WSO Board member Ed Peartree in October 1984 when I explained the concept of starting a Birdathon/Bandathon (B/B) to raise money for WSO’s Honey Creek property in Sauk County. Honey Creek property taxes were increasing steadily and management expenses for the property were tapping into WSO’s general operating funds. I had been on the Board for a couple of years, serving as Publicity Chair, and at that time, the Board was very conservative fiscally. But one of the things I love about how the Board functions then and now is the liberty that a Board member is allowed in pursuing just about any idea. If an idea or proposed activity involves WSO finances, then Board action is required. On a motion by Charles Kemper and a second by Howard Young, the Board gave me the go-ahead to head a committee to implement the B/B. Obviously, I had no idea that it would have a steady, successful 25-year life. The Honey Creek B/B is still going strongly today and the future looks bright under the

direction of Carl Schwartz who has coordinated it for the past 6 years and with Anna Pidgeon spearheading the banding operation.

The first presence of the WSO at Honey Creek occurred in 1959 when 30 acres were rented at \$2.00/acre for 2 years. This tract was purchased in December 1960 for \$1,200. Six more parcels ranging in size from 3 to 85 acres and ranging in price from \$600 to \$5,000 were purchased during the 1960s. Additional land purchases were made during the 1970s. The Cox Nature Center was built over a several year period during the early-to-mid-70s on a 3-acre parcel purchased in September 1972. This involvement by the WSO at Honey Creek would have been impossible without the dedication and untiring efforts of Harold Kruse. Harold knows the Baraboo Hills and many of the property owners, and during this period he had a real “ear-to-the-ground” when it came to real estate matters in the area. He published a brief history of the Honey Creek natural area for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue of the *Passenger Pigeon* (Kruse 1989). Harold also recently

published a bird guide by car to some of his favorite places in the Baraboo Hills, including the wetlands on WSO's Honey Creek property (<http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/wisconsin/science/art20941.html>)

Hoffman (1989) authored a management plan and user guidelines for WSO's Honey Creek property. Ed Peartree (1989) recounted the highlights of capturing and banding 33,521 birds in his 30 years of banding at Honey Creek. In over 60 years of banding, Ed placed those little aluminum leg bracelets on more than 48,000 birds. A Honey Creek State Natural Area Master Plan was approved in 1993. Harold Kruse first led a group up the Honey Creek valley to the waterfall in 1956 and until 2001, had only missed one annual hike to that destination.

The first B/B was held 18 May 1985. The median date for the 25 Birdathons is 16 May (range: 11–25 May). Banding times have been more flexible because of weather and time commitments. Ed and JJ Peartree who parked their camper at Honey Creek for the week-end tried to start mist-netting and banding on Friday evening and usually continued through Sunday afternoon. In recent years, banding often has occurred on only one day and has been constrained by the weather. In 2004, banding occurred a week prior to the Birdathon, and no banding was done in 2001 following Ed's death. High water, overgrown trails, and inclement weather during the 2000s have short-circuited the long walk to the waterfall on several occasions. A fire in the nature center stove has been a very welcome treat on several occasions as

early morning frosts have not been uncommon.

All species counted on the Birdathon have been identified either while observers were standing on WSO property or during the walk to the waterfall. Birds identified past the waterfall or on the drive back to the nature center were not included in the total. Traditionally, the count has started in pre-dawn hours at the junction of Skyview Drive and Alder Lane that leads to the nature center. During early morning hours, Skyview and Alder are walked several times, and the area around the nature center and the bird feeders near the Gordie Cox residence are scouted for birds to be added to the day's checklist. And yes, it is "legal" to use a scope from the bridge on Skyview (the eastern boundary used for the Birdathon) to look for Cliff Swallows and Rock Pigeons at a barn located along Co. PF. Those camping at the nature center have sometimes added nocturnal species to the list, ones that called or sang after midnight on the Birdathon date.

The Birdathon has tallied 150 species; banding has accounted for 4 additional species, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Prothonotary Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco. The 25-year average number of species identified during the one-day Birdathon is 85 (range: 69–99). Ninety species have been exceeded three times: 99 in 2005 and 98 in 1999 and 2006. There has been 1 year with the Birdathon total in the 60s and 5 years in the 70s. These totals reflect the many birders who have helped add species during the day of the Birdathon. While many species become tick-marks during the walk up the Honey Creek valley, a few new species

are always added to each year's total by those who stay behind and bird around the nature center and the roadsides. For example in 2009, Harold Kruse observed the only Red-headed Woodpecker of the day as he was being driven slowly along Skyview toward the trailhead.

One-fifth (31 species) of the total species tallied have been seen every year. This list of reliable species includes both permanent residents and migrants: Mourning Dove, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Blue-winged Warbler, Yellow Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, Chipping Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, and American Goldfinch.

Another 14 species have been missed only once; half of these were not tallied in 2003 under horrible windy and wet weather conditions. These 14 species include Wood Duck, Mallard, Ruffed Grouse, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, American Woodcock, Barred Owl, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Wood Thrush, Northern Waterthrush, and Indigo Bunting.

Species (19) encountered in only 1 of the 25 years during either the Birdathon or Bandathon include

Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, American Bittern, Least Bittern, Bald Eagle, Pectoral Sandpiper, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Philadelphia Vireo, Horned Lark, Purple Martin, Bank Swallow, Brown Creeper, Marsh Wren, Pine Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Yellow-headed Blackbird, and Pine Siskin.

Warbler species (31) also have accounted for one-fifth of the total number of species. On the Birdathon an average of 15 warbler species (range: 9–21) has been identified. The low count occurred in 1987, and the high count was made in 1995; 20 were found in 2006. The range (1–18) of warbler species banded is even greater, and the average is only 5 species. Double-digits were tallied in 1996 (18), 1995 (12), and 1989 (10). Interestingly, more warbler species were banded (18) in 1996 than were tallied on the Birdathon (17).

Some species show interesting frequency patterns. Canada Goose was counted only once before 1998 but now has been seen or heard in 11 of the last 12 years. Ring-necked Pheasant has been heard only once outside of a 9 consecutive year run from 1999 through 2007. Wild Turkey was heard only once in the first 4 Birdathons, but it has been missed only once since 1989. Whip-poor-will was heard every year through 2002 but now has been missed on 3 of the last 7 events. Tufted Titmouse was observed only once through 1996 but now has been located in 12 out of the last 13 events.

The species total banded during the Bandathon is 86 with 23 species only encountered in a single year. Fifteen species have been banded in at least half of the Bandathons: Downy Wood-

## HONEY CREEK BIRDATHON/BANDATHON MEMORIES

There are many things that have made coordinating the Honey Creek Birdathon/Bandathon for these last six years one of the things I like best about my life as a birder. It's obviously good knowing that you are helping a great organization preserve a great place. Even in bad weather, the birds, the friends, and the walk toward the waterfall make for a great day.

I also enjoy sifting through my often soggy notes to write the account of our day at Honey Creek, knowing I have a tough act to follow after the 19 years that Birdathon founder Noel Cutright spent weaving together science and poetry.

One of the things I like best is the notes I get from folks who were unable to be on hand at Honey Creek. Here's a sampling that demonstrates why:

*The gang did a great job in spite of the weather. Here's my pledge check, which I rounded up a bit. Thanks for your work.*

*Thanks for your effort and the "play by play" chronicle of the event.*

*Your report made what seemed like a pretty uncomfortable morning into an enjoyable occasion. Thanks so much for sharing it with us stay-at-homers.*

*Sounded like a great day to me—miserable but exhilarating. Really Wisconsin!*

*Thanks for keeping up the Birdathon at Honey Creek. Can't believe how much I miss the field trips and all.*

*I enjoyed your trail notes very much!*

*Congrats on a great count at Honey Creek and for pulling out garlic mustard!! I am so pleased to read the summary re-cap. Thanks for putting together the piece—it motivates me and probably others to contribute more funds for bird conservation efforts.*

*Your account of the day is so great . . . I can no longer travel nor can I hear **out there** the bird calls and songs I can hear in my head. Your write-up shares one of the good old days with Ed Peartree, the Coxes, and Harold and Carla (Kruse).*

*THANKS!*

—Carl Schwartz

pecker, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Veery, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Northern Waterthrush, Common Yellowthroat, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, and American Goldfinch. No species has been banded on all 25 Ban-

dathons, but Rose-breasted Grosbeak and American Goldfinch have been missed only once, Gray Catbird and Red-winged Blackbird twice, and Common Yellowthroat three times. The Veery was mist-netted in 13 of the first 15 years but has been absent since 1999. Approximately one-quarter of the species (23) have been captured



on only one Bandathon. This list includes some interesting non-passerine species: Green Heron, Virginia Rail, Spotted Sandpiper, American Woodcock, Mourning Dove, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Whip-poor-will, and Pileated Woodpecker.

One of the fascinating aspects of conducting bird banding at a location over an extended number of years is recapturing previously banded birds. This now happens at every Honey Creek Bandathon, and some of the recaptures are quite interesting. Among the more common species that are recaptured most frequently at southern Wisconsin banding stations are Gray Catbird, Common Yellowthroat, Song Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Baltimore Oriole, Song Sparrow, and American Goldfinch. Woodpeckers also are good repeaters. The longest interval for a Honey Creek Bandathon bird that I have in my records is that of a Veery banded in 1981 that was recaptured in 1985, 1986, and 1991; another Veery was banded in 1989 and was recaptured in 1995. Catbirds often provide interesting encounters, and Honey Creek banded catbirds are no exception. A catbird banded in 1990 was recaptured in 1994 and again in 1999. Other catbird returns include one banded in 1984 that returned in 1990 and one banded in 1995 that returned in 1999. Goldfinches filled the mist nets at Honey Creek on 10 May 1997. Of 103 birds banded on that day, 81 were goldfinches and included birds banded in 1994 and 1996.

While one can use Honey Creek Birdathon presence/absence data to determine to some degree which species' populations might be increasing or decreasing, these data cannot be used in any quantitative sense. To

me, when I view the Birdathon checklist over the past 25 years, some things do stand out. For example, certain species are now being reliably found that were uncertain in earlier years; others show the complete opposite. Since the Birdathon occurs during the height of spring migration, it is expected that annual variations should be pronounced. For example, I remember one Birdathon when one could hear a singing Mourning Warbler almost the entire walk to the waterfall. In other years, the numbers of Ceruleans, redstarts, or waterthrushes that were heard on the walk up the valley were impressive.

Lange (2009) published the results of 26 breeding bird surveys at Honey Creek between 1981 and 2008. For the 46 species analyzed, he found that 27 showed no change in population trend, 11 showed a decline, and 8 demonstrated an increase. Declining species were Red-headed Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Warbling Vireo, White-breasted Nuthatch, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Gray Catbird, Yellow Warbler, Swamp Sparrow, Brown-headed Cowbird, and Baltimore Oriole. All of these species have been reliably found on the Birdathon although a decline in the number of red-heads has been noticeable, as it has throughout most of Wisconsin. Increasing species were Barred Owl, Eastern Phoebe, Red-eyed Vireo, House Wren, Veery, American Redstart, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. The only species from this list that stands out to me is the Veery, which has virtually disappeared from the large wetland along Skyview and was not banded during the 2000s, whereas it was only missed on the Ban-



dathon in 2 of the first 15 years. As Lange so ably points out, documenting change is one thing, trying to determine the cause is a major challenge.

The success of the Birdathon/Bandathon has helped the WSO immensely in securing sufficient funds to pay Honey Creek property taxes, insurance, and upkeep. Over the 25 years, the donation total is \$71,838.58 (average: \$2,873.54; range: \$788.15–5,752.15). The average for 5-years increments from 1985 through 2009 is \$1,329; 1,571; 2,370; 2,288; and 5,267. The significant increase for the last five years is directly due to the coordination efforts of Carl Schwartz who has brought new life to the event although difficult weather has plagued his tenure. Other than some postage costs, expenses for the event have been non-existent.

Most of the credit for the success of the Honey Creek Birdathon/Bandathon goes to those with sharp eyes and ears for helping build the checklist each year, the banders and all of the mist-net tenders, and especially to those WSO members who have made a financial pledge, whether it has

been all 25 years or in just a single year. I enjoyed coordinating the event for its first 19 years, and Carl and Anna are to be commended for taking over the reins from me and the Peartrees and for doing such a terrific job.

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*Noel Cutright is a past president of WSO and the current Historian. He served as the WSO Conservation Chair for a number of years and still does much conservation work on behalf of the birds. He was the lead editor on the "Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Wisconsin." He conducts numerous Breeding Bird Surveys each spring and many Christmas Bird Counts each winter.*

## “From Field and Feeder”

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*These two observations about loons and songbirds are really  
“from lake and backyard water feature,”  
but still apply as fascinating bird behavior.*

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### LOON MIGRATION CORRIDORS?

On 16 April 2009, I ended up standing in the sun on the leeward side of the point at Harrington Beach State Park for about three hours that afternoon, caught up in the northward passage of waterfowl on Lake Michigan. Anyone who spends any time observing waterfowl on the lake quickly becomes aware of the distribution pattern of ducks in relation to the shoreline. Bufflehead are predominately seen very close to the shore, scaup a little farther out, goldeneyes beyond that, and mergansers out just short of the horizon. Of course, Long-tailed Ducks seem to usually be somewhere beyond the visual field, perhaps hidden by the curvature of the earth at that distance.

On this afternoon, in addition to the movement of the above waterfowl, loons were intermittently seen passing by. By the time three hours had passed, I had watched 11 Common Loons and 14 Red-throated Loons move against a northeast wind, passing the point at Harrington Beach. As time went on, it became evident that the Common Loons invariably were passing by out a couple hundred yards

from shore, in the region favored by the Red-breasted Mergansers. Equally invariably, the Red-throated Loons would pass the point at a distance of roughly 50–75 yards, more in the area where scaup seem most comfortable. To further emphasize the pattern, the thirteenth Red-throated Loon was first observed fishing a few hundred yards to the south of where I stood, in the bufflehead-scaup region from the shoreline. I happened to be watching as it took flight, witnessing it make that slowly elevating take-off directly east out into the lake. When it got out beyond the merganser area of the lake, it made the expected left turn for heading north, but interestingly it did not make a 90-degree turn out there. It made a full 180 turn, coming back in to the 50–75 yard range that all of the other Red-throated Loons had taken north. It then made a 90-degree right turn to proceed north in its “prescribed” pathway.

One additional loon was seen that day, not seen early enough or well enough to identify, but it was strikingly dark above and white below, and only about Red-throated Loon-sized. It was flying out there in the Red-



Figure 1. The Morettis' sylvan cascades.

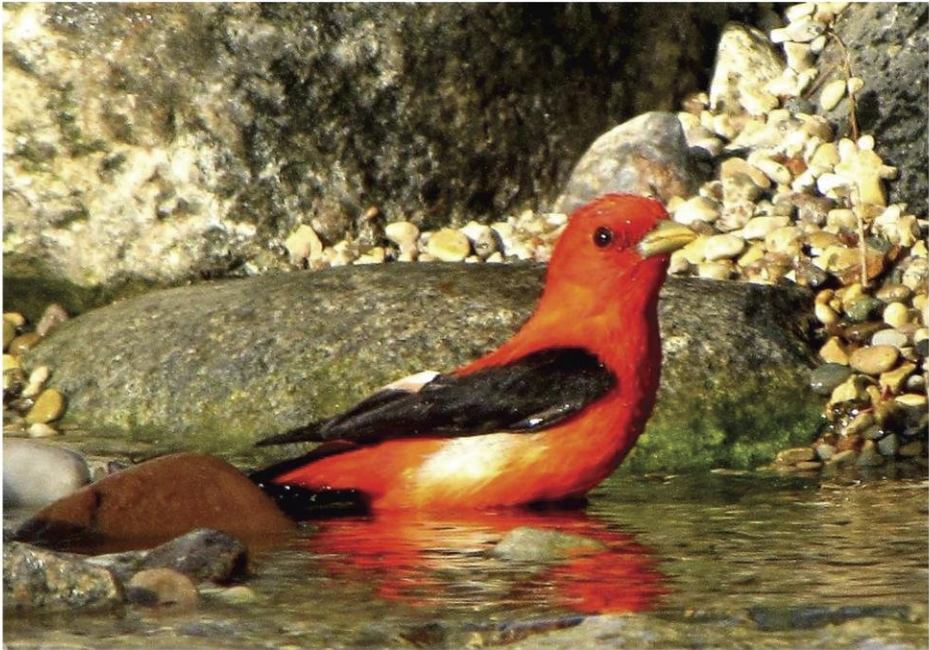


Figure 2. Scarlet Tanager in pond 1.





Figure 3. Blue Jay family.



Figure 4. Bluebird in pond 1.

throated "corridor" as well.—*Jim Frank, Milwaukee, WI.*

### SYLVAN CASCADES REVISITED

It's been 13 years since my husband, Pat, and I installed our original water feature using a do-it-yourself kit that we dug into a slope in our wooded backyard. Three years later, after modifying it by adding a deeper pond for fish, we had tallied 51 species of birds. In the summer of 2008, we needed to re-do the pond and stream, since we were losing water. It was not a job we felt we could do ourselves, so we hired a company that specializes in pond construction. A job that would have taken us weeks of back-breaking labor was completed in just a few days (Fig. 1). A meandering, gravel-lined stream connects to a shallow 2 × 4 ft pool about 6 inches deep and then to a deeper 5 × 7 ft pool for the fish. The stream bed, lined with pea gravel, attracts the birds. Four waterfalls add sound and motion and can be heard by the birds as they fly over. It now has a more natural look, nestled into the hillside, with ferns, junipers and shade-loving perennials tucked into rocky crevices. The water feature is located right outside the family room window and next to the screenhouse for easy viewing.

One day in early July, I was out planting ferns and perennials around the pondscape and listening to the twitter of birds all around me. Taking a break, I stood very still against the side of the house and watched as a parade of birds came in to the pond. First a pair of Northern Cardinals arrived, followed by the female Scarlet Tanager with a fledgling; later the male tanager (Fig. 2) made an appearance. He's a regular, bathing several

times a day. Next to arrive were four young Tufted Titmice. They had recently fledged and were rather skittish. After a few minutes of watching the bathing techniques of some young Black-capped Chickadees they soon figured it out. Birds learn very quickly! A while later, a male Indigo Bunting flew in, followed by a Gray Catbird. When the Blue Jay youngsters arrived (Fig. 3) on the scene, everyone scattered. They proved to be a rowdy bunch of kids, but lots of fun to watch. Later, after I had gone back into the house, a Red-eyed Vireo landed on a gray dogwood shrub next to the pond, looked things over, and belly-flopped into the smaller pool. Shaking his wings vigorously, he flew back to the dogwood and preened. This 'plunge-bathing' technique was repeated several more times and is always fun to watch. Blue-headed Vireos do the same thing. Not all birds bathe the same way, we've learned.

This past spring, we saw a female Bluebird bathing in one of the cascades (Fig 4). This was a first in our wooded yard and we were able to get a few photos. Speaking of photography, we have a digital movie camera set upon a tripod in the family room and Pat has been able to get some nice footage of the birds bathing. The proximity of the water feature to the house works well for still shots, too. Placing a small branch across the stream gives the birds a place on which to land before venturing into the water. It also keeps them in camera view for a longer period of time.

In the 13 years that we've had our water feature in its various forms, we've tallied 76 species of birds using it (Table 1). This includes 25 species of warblers (Fig. 5), 5 species of wood-

peckers (no, not the Pileated, unfortunately), 6 species of sparrows, 6 species of thrushes, orioles (Fig. 6), hummers, redpolls and Pine Siskins, to name a few. In November 1997 several female Evening Grosbeaks showed up and bathed in the pond along with the juncos.

Water, along with food and shelter, is very attractive to birds. A birdbath will do very well, but adding the element of running water makes it irresistible. You're much more likely to

attract migrants and non-feeder birds in addition to your "yard birds." It's been a great source of pleasure for us. We can't imagine our yard without it.

It's been heartening to hear that many of you have added water features to your yards as well. The technology in pond construction has made it relatively easy to go beyond the basic birdbath to a more natural look, which is aesthetically pleasing to us and very attractive to the birds.—

*Anne Moretti, Dousman, WI.*

Table 1. Here's a list of all the birds seen at the 3 versions of our water feature over the span of 13 years. Some are regulars; some are seen occasionally and some were one-time wonders.

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Cooper's Hawk	Magnolia Warbler
Wild Turkey	Cape May Warbler
Mourning Dove	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Black-throated Green Warbler
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Blackburnian Warbler
Downy Woodpecker	Yellow-throated Warbler (2004)
Hairy Woodpecker	Pine Warbler
Northern Flicker	Palm Warbler
Eastern Phoebe	Bay-breasted Warbler
Blue Jay	Blackpoll Warbler
American Crow	Cerulean Warbler
Black-capped Chickadee	Black-and-white Warbler
Tufted Titmouse	American Redstart
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Worm-eating Warbler (2000)
White-breasted Nuthatch	Ovenbird
Brown Creeper	Mourning Warbler
House Wren	Hooded Warbler
Golden-crowned Kinglet	Scarlet Tanager
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Northern Cardinal
Eastern Bluebird (2009)	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Gray-cheeked Thrush	Indigo Bunting
Swainson's Thrush	Eastern Towhee
Hermit Thrush	Chipping Sparrow
Wood Thrush	Field Sparrow
American Robin	Fox Sparrow
Gray Catbird	Song Sparrow
Brown Thrasher	White-throated Sparrow
Cedar Waxwing	Dark-eyed Junco
Blue-headed Vireo	Common Grackle
Red-eyed Vireo	Brown-headed Cowbird
Blue-winged Warbler	Baltimore Oriole
Golden-winged Warbler	Purple Finch
Tennessee Warbler	House Finch
Orange-crowned Warbler	Common Redpoll (2009)
Nashville Warbler	Pine Siskin
Northern Parula Warbler	American Goldfinch
Chestnut-sided Warbler	Evening Grosbeak (1997)

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Figure 5. Hooded Warbler bathing.



Figure 6. Baltimore Oriole and Scarlet Tanager.

# Lessons from the Seasons: Spring 2009

*Randy Hoffman*

*305 Fifth Street  
Waunakee, Wisconsin 53597  
608. 849. 4502  
ecurlew@hotmail.com*

This lesson could easily be titled “The Curious Case of the Spring Summers.” The spring of 2009 brought numerous Summer Tanagers into the state. Ebird captured nearly 25 submissions plus an additional five submitted by hard copy made the official reports the highest ever. If we add several sightings submitted on the birdnet, a few given to me second hand and obviously some missed, the state could have had easily over 50 Summer Tanagers in May alone. This number by all accounts appears unprecedented, but was it and what was the significance?

Could it be the national trend of this species is rising and extra birds are showing up in Wisconsin? Possibly, but the national trend is showing a relatively stable population with a slight national increase at best. Sometimes national does not mean local. The trends for the Appalachian areas are down, Ohio is neutral, while the Atlantic seaboard is rising slightly. Curiously though, the Midwestern population is on an upward trajectory. The Illinois numbers are showing a plus 4.5 trend. More numbers directly south of us could lead to more over-shoots into the state.

Males are found routinely north of their normal breeding range every year and range wide for this species in spring. The phenomenon is typical and should be expected. Summer Tanagers winter in Central and northern South America. They fly across the Gulf of Mexico in spring usually arriving on the Gulf Coast in mid-April. The birds are nocturnal migrants and rarely spend more than two days at any stopover location. They head north in rapid fashion with birds arriving in central Illinois and Ohio by 7 May.

Nearly all of the birds recorded in Wisconsin are males; therefore, like their cousin, the Scarlet Tanager, identification is relatively straight forward. Most birders with even basic skills would get excited and be able to identify a brilliant male Summer Tanager if they see one, although after full leaf out, seeing one may be tricky due to disruptive coloration. Finding a stationary Scarlet or Summer Tanager in the top of a green tree can be very frustrating.

Identification and clues to narrow the location during full leaf are most often accomplished by song or call notes. Most relatively experienced



birders can identify the raspy, nasally song that is similar in cadence to American Robin. With a little more experience, birders can readily key in on the chip-burr call notes of the Scarlet Tanager. Summer Tanagers have a song described as difficult to describe with a cadence similar to an American Robin. Others have described the song as similar to a robin. I wonder how many birders have dismissed a singing Summer Tanager in late May or early June as just another robin. The call notes, however, are quite different. The best mnemonic iterations are *pi-tuk* or *ki-ti-tuk*. With the tremendous increase in Summer Tanager sightings, birders may wish to better learn the song and especially the call notes of this species.

Habitat can also be a key when searching for a Summer Tanager. Wayward birds in spring oft times show up at feeders, although I'm not suggesting a person stare at their feeders for weeks on end hoping a Summer Tanager will show. Birders should focus where the birds would most likely appear. Habitat can be a key. Even when birds are out of range, they tend to end up in a somewhat familiar habitat. The two eastern tanagers many times will overlap in geographical area, but they do separate by habitat preferences. Scarlet Tanagers prefer dense forest with many tree species. Summer Tanagers prefer open deciduous woods near gaps and edges. Where the species are found together, the Summer Tanager is found in shorter trees with less canopy cover and fewer tree species.

Summer Tanagers glean bugs and fruit from the leaves and bark of trees. They tend to prefer the top portion of

a tree or the outer sides when they are near gaps. This species also captures many insects by conducting short sallies in flycatcher fashion. Most intriguing is the fact that they capture many bees and wasps in these sallies, then take them back to a branch and beat the stingers off before consuming them.

By now, the reader has probably discerned the lesson is to keep an eye out for Summer Tanagers. However, as with any curious case, there must be a twist at the end.

Due to increases in the central population and potential changes in the climate, Summer Tanagers are showing up in higher numbers. While this fact is true, most people do not realize this species formerly nested in Wisconsin on a regular basis. In the late 1800s, the species nested in southeast Wisconsin. At that time many of the forest remnants were in the early stages of transforming from savanna into denser forests. This situation must have been to the liking of Summer Tanagers.

Most woodlots in the southeast today are buckthorn and garlic mustard infested dense forest. A few places such as the Lulu Lake Preserve, portions of the Southern Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest, and Franklin Park Savanna in Milwaukee County are being managed to restore savanna conditions that are similar to the 1800s. This lesson suggests that in addition to learning more about Summer Tanagers, especially their song and call notes, we should conduct more nesting surveys in these or other restorations for the presence of breeding Summer Tanagers.

# The Spring Season: 2009

*Marilyn Bontly*

*901 E. Fairy Chasm Road  
Bayside, Wisconsin 53217  
mbontly@wi.rr.com*

**I**t is difficult for me to imagine while I work on the Spring Season report that Karl David could do this job so effectively for 10 years. The amount of data is nearly overwhelming and I think he deserves a tremendous “Thank you” from WSO members for services rendered. Another person I wish to thank is Andrea Szymczak, who has served as my co-compiler and contributed by reviewing arrival reports for the previous five seasons, sorting through the eBird data, co-writing the individual species accounts, and generally assuring me that we could complete this task in a timely manner while still remaining sane. Other folks to thank are Randy Hoffman and Andy Paulios, who answered innumerable questions about the eBird data and provided Andrea and me with a hands-on training session, Jim Frank for responding quickly to my many questions on the Rare Bird reports and documentation of early arriving species, Bob Domagalski for reviewing parts of the species accounts and answering many knotty questions about arrival dates, John Idzikowski for providing some significant weather information, Bettie Harriman whose editing of the Passenger Pigeon and consequently this report was helpful and encourag-

ing, and Sandy Manning from the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center for working with me to learn Excel 2007.

I began birding in 1972 when my husband Tom and I and our four-year-old son moved to Bayside, a suburb on the northeast side of Milwaukee, where we saw birds coming to a feeder the previous owner had left with sunflower seed in it. They were very attractive and distinctive—black and white with a red breast and large whitish bill. That got me started birding my backyard. Soon I met Winnie Woodmansee at the nearby Schlitz Audubon Center and was amazed that she could identify a bird even before seeing it! It took a long time to learn even half the bird songs and call notes that she knew. But she was a good teacher—lots of repetition—and I birded with her frequently for years. She was also insistent on record keeping, so I filled out seasonal reports and wrote rare bird reports. I wonder what she’d think if she knew I was now compiling a seasonal report?

## WEATHER AND BIRDS

Four observers commented on the weather. In Jefferson County, Karen



Tri-colored Heron seen flying along Dike Road in Horicon Marsh on 28 April 2009 by Jack Bartholmai.



Swainson's Hawk seen 21 May 2009 during the WSO convention field trip in Polk County, by Jenny Wenzel.



Piping Plover at Wisconsin Point in Douglas County on 13 May 2009 by Dan Jackson.



Black-necked Stilt along Dike Road in Horicon Marsh photographed by Philip Johnson on 12 May 2009.



American Avocet in Winnebago County on 19 May 2009 photographed by Denny Malueg.

Etter Hale said March was very wet with more than 7" of precipitation including 6" of snow. It started out cold with temperatures in the single digits. April was generally cool with a warm spell 15–18 April reaching 82 degrees on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Over 4" of rain fell. May was windy and still cool except for 80s on 19–21 May. Paul Risch in Taylor County said mid-March had a few days with above normal temperatures, then it stayed cold for weeks, finally warming during the last week of April. In Appleton, Daryl Tessen reported a "light frost" on some roofs the morning of 31 May. He felt migration was generally late and slow with poor waves. The last two-thirds of May showed improvement. Daryl reported two good passerine waves, 6 May at Bay Beach Sanctuary in Green Bay and 16 May along the Lake Michigan shoreline on a day with strong north-west winds. In Douglas County, the La Valleys reported about 10" of snow in March but in May precipitation totaled only .8" and temperatures seemed above normal.

And then there was **9 May**.

At 10:28 a.m. came a Wisbirdn message from Steve Lubahn in Milwaukee County: "The cold front has created a fall out. It is a great day to be out."

Here is John Idzikowski's summary of the event: " On 9 May 2009, observers awoke to a cold, windy, rainy dawn; field trips were cancelled, but those who went out in the Milwaukee area experienced what may be called a "50-year event" of May bird migration. The most birded area that morning was Lake Park in Milwaukee where 25 warbler species were recorded in astonishing numbers; birds were everywhere. Flowering trees had 10 species of warblers and 3 species of vireos.

Lifetime day highs were recorded for most species by the most experienced, long time observers. The light rain and wind kept insects low and migrants were seen to find food easily. Even those who did not get out until midday experienced this event. Similar numbers were reported from locations to the south, mostly within Milwaukee County but to the north as far as Green Bay and west in Madison a 'normal big first wave' was noted minus the high numbers."

John explains that during the pre-dawn hours the first "big wave" of May migrants, usually expected from 7 to 12 May, had overflowed the state north to Green Bay as a cold front associated with a strong but rather small surface low pressure area approached from the west. As seen on Nexrad radar at about 2–3 a.m., this huge swarm of migrants was forced lower as it met the light rain of the frontal passage. During this period the heaviest rain developed over southeast Wisconsin from Lake Michigan to about 40 miles west along a line from Milwaukee roughly following I-94. As other migrants away from this area continued north in light rain, a large part of the swarm became grounded pre-dawn in the heaviest rain. This rain concentrated a large portion of the swarm that normally would have continued north for a normal dawn fallout.

From Judith Huf: "The pouring rain stopped about 8 a.m. and I went to Lake Park on this dank and cold morning to find hundreds and hundreds of birds everywhere (feasting on the thick clouds of tiny insects) and a dozen or so amazed and stunned bird-watchers . . . How do you count birds or even estimate numbers on a day like this? The trees were alive with



birds. One small maple tree which was heavy with yellow flowers had at one time: 4 Scarlet Tanagers (3 male, 1 female), 3 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (2 male, 1 female), 3 Baltimore Orioles, a Nashville Warbler, a Cape May Warbler, and a Yellow-rumped Warbler! There were flocks of 30 or more thrushes on the lawn at one time. (I had a “royal flush” of thrushes: Wood, Hermit, Swainson’s, Grey-cheeked, Veery, [American] Robin, and [Eastern] Bluebird.) There were so many White-crowned Sparrows singing near the Walcott Statue that it was almost

deafening. The migrants were so numerous the ‘common’ birds were uncommon. We saw more tanagers than cardinals, more Ovenbirds than chickadees.”

Two rare birds were reported on 9 May. Tom Prestby, Paul Schilke and Quentin Yoerger, found a pair of Cinnamon Teal during their Sauk County Big Day which totaled 144 species. And a White-faced Ibis was seen at Horicon Marsh during the Bird Festival. Also along Lake Michigan, Steve Lubahn found a Northern Mockingbird at Sheridan Park and John





Red Knot by Ryan Brady on 26 May 2009 in Ashland County.



Laughing Gull on 12 May 2009 in Ashland County by Erik Bruhnke.



Female Summer Tanager in the yard of David Kuecherer (Winnebago County) on 15 May 2009.



Male Summer Tanager in Muskego (Waukesha County) on 2 May 2009 by Katie Zientek.



Long-eared Owl nest with young photographed by Jim Holschbach in his Manitowoc County backyard in spring 2009.



Recently fledged Long-eared Owl (or is it a ghost owl?) in Manitowoc County yard of Jim Holschbach.



Western Tanager in Mauston (Juneau County) was photographed by Josette Buehlman.



Yellow-throated Warbler seen and photographed in Waukesha County by Anne Moretti on 3 May 2009.



Idzikowski reported having 35-year single-day high numbers for several species including Least Flycatcher, Grey Catbird, Blue-headed Vireo, and White-crowned Sparrow. Birders in Ozaukee County came up with 22 species of warblers. In Green Bay at Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, Ty and Ida Baumann had a record-breaking one day total of 107 species including 24 warblers. Away from the lake, Andy Paulios saw 15 warbler species in his McFarland yard, Pheasant Branch Conservancy in Madison hosted 23 species of warblers, Paul Bruce reported an “astonishing” 108 species in Winnebago County, and as far west as Platteville Luke Dahlberg reported a big wave of passerine migrants. Another Northern Mockingbird was seen by Kay Kavanagh in Florence County. In some of the species accounts that follow, the 9 May date appears many times, especially when observers report the highest number seen.

### RARITIES

The WSO Records Committee voted to approve documentation of the following 14 species: Brant, Cinnamon Teal, White-faced Ibis, Tricolored Heron, Black-necked Stilt, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Pomarine Jaeger, Black-headed Gull, California Gull, Chuck-will's-widow, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Western Tanager, Painted Bunting, and Hoary Redpoll. The California Gull becomes the 8<sup>th</sup> and the Black-headed Gull the 12<sup>th</sup> records of these birds in the state. The committee also voted favorably on several very early arrival dates for Willow Flycatcher, Prairie Warbler, and Indigo Bunting.

For observers who enter their sightings on eBird, check “WI eBird Resources” for the WSO Rare Bird Records and WSO Record Arrival/Departure Dates on the eBird homepage. If you think you might have seen a bird that has arrived very early or is departing the state late or is unusual to see in Wisconsin, please write up a documentation of that species and submit it to the WSO Records Committee for review. Send your report to Randy Hoffman via an online report or send to him via snail mail. See the Passenger Pigeon for his addresses. Observers who do not use eBird can send documentation to Randy when sending their seasonal reports to him. **Making a notation on eBird does not satisfy the need for a rare bird report or an early/late date report to be sent to the Records Committee.** For more information on this issue, please review Jim Frank's article “WSO Records Committee Update—2009 Documenting Birds: Why and How?” in the Passenger Pigeon, Vol 71, No. 2.

### ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Many waterfowl species that don't overwinter in Wisconsin arrived in the state 4 and 5 March. American White Pelicans were noted in Brown County 3 March and may have spent the winter. They were reported in Grant County the next day. Another significant number of species arrived 25–27 April including a Willow Flycatcher on the 27<sup>th</sup>, tying the early arrival date and a Prairie Warbler also on the 27<sup>th</sup> becoming the 3<sup>rd</sup> earliest date, the others being 25 April 1949, and 26 April 2001. An Indigo Bunting seen

18 March smashes the old record date of 11 April 1978, and becomes the only March record. Several other arrivals would be record early if supportive documentation had been sent to the committee for review and been accepted. In particular the report of a Yellow-breasted Chat also on 27 April (!!) would become the earliest date ever for that species as would a Great Egret reported 6 March. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were reported in March but were undocumented. Some other relatively early arrivals include Tricolored Heron, Red Knot, Virginia Rail, Barn Swallow, Yellow-throated Vireo, Cape May and Kirtland's Warblers. Northern Mockingbirds and Summer Tanagers were widely reported. No record late departures were noted in the reports for this season although a few warblers and finches lingered in the southern counties at the end of the season. The White-winged Crossbills which appeared across the state during the winter and into the spring were still in Milwaukee County 24 April. In the 2008 Spring Season report, White-winged Crossbills were not reported anywhere in the state. Pine Siskins and Common Redpolls were found in high numbers around the state. Most species arrived and/or departed the state close to their expected dates.

#### EXOTICS AND REINTRODUCTIONS

There were numerous reports of Whooping Cranes as the population of Direct Autumn Release birds and the ultra-light led cranes continues to increase. The first report was 11 April at Necedah NWR, Juneau County, by Van Lanen when he counted 4 birds.

Nest monitoring occurred at Necedah 11, 18, 19, 25, and 26 April and in early May with counts of 2 to 7 individuals. Reports also came from Columbia, Dodge, Monroe, and Portage Counties. Three birds spent much of May in Columbia County where they were seen by many through 31 May.

Continuing a trend from the last two years, there were fewer reports of exotic species. Fitzgerald reported a European Goldfinch in Walworth County 19 March and Abert found 2 at the Coast Guard Impoundment in Milwaukee County 31 May. Gustafson found a Common Chaffinch 24 April at Wind Point lighthouse in Racine County. The bird was also photographed by DeBoer the next day at the same location. Due to the probable released origin of these birds, they are not accepted by the Record Committee as "countable" species. The last reported Great Tit was on 19 March 2007, so perhaps the birds which had been reported in Door and Milwaukee Counties did not survive the last two winters

#### STATISTICS

In this "Age of eBird," over 400 observers submitted more than 211,000 individual entries to that site. Thus eBird has become the overwhelming instrument to report sightings and all relevant data were used in this report. Submissions came from all 72 counties with only Menomonee County reporting fewer than 25 species. In that county, 8 species were reported on 7 April and 28 May from 2 observers who were probably driving through the county with the car windows rolled down. All other counties reported a



Painted Bunting at a feeder in Door County on 27 April 2009 was photographed by Roy Lukes.



Male White-winged Crossbill on 4 March 2009 photographed by Tom Prestby in Andy Paulios's yard in Dane County.



Female White-winged Crossbill in Paulios' yard (Dane County) on 4 March 2009 by Tom Prestby.

minimum of 25 species from multiple visits. The total number of observers who sent in written reports fell to 22 for this spring season, from 69 in 2008 and 71 in 2007 and covered 35 counties. The eBird data can be confusing, misleading, and even contradictory, so caution was used in determining what to include and what to question and not use. It is hoped that eBird will continue to improve their methods and provide users with more ways to refine the data they are entering. Written reporters are urged to use the latest edition of the Single County and Multiple County Field Forms which can be obtained from Randy Hoffman. This will help prevent inadvertently overlooking an entry on the form.

In addition to eBird and the written reports, a small selection of Wisbirdn messages were used to supplement BOP and EOP sightings in order to get a complete look at the birds in the state at the start and end of the spring season. Wisbirders are urged to submit their sightings on eBird in addition to sending a message to the birding community, so that these records will become part of the permanent data base at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

Species seen during spring seasons from 2001 through 2008 numbered from a low of 300 in 2003 to a high of 318 in 2005. It appears that the number remains within a small range even with the high number of submissions on eBird. This season 310 species were reported, including species reviewed by the Records Committee. This is three less than in 2007 and 2008. There were no valid records of Gray Partridge or Townsend's Solitaire and some of the rarities from Spring 2008

were not repeated this season. But Tricolored Heron, White-faced Ibis, Pomarine Jaeger, Black-headed and California Gulls, and Western Tanager were seen, as well as a very unexpected spring Buff-breasted Sandpiper. White-winged Crossbills which were absent in 2008 were found in abundance this season.

## THE ACCOUNTS

The following 27 species, which are common, widespread, and generally sedentary, are not included in the species accounts: Canada Goose, Mute Swan, Mallard, Ring-necked Pheasant, Wild Turkey, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, American Robin, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, House Finch, American Goldfinch, and House Sparrow.

Abbreviations used: BOP = beginning of period; EOP = end of period; TTP = throughout the period; NWR = National Wildlife Refuge; WMA = Wildlife Management Area; WSO = Wisconsin Society for Ornithology; m. obs.= many observers.

## REPORTS

(1 March–31 May 2009)

**Greater White-fronted Goose**—First reported 1 March in Waukesha County (Gustafson). Next seen 4 March in Dane County on Lower Mud Lake (Boyle, Paulios, Prestby). On 19 March Tessen reported 850 in Columbia County for a high count nearly double the 2008 count of 475. Other high counts

included 225 in Columbia 6 March (Prestby), 160 in Jefferson County 19 March (Huberty and Kollath), and 114 in Pierce County 14 March (Kieser). Last reported by Jakoubek on 30 April at Nine Springs in Dane. Seen in 23 counties.

**Snow Goose**—Reported 5 March in Walworth County (Fitzgerald) and Dodge County (Tessen). Frank saw the last bird in Ozaukee County 16 May. The high count of 32 in Trempealeau County 27 April (Slager) is half the number reported in 2008. Seen in 25 counties.

**Snow X Ross's Goose**—First observed 6 March in Columbia County at Harvey Road by Prestby. Martin saw an individual at the same location on 22 March.

**Ross's Goose**—One individual reported at Lower Mud Lake in Dane County 4 March (Boyle, Paulios, Prestby). High counts of 5 birds seen by Jackson 22 March in Columbia County and 4 seen by T. Wood 7 March in Columbia. Last found in Dane on 2 May (Shenot). Seen in 12 counties.

**Brant**—Belter and Schaufenbuel reported the only bird 11 May in Marathon County. See "By the Wayside."

**Cackling Goose**—Found BOP in Waukesha County (Gustafson). Tessen counted 350 birds 19 March in Columbia County. The final report came from Ashland County 27 April (Brady). Unlike recent spring seasons, the species was seen in the following counties with a mostly northwestern bias: Ashland, Chippewa, Eau Claire, Monroe, and Pierce. Seen in a total of 28 counties.

**Trumpeter Swan**—Reported BOP in Dane County (Tessen) and next on 3 March in Polk County (Maercklein). Sixty-eight birds were seen 14 March in St. Croix County (Persico). Final reports came from Ashland (Oksita) and Bayfield (Betchkal) Counties on 30 May.

**Tundra Swan**—Earliest report on 4 March in Dane County (Paulios, Prestby). Maximum number of 4,400 seen 26 March in Outagamie County (Tessen). Schaufenbuel saw 1200 on 26 March in Vernon County. Late reports came on 22 May from Kewaunee (Franke) and 23 May in Burnett (Richmond) Counties.

**Wood Duck**—Reported BOP in Waukesha County (Szymczak). High counts of 50 reported 13 March in Waukesha (Gustafson) and 65 on 24 April in Dane (D. Graham) Counties.

**Gadwall**—Reported BOP in Dane County (Paulios) and 2 March in Racine County (Fitzgerald). High counts of 126 birds seen 2 April in Sauk County (A. Holschbach) and 150 seen 18 March in Dane (Paulios). Seen EOP in Adams, Dodge, Manitowoc, and Milwaukee Counties.

**Eurasian Wigeon**—Not reported this season, after consecutive reports from the last three seasons.

**American Wigeon**—Seen on 5 March in both Dane (Paulios, Prestby) and Sauk (A. Holschbach) Counties. High counts of 70 birds 25 March in Sauk (Stutz) and 100 in Calumet County (Zarnoth). Found EOP at the Coast Guard Impoundment in Milwaukee County (m. obs.).

**American Black Duck**—Found BOP in Manitowoc, Marathon, Milwaukee, Outagamie, and Waukesha Counties. One hundred individuals were seen in Brown County at Bay Beach on 3 March (Swelstad) and 7 March (Rickaby). Seen EOP in Ashland, Douglas, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, and Outagamie Counties.

**American Black Duck × Mallard**—Hybrids were reported from Brown County (Rickaby) 7 March, Douglas County (Svingen) 3 April, and Milwaukee County (Fitzgerald) 27 March.

**Blue-winged Teal**—An early individual was found 9 March in Vernon County (Jackson). Next seen 15 March in Manitowoc County (Cameron, Domagalski, Kavanagh) and Milwaukee County (Frank). High counts of 200 individuals seen in Bayfield County (Anich, Brady) and Walworth County (L. Graham).

**Cinnamon Teal**—A pair was seen 9 May at a Sauk County ephemeral pond (Prestby, Schilke, Q. Yoerger) during a Big Day count. See "By the Wayside."

**Northern Shoveler**—Reported 5 March in Dane (Paulios, Prestby), Racine (Fitzgerald), and Sauk (A. Holschbach) Counties. On 22 April Prestby counted 300 birds at Mud Lake in Dodge County.

**Northern Pintail**—Reported in Dane, Columbia, Ozaukee, and Walworth Counties 5 March. The Hoy Audubon field trip in Jefferson County found 300 birds on 4 April. Seen EOP at the Coast Guard Impoundment in Milwaukee County (m. obs.).

**Green-winged Teal**—Arrived 5 March in Columbia County (Tessen). Seen in three additional counties the following day. Seen by Persico 15 March in St. Croix County. High counts of 125 in Jefferson County (Kollath) on 15 April and 165 in Sauk County (A. Holschbach) on 2 April. Found EOP in Manitowoc County (J. Holschbach).

**Canvasback**—Seen BOP in Ozaukee County (Frank) and 3 March in Marinette County (Kavanagh). A staggering 6,000 birds were seen at Potosi Landing in Grant County 22 March (Prestby, Q. Yoerger). On 26 March in La Crosse County Jackson saw 5000, which may represent the same flock moving north. A single male was last reported 26 May in Trempealeau County (Slager).

**Redhead**—Seen TTP in Manitowoc County (Domagalski, Sontag). In addition, seen BOP in Milwaukee (Gustafson), Ozaukee (Frank), and Waukesha (Szymczak, Wilson) Counties. High numbers were significantly lower than in recent years, with only 200 reported 9 March in Dane (Prestby) and 26 March in Brown (Schlike) Counties. In recent years, only 2007 came close to the “low” high count, with 400 birds reported. Found EOP in Dodge, Outagamie, and Waukesha Counties.

**Ring-necked Duck**—Again, 5 March was the first arrival date for another puddle duck, with birds reported in Dane, Dodge, La Crosse, Racine, and Sauk Counties. Svingen counted 1,128 birds as the maximum count 20 April in Douglas County. The next highest count was 550 reported at Vernon Marsh 1 April in Waukesha County (Szymczak). EOP in Douglas (LaValleys), Marathon (Belter), Oneida (Peczynski), and Price (Krakowski) Counties.

**Greater Scaup**—1,500 birds were seen BOP in Milwaukee County (Howe, Wenzel) and 15 March in Ozaukee County (Tessen). Reported in 29 counties away from the Great Lakes, perhaps some of these the result of misidentification? EOP in Manitowoc and Milwaukee Counties.

**Lesser Scaup**—Reported BOP in Manitowoc, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Waukesha Counties. Q. Yoerger saw 5000 22 March in Grant County. Other counts of 1,000 or more birds came from Pepin, Walworth, and Washington Counties. EOP in Manitowoc and Milwaukee.

**Scaup sp.**—Some 8,000 birds were counted at East Lower Green Bay in Brown County on 16 April (Schilke).

**Harlequin Duck**—Only reported from two counties. First seen 11 March in Pierce County (Bakken) where it was also seen in March 2008. Reported in Sheboygan County 15 March by participants on the WSO field trip. Last seen at that location 12 April by T. Wood.

**Surf Scoter**—The first report and high count (30 birds) came 15 March in Sheboygan County (m. obs.). Found inland 26 March at Delavan Lake in Walworth County (Fitzgerald). Seen in a total of eight counties. Found EOP in Manitowoc County (Sontag).

**White-winged Scoter**—Found BOP in Manitowoc County (Sontag). The high count of 24 seen 3 March in Door County (Schilke). Found in a total of 7 counties. The final report came 17 May from Douglas County (Svingen).

**Black Scoter**—Found 15 March in Manitowoc County (Cameron) and Milwaukee County (Frank). A high count of 5 birds was reported 12 April in Ozaukee County (T. Wood). Found in 5 counties. EOP report from Manitowoc (Domagalski).

**Long-tailed Duck**—Reported BOP in Milwaukee County (Howe, Wenzel). An enormous flock totaling over 6,000 birds that “stretched along the horizon for a few miles” was reported on 15 March in Sheboygan County (West). On the same day, 3,000 were seen in Ozaukee County (Tessen). An interesting last report came on 3 May from Lake Poygan in Waushara County (Matheson).

**Bufflehead**—The only report in excess of 40 birds was the 150 found on 26 March in Walworth County (Fitzgerald). TTP in Manitowoc County. A tantalizing report of possible nesting came from Horicon Marsh, Dodge County, where a female was seen at a Wood Duck box but the presence of eggs was not determined.

**Common Goldeneye**—Schilke reported the highest number in Brown County with a maximum of 6,000 on 26 March. Last observed at Horicon Marsh on 26 May in Fond du Lac County (Schaufenbuel).

**Barrow’s Goldeneye**—The only report came in the form of an adult male from Douglas County on 8 March (Svingen). See “By the Wayside.”

**Hooded Merganser**—Found BOP in Milwaukee (Gustafson) and Ozaukee (Frank) Counties. Seen on or before 7 March in 16 counties, including north to St. Croix County.

High number of 122 also came from St. Croix on 21 March (Persico).

**Common Merganser**—Reported BOP in 10 counties. Highest reported number was 1,200 seen 9 March in Vernon County (Jackson). The only other count above 500 was 750 birds seen 5 March in Columbia County (Tessen).

**Red-breasted Mergansers**—TTP in Manitowoc County (Sontag). High count of 1,500 birds was reported 9 May from Manitowoc (Tessen).

**Ruddy Duck**—BOP in Ozaukee County (Frank). The next report came on 6 March from Rock County (Q. Yoerger). A high count of 1,000 birds occurred on 18 April from Dodge County (Tessen). A second significant report of 600 came on 23 April from Green Lake County (Prestby).

**Northern Bobwhite**—Found in Brown, Dane, Dodge, Iowa, Portage, Richland, Sauk, and Waukesha Counties.

**Ruffed Grouse**—The only unusual report was one bird seen 22 March at Pheasant Branch Conservancy in Dane County by McDowell.

**Spruce Grouse**—Only reported from two counties. Eleven birds were seen by the Riveredge Bird Club in Vilas County on 8 March (m. obs.). The last report from that county was 18 April (T. Wood). Unexpectedly, 2 birds were found in a spruce bog on 10 May in Langlade County (Richmond).

**Sharp-tailed Grouse**—TTP in Douglas County (LaValleys). Thirty-one birds were found 11 April at the Namekagon Barrens in Burnett County (Brabant, Lorenz). The only other reporting county was Taylor (Cameron, Risch).

**Greater Prairie-Chicken**—Reported from Adams, Marathon, and Portage Counties. A high count of 26 birds came on 4 April from Buena Vista Grasslands in Portage (Marschalek).

**Red-throated Loon**—First reported at Kohler-Andrae State Park in Sheboygan County 14 March (Thiessen). Last seen 29 May in Douglas County (Svingen). The high count of 14 came on 16 April in Ozaukee County (Frank).

**Common Loon**—First reported on the day of the WSO field trip, 15 March, in Ozaukee and Sheboygan Counties (m. obs.). Bodies of

water in the northern part of the state were still frozen and birds were concentrated on the southern lakes, reflected in a high count of 152 birds reported from Dane County 2 April (Paulios). Birds started to filter into the northern half of the state on 4 April and 5 April in Outagamie and Eau Claire Counties, respectively. Seen in four counties at EOP, the southernmost of which were Dane (Thiessen) and Milwaukee (Bontly) Counties.

**Pied-billed Grebe**—First reported 6 March on the Yahara River in Dane County (Jakoubek) and in Milwaukee County (Wilson). Entry into the northern part of the state occurred 20 March when 3 birds were reported in St. Croix County (Persico). High counts were 50 birds on 27 April in Marathon County (Belter) and 60 birds on 28 April in La Crosse County (Jackson).

**Horned Grebe**—First reported 11 March from the Sheridan Park bluff in Milwaukee County (Szymczak). A staggering minimum of 300 individuals were present on Lake Wausau in Marathon County on 27 April (Belter). Last reported in Kewaunee County on the 29 May (Schilke).

**Red-necked Grebe**—An eye-popping 5 individuals on 4 April in Ozaukee County (Stutz) was both the high count and earliest arrival date. Reported from 10 counties.

**Eared Grebe**—Reported in Columbia, Dodge, and Kewaunee Counties. The Columbia report came from Harvey Road 3 May (m. obs.) with a maximum of three birds. The Dodge County report came from Horicon Marsh 24 May (Prestby). The Kewaunee bird was seen 22–23 May (Franke, Schilke).

**Western Grebe**—Found at Wind Point in Racine County 27 April (Wenzel). Three birds were reported 14 May in Trempealeau County by Slager. Last seen by Tessen 24 May in Douglas County.

**American White Pelican**—At their known overwintering location in Brown County a bird was seen 3 March (Swelstad) followed by a report 4 March at St. Feriole Island, Prairie du Chien, in Crawford County which was not sent to the Records Committee for review. Presently the early record is 9 March 1866 (yes, 1866). This record is made to be broken! A maximum of 1,000 birds was seen 23 March in Vernon County (Jackson).

**Double-crested Cormorant**—Also seen 3 March in Brown County (Swelstad). Uttech re-

ported 1000 individuals in Ozaukee County 29 April. Surveys during May showed the greatest concentration of nests was on islands in Green Bay with smaller numbers in the Apostle Islands, Horicon Marsh, Lake Winnebago, and Mead WMA.

**American Bittern**—Reported 11 April at Lulu Lake, Walworth County (Howe) and 15 April in Monroe County (Epstein). Prestby reported a total of 36 birds on 3 and 4 May in Wood County on wetland surveys.

**Least Bittern**—Reported from 10 counties, first in Iowa County, 10 May (A. Holschbach). Reports of two birds came from Crex Meadow, Burnett County 23 May (Richmond), and Jefferson County 29 May (Kollath). EOP in Dodge County.

**Great Blue Heron**—BOP at Arena Boat Landing, Iowa County (A. Holschbach). One bird was reported 5 March in Waupaca County (Matheson). Belter saw an amazing 400 birds in Marathon County 9 May.

**Great Egret**—A bird seen 6 March in Dane County would have been record early if supporting documentation had been submitted and evaluated by the Records Committee. So the first official sighting came from Dane on 22 March (Paulios). On 5 May 70 birds were seen in Walworth County at Natureland Park (L. Graham).

**Snowy Egret**—The first report on 17 April in Dane County at 9 Springs Natural Area (Schwarz) preceded the next report at the same location by nearly a month. Also reported in Brown (Swelstad) and Manitowoc (Mooney, Sontag) Counties.

**Tricolored Heron**—Jack Bartholmai found and photographed one (pg. 40) along Dike Road at Horicon Marsh in Dodge County 28 April for the second earliest sighting.

**Cattle Egret**—Found in 7 counties. First seen in Dane County at the Schumacher Road ponds 19 April (Otto) and last reported in Dodge County 28 May (Tessen). Most sightings were during May at Horicon NWR in Dodge and Fond du Lac Counties. Ten birds were reported in both Dodge 1 May and Trempeleau Counties 17 May.

**Green Heron**—Reported first 9 April in Manitowoc County (Domagalski) and next seen 18 April in Ozaukee County (Bontly, Sommer). Maximum of 8 birds was found in Dane County

on 17 May (Gold) and 20 May (Lorenz) both at 9 Springs Natural Area.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron**—First seen 17 April in Milwaukee (Corbo) and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties. Forty individuals were reported in Dodge County 10 May (Paulios) and 14 May (Prestby).

**White-faced Ibis**—A bird seen in Dodge County 9 May during the Horicon Marsh Bird Festival and documented by Gustafson becomes Wisconsin's 14<sup>th</sup> record. Photographed 17 May (Franke). See "By the Wayside."

**Turkey Vulture**—First seen 4 March in Waukesha County (Gross). The next day it was seen in Dane County. The high count of 110 birds occurred 14 March in Sauk County (Dischler).

**Osprey**—Found 28 March in Columbia County at Goose Pond (Brigham). The high count was 12 birds at Crex Meadows on 1 May. Reported in 51 counties state wide compared to 21 counties in 2008.

**Bald Eagle**—Found BOP in 7 counties north to Bayfield (Brady). A high count of 380 birds was seen in Pierce County 14 March (Kieser) and 110 in Grant County 15 March (G. and Q. Yoerger). A southern nesting report came from Ozaukee County.

**Northern Harrier**—BOP in Dodge, Ozaukee, Portage, Walworth, and Waukesha Counties. Found EOP in 9 counties scattered throughout the state. On 14 April in Portage County (Schaufenbuel) 17 birds were reported.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk**—Found BOP in Dodge County (Klein) and Waukesha County (Gustafson) and TTP in Douglas County (LaValleys). A maximum of 3 birds was the high count in Bayfield County (Brady, Oksiuta) and Sawyer County (Pertile). The last reports were from Bayfield (Oksiuta) and Brown (Kavanagh) Counties on 29 May.

**Northern Goshawk**—Reported from 10 northern counties and Ozaukee County for the only southern report. Two birds were seen in Door County 17 May (Rickaby). All other reports were of single birds.

**Red-shouldered Hawk**—TTP in Manitowoc County (Domagalski). Four birds seen in Brown County 1 May (Rickaby) and Grant County 17 April (West) were the highest number reported. After being reported from only 9 counties in 2008, the reports from 37 counties



for this year speak to the widespread use of eBird. Last reported in Adams County EOP (Anich).

**Broad-winged Hawk**—The earliest reports were from Dane County on 17 April (D. Graham, Stutz). One hundred eighty birds were seen migrating past Fisher Creek in Manitowoc County on 27 April (Schilke) and 155 in Waupaca County 23 April (Matheson). Seen in 37 counties.

**Swainson's Hawk**—Two birds were seen by participants in a WSO convention field trip to Polk County on 21 May. Photographed by Schultz and Wenzel (pg. 40). Another bird was seen 4 April in Iowa County (Fissel). See "By the Wayside" for his account.

**Rough-legged Hawk**—Present BOP in Douglas, Manitowoc, Marathon, Marinette, Monroe, Outagamie, Ozaukee, and Portage Counties. The high count at Buena Vista Grasslands in Portage was 35 birds on 14 March (Cameron). Still found EOP in Dane County (Theissen) and Oneida County (Peczynski).

**Golden Eagle**—Reported from six counties this season. Seen BOP by Epstein in Monroe County. A migratory total count of 8 birds was reported 14–15 March in Bayfield County (Brady). Last reports came on 10 April from Bayfield (Oksiuta) and Wood (Jackson) Counties.

**American Kestrel**—EOP in 9 counties north to Taylor and Marathon. Matheson reported the only counts greater than 10 birds. He saw 13 on 18 April in Portage County and 15 on 22 March in Waupaca County.

**Mertlin**—Reported 2 March in Grant County (Dahlberg) and 5 March in Florence County (Kavanagh). Twenty birds were viewed migrating in Door County 27 April (Ettenhofer). Reported 30 May in Adams County (Tessen) and EOP in Douglas County (LaValleys).

**Peregrine Falcon**—According to Greg Septon of the Peregrine Falcon Recovery Program, there were 82 young produced at 30 successful nest sites. Twelve nests were located along the Lake Michigan shoreline, five along the Fox River into Green Bay, two along the Wisconsin River, two along the shores of Lake Superior, seven along the Mississippi River (including four on natural cliffs), and two inland at Madison and Jefferson. In 2009, through EOP, there were four new, active, and productive nest sites.

**Yellow Rail**—Reported from only three counties. Found 2 May in Burnett County at Crex Meadows (Forsgren) and 4 May in Walworth County (Howe). The third county report came from Fond du Lac County 12 May (Prestby).

**King Rail**—Also reported from only three counties. Tessen reported the first 2 May in Green Lake County. Wilson reported on 3 May from Dodge County. Finally, Prestby found an individual 23 May in Fond du Lac County.

**Virginia Rail**—Not surprisingly, the first bird was reported in Walworth County 27 March by Howe, the resident wetland savant! This is the third earliest record date for the species. The high count of 12 birds was reported 25 May in Dodge County at Horicon Marsh (Diehl). This was also the location of the EOP report (Paulios, Prestby).

**Sora**—Reported from 52 counties versus 20 in 2008, again the power of eBird. First reported 11 April in Walworth County (Howe). The high count of 60 birds was reported during a wetland survey from Dodge County 14 May (Paulios). Another interesting total of 28 birds was found 17–18 May in Wood County by Prestby.

**Common Moorhen**—Found in ten counties that encompass the southeastern quadrant of the state, the exception being Trempealeau County. The early date was 26 April in Dodge County (m. obs.). The other April report was on the 29<sup>th</sup> from Dane County (Brabant, Gold). The high count of 10 came from Dodge on 14 May (Paulios).

**American Coot**—BOP in Dane (Evanson, Paulios) and Ozaukee (Frank) Counties. High counts of 2,000 and 3,600 came from Juneau (Marschalek) and Sauk (A. Holschbach) Counties respectively.

**Sandhill Crane**—The only BOP report came from Iowa County (A. Holschbach). Dane, Racine, and Waukesha Counties were added on 2 March. The high count of 508 birds came from the same location as in 2008 in Waukesha 16 March (Szymczak).

**Black-bellied Plover**—Reported from 14 counties. Evanson found the first bird 26 April in Rock County. The only other April report was filed by Thiessen on the 30<sup>th</sup> from Dane County. The highest number reported was 43 on 21 May in Kewaunee County (Schilke). Last reported in Milwaukee and Columbia Counties on 28 May.

**American Golden-Plover**—Reported from 10 counties. The earliest arrival date was 18 April at Goose Pond in Columbia County (Paulios). Last seen 24 May in Douglas County (Tessen). Theissen saw 45 birds 30 April in Dane County.

**Semipalmated Plover**—Four birds were seen on 19 April in Winnebago County by Tessen. High counts of 40 on 13 May were reported in Sauk (A. Holschbach) and 50 on 24 May in Milwaukee (S. Cutright) Counties. Reported EOP from Ashland, Dane, Dodge, Jefferson, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, and Winnebago Counties.

**Piping Plover**—Reported from five counties beginning on 29 April in Racine County during the Hoy Audubon field trip. The second report, initially provided by Petherick, came from the Coast Guard Impoundment in Milwaukee County, where it was reported between 11–15 May (m.obs.). Tessen reported a single bird in both Calumet and Fond du Lac Counties on 16 May. The last sighting was from Wisconsin Point (pg. 40) in Douglas County 18 May (Svingen).

**Killdeer**—TTP in Marathon County (Hoeft). On 26 May in Dane County Jakoubek reported 101 individuals.

**Black-necked Stilt**—The following reports were accepted by the WSO Records Committee: 25 April in Columbia County (D. Graham), which becomes the 6<sup>th</sup> earliest record, 8–9 May in Dodge County (Gustafson), (pg. 41), and again on 17 May (Franke). See “By the Wayside.”

**American Avocet**—Reported from seven counties. The first report came from Milwaukee County 18 April (Petherick, Wilson). Fifteen individuals were seen 3 May in Ozaukee County by the Riveredge Bird Club. Found EOP in Winnebago (pg. 41) County (Bruce).

**Spotted Sandpiper**—First “spotted” 4 April in Iowa County at Governor Dodge State Park (Heikkinen). Sinkula saw 15 birds in Kewaunee County 20 May.

**Solitary Sandpiper**—First reported 18 April in Waukesha County (Szymczak). Schilke saw the next one 24 April in Oconto County. The highest total seen was 11 birds, 9 May, in Florence County (Kavanagh). Last reported 29 May in Dane County (Bucci).

**Greater Yellowlegs**—First seen 21 March in Columbia County (Prestby). The species

made it all the way north to Douglas County 28 March (LaValleys). Prestby saw 40 birds 26 April in Dodge County. Last reported 30 May in Adams County after the WSO field trip (m. obs.).

**Willet**—The first report consisted of 11 individuals 24 April in Green County (Q. Yoerger). Then, between 27–29 April there were reports from 10 additional counties. Last reported 30 May in Dane (Heikkinen, Stutz) and Milwaukee (m. obs.) Counties. A high count of 60 was reported by an observer at Concordia University on 1 May in Ozaukee County. Reported in 18 counties.

**Lesser Yellowlegs**—The earliest report, 15 March in Fond du Lac County, would become a WSO record if it were to be submitted to the Records Committee for review since there are only 2 records before 15 March. Thiessen reported one 18 March in Columbia County. Before the end of that month it had been reported in three additional counties. A review of the previous seasonal reports reveals that these are the first March reports in the past six years. Gold reported 150 birds in Sauk County 3 May.

**Upland Sandpiper**—17 April has been the arrival date for this species in four out of the past six seasons. This season it was seen on that date in Grant County (West). The report, of 7 birds, was also the high count. Found EOP in Douglas County (LaValleys). Reports came from 17 counties.

**Whimbrel**—Reported from five counties beginning in Manitowoc County 16 May (A. & J. Holschbach, Tessen). Last reported 24 May in Douglas (Tessen) and Sheboygan (Q. Yoerger) Counties. The high count of 31 birds (17 May in Manitowoc, Schaufenbuel, Shillinglaw) is considerably lower than totals from the 2008 season. Also seen in Kewaunee and Milwaukee Counties.

**Hudsonian Godwit**—First seen 2 May in Fond du Lac County (Tessen). The next county report came from Dodge County 13 May (Paulios). A high number of 5 birds on 30 May in Columbia County was also the last report (Romano). EOP in Dodge (Paulios, Prestby). Reported in 12 counties.

**Marbled Godwit**—Reported in 10 counties, the first coming from Dane County at 9 Springs Natural Area 25 April (m. obs.). Last reported 28 May in Adams County (Anich). No counts of more than 2 birds were reported.

**Ruddy Turnstone**—Simultaneous arrivals on 9 May in Manitowoc (Sontag), Milwaukee (Szymczak), and Racine (Fare) Counties. Found EOP in Winnebago County (Bruce). High count of 30 birds on 24 May in Douglas County. Seen in 17 counties, 8 of which were away from the Great Lakes.

**Red Knot**—The first report 8 May in Kewaunee County (Sinkula) of 8 birds was also the high count. Last seen 29 May in Douglas County (Svingen). Also seen in Ashland (pg. 44), Manitowoc, and Milwaukee Counties.

**Sanderling**—Hoy Audubon members reported three birds 29 April in Racine County (m. obs.), followed by one bird reported 30 April in Sauk County (Romano). After these two April reports, the first May report came on the 8<sup>th</sup> to the north in Douglas County (Svingen). EOP in Sheboygan County (Mueller). High number of 35 birds in Marinette County 27 May (Prestby).

**Semipalmated Sandpiper**—First reported 28 April in Dane County (Prestby, Schaufenbuel). High counts of 50 birds 30 May in Jefferson County (Kollath) and 27 May in Milwaukee County (Sommer). EOP in Ashland, Dane, Manitowoc, and Winnebago Counties.

**Least Sandpiper**—14 April in Columbia County (Lorenz, Marschalek) marked the earliest report. The highest number reported was 125 by Prestby 8 May from Sauk County. EOP in Ashland, Dane, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, and Winnebago Counties.

**White-rumped Sandpiper**—First reported 9 May in Dodge County (Kass), followed by a 13 May report from Sauk County (A. Holschbach). The high count was 18 birds on 22 May in Columbia County (Prestby). The only EOP report was from Milwaukee County (Gustafson).

**Baird's Sandpiper**—Two birds were reported 3 May in Fond du Lac County (Frank, Tessen). EOP reports came from Ashland County (Oksiuta) and Manitowoc County (Shillinglaw). The latter report also was the high count of 14.

**Pectoral Sandpiper**—Tessen reported two birds 19 March in Dodge County. Prestby's 45 birds on 26 April in Dodge were the highest number. Outside of Dodge, reports of 32 birds came from Lafayette (Romano) and Rock (Q. Yoerger) Counties. Reports from Adams and Ashland Counties on 30 May.

**Dunlin**—Seen 18 April in Dodge County (Tessen, West). Tessen reported over 500 on 28 May in Dodge. Reported in five counties around the state EOP.

**Stilt Sandpiper**—Reported only in Calumet, Dodge, Kewaunee, and Milwaukee Counties. First reported 11 May from Dodge (McLeod), two birds, which was also a high count. The other report of two birds came from the same county 28 May (Heikkinen).

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper**—A rare spring report from Adams County 30 May (m. obs., documented by Tessen) following the WSO field trip. Photographed by Anich. A review of the arrival dates for this species shows the last spring report occurred back in 1981.

**Short-billed Dowitcher**—First reported 28 April from Dane County (Schwarz). High count of 34 came from Manitowoc County on 12 May (Sontag). Also found EOP in Manitowoc (Shillinglaw).

**Long-billed Dowitcher**—The early arrival was 21 April in Dodge County (Schaefer). The NLDC birders had 12 birds 19 May in Vilas County. A sighting in Milwaukee County (Mooney) 22 May was the final report. Reported from 11 counties.

**Wilson's Snipe**—BOP in Waukesha County (Szymczak) and Columbia County where the Schwalbes saw 6 birds at a location where they may have overwintered. The next report came on 6 March in Dane County (Schiffman). A. Holschbach noted 57 birds on 1 April in Sauk County. EOP in Price County (Krakowski).

**American Woodcock**—Howe reported the first bird on 6 March in Walworth County. The next report came 9 March in Dane County (Stutz). The high count of 15 birds came from the same county 27 March (Pfeiffer).

**Wilson's Phalarope**—Tessen reported the first 18 April in Dodge County. Reached Bayfield County 27 April (Anich, Brady, Oksiuta). Thirteen birds were seen 13 May in Eau Claire County (Betchkal).

**Red-necked Phalarope**—Three birds on 13 May in Trempealeau County (Slager) were the first. Final reports came on 30 May from Dodge (Romano) and Jefferson (Kollath) Counties. Reported in only five counties.

**Bonaparte's Gull**—Reported from three counties on 23 March: Columbia (West), Crawford (Schaufenbuel), and Walworth (Fitzger-

ald). An incredible 3,000 birds were seen 9 May in Marathon County (Belter). Found EOP in Ashland and Manitowoc Counties.

**Black-headed Gull**—A report by Shillinglaw 17 May in Manitowoc County becomes Wisconsin's 12<sup>th</sup> record. See "By the Wayside."

**Little Gull**—Reported 16 May through EOP in Manitowoc County and 26–30 May in Kewaunee County (m. obs). These were the only reporting counties.

**Laughing Gull**—Found in 4 counties: First in Ashland County (pg. 44) 12 May (Bruhnke), next in Milwaukee County (Frank) 23 May, where reported through 28 May (Gustafson). Also seen by Thiessen in Dane County 26 May and finally by Romano in Sheboygan County 30 May.

**Franklin's Gull**—Reported 14 May from Dane (Thiessen) and Manitowoc (Schilke) Counties. Last reported 30 May from Kewaunee County (Prestby). On 18 May 56 birds were reported from Dane (Schiffman).

**California Gull**—The Records Committee accepted two reports this season 27 March and 4 April in Kenosha County representing the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> records. It is likely this was the same individual. See "By the Wayside."

**Thayer's Gull**—TTP in Manitowoc County (Sontag). Still present on 30 May in Sheboygan County (Romano). Seen in 10 counties.

**Iceland Gull**—A maximum of 3 birds was reported 7 May from Doctor's Park in Milwaukee County (Frank). Still present 29 May in Sheboygan County (Schaufenbuel).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull**—First reported 13 March in Milwaukee County (Wilson). High total of 11 was found on 6 April at the Des Plaines River in Kenosha County (Dixon). Reported 28 May (S. Cutright) and finally 30 May (Romano) in Sheboygan County. Reported in 11 counties.

**Glaucous Gull**—A season maximum of 13 was reported from Douglas County (Svingen) on both 21 March and 23 April. Last reported 30 May in Sheboygan County (Romano). Found in 11 counties.

**Great Black-backed Gull**—Tessen reported 11 birds 30 March in Manitowoc County. Also found EOP in that same county (Domagal-

ski, Franke, Sontag). Seen only in counties along Lake Michigan and in Douglas County.

**Caspian Tern**—First reported 10 April in Manitowoc County (Sontag). Frank reported the highest total, 201 birds, 17 May in Milwaukee County. Other counts, each of 150 birds, came from Kewaunee (Prestby) and Racine Counties (Fare).

**Black Tern**—First reported 28 April from Dodge County (Hansen). Tessen and Gustafson reported 210 birds in that same county 8 May. The other high count, 200 birds, was reported from Trempealeau County 17 May (Forsgren, Slager). Reported from a total of 24 counties.

**Common Tern**—First reported 22 April in Milwaukee County (Bontly). Two high counts of 950 individuals came on 6 May in Manitowoc County (Sontag) and 17 May in Sheboygan County (Schaufenbuel).

**Forster's Tern**—Reported from Dane (Prestby), Dodge (Seiser), and Racine (Fare) Counties on 16 April. Schilke reported 75 birds on 11 May in Manitowoc County.

**Pomarine Jaeger**—One individual seen by Svingen 16 May at Wisconsin Point in Douglas County is only the second spring appearance for this species. See "By the Wayside."

**Eurasian Collared-Dove**—Reported from the following seven counties: Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Grant, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Sheboygan where it was well documented by D. and M. Brasser. Nine birds were seen at Patch Grove in Grant on 3 March (Kirschbaum).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo**—Romano reported 2 birds on 8 May in Sauk County. Heikkinen reported a bird the following day in Richland County. EOP in Dane, Fond du Lac, and Iowa Counties.

**Black-billed Cuckoo**—Prestby reported the first bird on 7 May in Green Lake County. Reported the following day in both Dodge (Tessen) and Sauk (Romano) Counties.

**Eastern Screech-Owl**—Even with the benefit of eBird, the species was only reported in eight counties compared to 12 in 2008. The "northernmost" were Manitowoc, where it was also seen EOP, and Winnebago Counties.

**Snowy Owl**—BOP in Manitowoc (Sontag) and Ozaukee (Frank) Counties. Three birds were seen along 6 Mile Road in Ozaukee

County BOP (Kuecherer) for the high count. Last reported 23 April from Vilas County by the NLDC birders.

**Long-eared Owl**—Reported nesting (pg. 45) in Manitowoc County by A. & J. Holschbach from 22 March through EOP. Also reported from Burnett and Milwaukee Counties.

**Short-eared Owl**—First reported 14 March in Portage County (Schaufenbuel), where it was also last reported 29 May (Trick). Four were the most reported from both Ozaukee and Portage Counties. Seen in ten additional counties.

**Northern Saw-whet Owl**—A high count of 3 birds was reported in Vilas County (J. Baughman). Reported in nine counties.

**Common Nighthawk**—First reported 30 April in Dane County (Fissel). The next report came 6 May from Trempealeau County (Slager). The greatest number seen was 55 in Trempealeau 17 May (Forsgren).

**Chuck-will's-widow**—T. Wood's report of a bird 31 May in Jackson County was the only one accepted by the Records Committee this season. See "By the Wayside."

**Whip-poor-will**—First reported 26 April in Walworth County (Howe). The next reports came on 30 April from Brown (Swelstad) and Florence (Kavanagh) Counties. High counts were of 15 birds in Marinette County (Kavanagh) and 16 birds in Portage County (Schaufenbuel). EOP in Washington County (Diehl).

**Chimney Swift**—Four birds were reported 18 April from Waukesha County (Zuhlke). The next report came on 23 April from Grant County (Stark). Huf reported 500 in Milwaukee County on 9 May. Belter reported 400 in Marathon County 23 May.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird**—First reported from Vernon County 19 April (Reynolds). Reported in Dane, Fond du Lac, and Milwaukee Counties by 27 April. Tessen reported 25 birds 28 May in Grant County.

**Belted Kingfisher**—BOP in Waukesha County (Gustafson, Szymczak). Reported north to St. Croix County by 7 March (Persico).

**Red-headed Woodpecker**—BOP in Crawford, Dodge, and Sawyer Counties (Sandstrom, Klein, Pertile). Ten birds were reported 3 May in Juneau County at Necedah NWR (Van

Lanen). This species of concern was reported in 48 counties compared to 18 in 2007 and 2008.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**—Birds found 2 March in Dane County (Owen) and 6 March in Iowa County (Prestby) could represent overwintering birds or early migrants. Next reported 16 March in Douglas County (LaValleys). Two birds found EOP in Dane (Schiffman) were interesting.

**Black-backed Woodpecker**—Reported from Douglas (Prestby), Florence (Kavanagh), Lincoln (Maercklein), Sawyer (Pertile), and Vilas (J. Baughman, Peczynski, T. Wood) Counties. The Florence bird was seen 24 May for the final report. No more than single individuals were seen.

**Northern Flicker**—Seen TTP in Waukesha County (Gustafson). Reported BOP from Crawford (Sandstrom), Outagamie (Tessen), and St. Croix (Persico) Counties. Belter reported 40 birds 17 April in Marathon County.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher**—First reported 29 April in Taylor County (Risch). Dane County hosted a bird 1 May (Nichols) but none were seen in another county until reported from Richland 9 May (Heikkinen). Southern EOP reports came from Milwaukee (Wilson) and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties. No more than two individuals were seen by any observer. Reports from 21 counties.

**Eastern Wood-Pewee**—Seen on 30 April in Portage County (Schaufenbuel). Next reported 1 May in both Dane (Brabant, Lorenz) and Grant (Johnson) Counties. Avon Bottoms in Rock County hosted 50 individuals 24 May (Jakoubek).

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**—Reported 5 May from Brown County (Rickaby). Next seen in Dane County 8 May (Brabant, Pfeiffer). The following day, Hansen saw 3 birds at Lake Park in Milwaukee County. A high count of 4 potentially nesting birds was found 21 May in Polk County (Heikkinen, Paulios) at Straight Lake Wildlife Area. Late migrants found in the following southern counties EOP: Iowa, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Waukesha.

**Acadian Flycatcher**—An early bird was found 8 May in Waukesha County (Szymczak). The following day Stutz located a bird in Jefferson County. It wasn't until 15 May that additional reports came from Columbia (Romano), Rock (Paulios), and Walworth (Szymczak) Counties. The high count of 17 birds came EOP

from Waukesha County (Szymczak). Reported from a total of 13 counties.

**Alder Flycatcher**—The species made a sudden appearance only in the northern counties beginning 10 May in Florence (Kavanagh). Richmond reported single birds in Langlade and Oneida Counties 12 May. High numbers of 13 and 14 were found in Marathon 22 May (Belter) and Price (Krakowski) Counties EOP.

**Willow Flycatcher**—Gustafson's 27 April sighting in Waukesha County ties the record early arrival date set back in 1991. See "By the Wayside." Next reported from Iowa County 9 May (Pugh) and Dane County 12 May (Marschalek). A high number of 12 birds was reported from Iowa 23 May (A. Holschbach).

**Least Flycatcher**—Simultaneous reports 25 April from Dane (Stark), Green (Q. Yoerger), and Racine (Fare) Counties. High totals of 33 and 40 seen 21 May in Oconto County (Kavanagh) and 9 May in Marathon County (Belter).

**Eastern Phoebe**—The first bird reported 15 March in Walworth County (Howe). The following day it was seen in three additional counties: Columbia (Dischler), Milwaukee (Squier), and Racine (Jarvis, Willard). Belter had 25 birds on 17 April in Marathon County.

**Great Crested Flycatcher**—Seen on 24 April in Dane (Martin) and Sauk (A. Holschbach) Counties. Added in Racine (Fare) and Trempealeau (Slager) Counties the next day. Kavanagh found 22 birds in Oconto County 21 May and Jakoubek found 40 in Rock County 24 May for the highest counts.

**Eastern Kingbird**—First found 28 April at both the Arboretum (Stutz) and Tiedeman's Pond (Pfeiffer) in Dane County. Next reported by an ornithology class in LaCrosse County 30 April. The high count, 24 birds, was found in Dane 14 May (Jakoubek).

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**—Found 29 April in River Hills, Milwaukee County, by Retko. He was able to photograph the bird on 5 May.

**Loggerhead Shrike**—Reported from the following counties: Brown on 11 May (Fleming), Green on 25 April (Q. Yoerger), Outagamie on 30 March (Tessen), Richland on 12 May (Duerksen), Rock on 25 April (Q. Yoerger), and Sauk on 16 May (T. Wood).

**Northern Shrike**—BOP in Manitowoc (Sontag), Vilas (J. Baughman), and Waukesha

(Gustafson) Counties. Brady reported a total of 5 birds 7 April in Ashland County. Last reported from Oneida County 15 April (Karnosky).

**White-eyed Vireo**—Yoerger found the first bird 26 April in Dane County. Another bird was seen 1–16 May at the Kennedy residence in Racine County (m. obs.). The only report of multiple birds came when Bucci reported two birds 17 May in Green County. In total, the species was reported in 7 counties.

**Bell's Vireo**—First reported at Warnimont Park in Milwaukee County 13 May (Fitzgerald, Lubahn, Prestby). EOP in Iowa (Romano) and Winnebago (Bruce) Counties. The Iowa County report was of two individuals. Reported from 7 counties.

**Yellow-throated Vireo**—The bird reported 18 April in Kenosha County would tie the current early date set in 2003 if it were submitted to the Records Committee for review. Next reported in Columbia (Romano) and Dane (Schwarz) Counties on 27 April. A high count of 15 birds was reported 24 May in Jackson County (Otto).

**Blue-headed Vireo**—First reported from Dane County 20 April (Stutz). The next two reports came 22 and 23 April from Walworth (Howe) and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties. Kavanagh had a 29 April arrival in Florence County. On the terrific migration day of 9 May, high counts of 15 and 22 were reported from Milwaukee County at Lake Park (Corbo, Mooney) and Sheridan Park (Szymczak). EOP in Langlade (Richmond) and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties.

**Warbling Vireo**—A "well-defined" arrival date of 27 April, when it was reported from the following counties: Dane (Gold, Schwarz), Fond du Lac (Butcher), Racine (Wenzel), and Sheboygan (S. Baughman). High counts of 24 and 25 birds came from Trempealeau (17 May, Forsgren) and Dodge (11 May, McLeod) Counties.

**Philadelphia Vireo**—Gold reported birds at both Lake Farm County Park and Pheasant Branch in Dane County on 6 May. The next reports came 9 May from 3 additional counties: Brown (Rickaby), Dodge (Kass), and Milwaukee (Hansen). Last reported 30 May in Milwaukee (Mooney). Jackson saw 9 birds 21 May in La Crosse County. Found in 19 counties.

**Red-eyed Vireo**—Reported 1 May from Sauk County (Pfeiffer). The next reports came on 2 and 3 May from Iowa (Pugh) and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties. Kavanagh reported

an astonishing 152 birds in Oconto County 21 May for the highest count in the past five spring seasons. Slager found 50 birds on 23 May in Trempealeau County. Widespread throughout the state.

**Gray Jay**—The southernmost sighting was also the last report on 26 May in Portage County (Schaufenbuel). Huf reported 4 birds on 21 May in Douglas County. Also seen in Florence, Forest, Iron, Langlade, Marathon, and Vilas Counties.

**Common Raven**—High numbers of 31 and 50 were reported from Florence (Kavanagh) and Bayfield (Oksiuta) Counties. The southernmost reports came from Adams, Monroe, and Sheboygan Counties. EOP from Winnebago County (Bruce). Seen in a total of 39 counties.

**Horned Lark**—The high count of 165 birds came on 14 March in St. Croix County (Persico). EOP in Dane and Eau Claire Counties.

**Purple Martin**—Two birds were reported 5 April from Winnebago County (Khan). The next report came from Dane County 7 April (Thiessen). High totals of 45 and 50 birds came from the relatively more northern counties of Langlade (12 May, Richmond) and Marathon (27 April, Belter). Seen in a total of 42 counties, including the following additional “northern” counties: Barron, Burnett, Chippewa, Douglas, Marinette, Oconto, Taylor, and Washburn.

**Tree Swallow**—Reported 17 March in Dane (Fissel) and Trempealeau (Betchkal) Counties. The next county was added 20 March in Racine where Fitzgerald reported 62 birds. The highest number reported was 1,200 on 20 April in Green Lake County (Schultz), which was significantly lower than the state high total of 5,000 seen in 2008.

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow**—The first report was 12 April from Trempealeau County (Slager). Seen the following day in La Crosse County (Jackson). Dane, Racine, and Walworth Counties were added 14 April. High totals of 150 and 160 individuals were reported from Jackson (18 May, Prestby) and Sheboygan (16 May, S. Baughman) Counties.

**Bank Swallow**—Rickaby saw 8 birds on 15 April in Brown County. Added in Dane (Ellis), Kewaunee (Sinkula), and Rock (Q. Yoerger) Counties on 18 April. A high count “range” of 120–150 birds was reported mid-May at Sheridan Park in Milwaukee County (Sommer, Win-

ter). Reported north to Bayfield, Florence, and Vilas Counties, unlike prior seasons.

**Cliff Swallow**—Two birds were reported 14 April in Portage County (Schaufenbuel). The next reports came 17 April from Marathon (Belter) and Sauk (Prestby) Counties. Schaufenbuel also had the high count, 245 birds, 12 May in Portage. Relatively widespread, including the northern “boundary” counties of Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Florence, Iron, and Marinette.

**Barn Swallow**—The 18 March bird reported by Sontag from Manitowoc County is the 4<sup>th</sup> earliest arrival date. Migration had slowed up in early April with the next report coming on the 9<sup>th</sup> in Dane (Theissen) and Ozaukee (Frank) Counties. S. Baughman reported 200 on 16 May from Sheboygan County.

**Boreal Chickadee**—Seen in Ashland, Florence, Forest, Langlade, and Vilas Counties. High count of 4 birds reported in Vilas 7 March (S. Cutright, Goodman). Last seen by Kavanagh 24 May in Florence.

**Tufted Titmouse**—BOP in Crawford, Dane, Jefferson, Iowa, LaCrosse, and Vernon Counties. Seen 15 March on the WSO field trip in Sheboygan County (m. obs.). Found north to Sawyer and Washburn Counties 18 April (Kavanagh).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch**—Found BOP in Bayfield, Brown, Douglas, Florence, Manitowoc, Marathon, Marinette, Oneida, Racine, Taylor, Vilas, and Waukesha Counties. Southern EOP locations were Milwaukee (Bontly) and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties.

**Brown Creeper**—Found BOP in Crawford, Iowa, Oneida, Vilas, and Waukesha Counties. Reports from the southern part of the state in Dodge (Rohde) and Sauk (Paulios) Counties on 30 May. Paulios and Prestby found a total of 12 migrants in Rock County while canoeing the Sugar River 24 April.

**Carolina Wren**—First reported 4 March in Dane County at Pheasant Branch (Prestby). No more than two birds were seen or heard (!) at any given location. Found in the following additional counties: Columbia, Grant, Monroe, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Rock, and Walworth.

**House Wren**—First reported 17 April in Walworth County (L. Graham). Next seen 19 April in Dodge County (Klein). On 12 May 50 were seen in Trempealeau County (Slager) for the high count.

**Winter Wren**—The first was reported by Sontag 6 March in Manitowoc County. The next sighting was 16 March in Milwaukee County at Doctor's Park (Frank). In 2008, the high count was 50 birds, this year it was only 5 birds, reported from Dane (Schwarz) and Rock (Huf) Counties. No out of the ordinary EOP reports.

**Sedge Wren**—Found simultaneously in Dane (Ellis), Dodge (m. obs.), and Walworth (Howe) Counties on 26 April. High totals of 23 and 30 birds from Portage (12 May, Schaufenbuel) and Green Lake (23 May, Prestby) Counties.

**Marsh Wren**—First found in Columbia County on 17 April (McLeod). Reported from Dodge County 19 April (Rohde). Not reported in any additional counties until 27 April when it appeared in Racine (Pugh) and Waukesha (Gustafson) Counties. A high total of 45 birds was found on a survey by Prestby at Horicon Marsh 14 May in Dodge. Outside of that county, Kavanagh found the next highest total of 25 birds in Brown County 29 May.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet**—Szymczak found 3 birds BOP in Waukesha County. Next found 3 March in Dane County (Lorenz, Marschalek). There was a lull in reporting until Bontly found another bird 9 March in Milwaukee County. High counts of 30 birds were reported from Dane County (3 April, Gold) and Ozaukee County (11 April, Sommer). Found EOP in Price (Krakowski) and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet**—First reported 24 March from Dane County (Marschalek). The only other March reports came from Milwaukee County on the 26<sup>th</sup> (O'Connor) and Ozaukee County on the 29<sup>th</sup> (T. Wood). Hagner found 75 birds on 26 April at Estabrook Park in Milwaukee. The only EOP report came from Douglas County (LaValleys).

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**—Howe reported two birds in Walworth County 18 April. Seen the next day in Milwaukee County (Hagner). The third county report came from Dane 20 April (Schwarz). Thirty birds were found in Dane (m. obs.) on 25 April and 4 May. Hale found 25 birds in Jefferson County on 9 May. Found north to Burnett (m. obs.) and Oconto (Prestby) Counties.

**Eastern Bluebird**—BOP in Dane, Grant, Iowa, Lafayette, and Ozaukee Counties. Matheson found a high count of 50 birds in Waupaca County on 22 March. Persico found 33 birds in St. Croix on 21 March.

**Veery**—First reported in Waukesha County 27 April (Gustafson). Seen the following day in Dane (D. Graham, McDowell) and Ozaukee (Sommer) Counties. The high counts ranged from 15–20 birds on the incredible migration day of 9 May in Milwaukee County (Huf, Mooney).

**Gray-cheeked Thrush**—April reports came from La Crosse (29<sup>th</sup>, Jackson) and Manitowoc (30<sup>th</sup>, Domagalski) Counties. Add in Brown and Green Lake Counties on 2 May. Multiple observers reported up to 12 birds in Milwaukee County on 9 May at both Schlitz Audubon and Lake Park. Last reported from Sheboygan County 27 May (S. Baughman).

**Swainson's Thrush**—Reported 25 April from Racine County (Kennedy). Seen the next day in Dane County (Heikkinen). A high count of 60 birds was reported at Schlitz Audubon in Milwaukee County 9 May. On the same day, in the same county, a range of 25–40 birds was reported at Lake Park (m. obs.). Southern EOP in Milwaukee (Bontly) and Racine (Kennedy) Counties.

**Hermit Thrush**—First reported 16 March in Rock County (L. Graham). Next reported from Dane County 24 March (Martin). Three counties posted high counts of 20 birds: Jackson (24 May, Otto), Milwaukee (18 April), and Oconto (21 May, Kavanagh). Expected EOP in northern portion of the state and 30 May report from Dane (Jakoubek).

**Wood Thrush**—First seen 23 April in Taylor County (Risch). Next reported by N. Cutright 25 April in Ozaukee County. The third county report came from Dane 26 April (McDowell). The high count was 25 birds in Walworth County 15 May (Szymczak).

**Varied Thrush**—The single report came from Oneida County BOP through 15 March (Karnosky).

**Gray Catbird**—Reported from both Dane (m. obs.) and Iowa (A. Holschbach) Counties 24 April. Added in Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Racine Counties the following day. A range of 40–45 birds was reported 9 May at Sheridan Park in Milwaukee (Fitzgerald, Szymczak). Fitzgerald and Prestby reported similar numbers 13 May at Warnimont Park in Milwaukee.

**Northern Mockingbird**—Numerous reports this season. First reported from Green County 24 April (Paulios, Prestby). Another April sighting came on the 29<sup>th</sup> in Sauk County at the Spring Green Preserve (West) where two



birds were also reported EOP. May reports from Florence (9–11 May, Kavanagh), Racine (8–10 May, m. obs.), Milwaukee (9 May, m. obs.), Monroe (19 May, Prestby) and Ozaukee (12 May, N. Cutright) Counties.

**Brown Thrasher**—First reported 18 March in Manitowoc County (Sontag), which is the earliest report in the last five seasons. Next reported 30 March in Dane County (Schwarz). Added in six additional counties by mid-April. Anich reported 15 birds in Bayfield County 4 May.

**American Pipit**—Seven birds were seen 22 March in Dane County (Evanson) and 2 birds were reported 24 March in Iowa County (A. Holschbach). Last reported 30 May from Adams County (Bontly). High count of 36 birds (compared with 200 in 2008) in Sauk County 2 May (A. Holschbach). Seen in 25 counties.

**Bohemian Waxwing**—A maximum of 10 birds was reported in Vilas County BOP through 21 March (J. Baughman, Peczynski, Schaufenbuel). In Sister Bay, Door County, Schwartz reported 90 birds eating mountain ash berries also BOP. The only other report was a “one day wonder” in Winnebago County 17 March (Bruce).

**Blue-winged Warbler**—First reported by McDowell in Dane County 27 April. Two birds were seen in Calumet County the next day. Two individuals on 21 May in Marinette County were the most northerly (Campbell). Counts of 15 birds were noted 9 May in Jefferson County (Stutz), 10 May in Sauk County (Prestby), and 11 May in Vernon County (E. Wood).

**Golden-winged Warbler**—Gustafson saw the first 27 April in Waukesha County. The next report was from Stutz 30 April in Dane County. Juneau was the third county added, 3 May (Prestby). No southern county reports came after 24 May. Belter found 18 birds on 13 May in Marathon County, and 10 migrating birds were seen 9 May at Lake Park in Milwaukee County (Corbo, Hansen).

**Blue-winged × Golden-winged Warbler**—The only report came from Slager 23 May in Trempealeau County when he saw a “Brewster’s.”

**Tennessee Warbler**—First seen 26 April in Dane County (A. Holschbach, Jakoubek). Two additional counties were added 29 April: La Crosse (Jackson) and Marathon (Hoeft). Slager saw 35 in Trempealeau County on 6 May. Found EOP in Fond du Lac County by Mueller.

**Orange-crowned Warbler**—First reported from Dane County 21 April (Lorenz). Reported from two other locations within Dane until it was added in Brown, Milwaukee, Sauk, and Waukesha Counties on 25 April. Last seen 28 May in Oconto (Rickaby) and Manitowoc (Shillinglaw) Counties. The highest number (14) was reported by Fitzgerald and Prestby 13 May in Milwaukee.

**Nashville Warbler**—Lorenz saw the first bird on 25 April in Dane County. Added the following day in Kenosha (Willard) and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties. On the terrific migration day of 9 May, 20–25 birds were seen at Lake Park in Milwaukee County (Corbo, Frank, Huf). The seasonal high count (60) came from Oconto County 21 May (Kavanagh). Wilson found a lingering migrant in Milwaukee EOP.

**Northern Parula**—Seen in Dane (Stutz) and Racine (Fare) Counties 25 April. Reported the next day at Doctor’s Park in Milwaukee County (Wilson). Huf saw 17 birds on 18 May in Milwaukee at Schlitz Audubon. Strelka found 11 birds on 26 May during a Florence County Big Day count.

**Yellow Warbler**—Reported in Dane County 24 April at three locations: 9 Springs Natural Area (Schwarz), Pheasant Branch (D. Graham, McDowell), and Picnic Point (Nichols). Seen the same day in Racine County (Gustafson). Eight additional southern counties reported the species the following day. Stutz saw 100 (!) in Jefferson County 9 May.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler**—Szymczak reported the first birds 1 May in Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties. Next seen 3 May in Dane, Dodge, Ozaukee, Sauk, and Wood Counties. During the 9 May “fallout” 20 birds were seen in Milwaukee County at Lake Park (Corbo, Hansen). Kavanagh found 61 birds in Oconto County 21 May. J. Baughman found 37 birds in Vilas County 19 May.

**Magnolia Warbler**—Seen 2 May in Brown (Rickaby) and Racine (Jarvis) Counties. The next county report came 5 May from Dane (McDowell). S. Baughman found 40 birds in Sheboygan County 16 May. Hansen saw 25 birds 9 May at Lake Park in Milwaukee County. Southern EOP sightings came from Milwaukee (Bontly, O’Connor, Wilson) and Racine (Kennedy) Counties.

**Cape May Warbler**—The first bird, which was reported 28 April in Dane County, ties the third earliest arrival date for this species (D. Graham, McDowell). Next seen 2 May in Brown

(Trick) and Milwaukee (Mueller) Counties. A high total of 20 was reported in Door County (L. Graham) on 19 May. Counts of 15 birds came from Brown 12 May (Swelstad) and Milwaukee 9 May (Corbo, Huf) Counties.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler**—Schilke saw one 30 April in Kewaunee County, which represents the earliest sighting in the past five seasons. Next reported 6 May in Brown (Tessen) and Dane (Sonzogni) Counties. Four was the high count on 9 May in Milwaukee County (Hansen). Following the trend from prior seasons, the migration occurred in 20 mostly eastern counties, with the exception of appearances in Polk and Vernon Counties. Reported “on territory” EOP in Forest County (Beaudry).

**Yellow-rumped Warbler**—March reports came from Racine (17<sup>th</sup>, Willard), Grant (22<sup>nd</sup>, Prestby, Q. Yoerger), and Washington (27<sup>th</sup>, Diehl) Counties. Next reported in Dane County 2 April (Romano). An astonishing 500 were seen 28 April in Trempealeau County (Slager). Other high counts came from La Crosse (325 on 2 May), Dodge (300 on 10 May), and Jefferson (300 on 9 May) Counties.

**Black-throated Green Warbler**—First reported 24 April in Ozaukee County at Lion’s Den Gorge (Frank). Seen the following day in Dane, Fond du Lac, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Waukesha Counties. Bontly saw 24 on 15 May at Schlitz Audubon in Milwaukee. Rickaby saw 21 birds on 17 May in Door County.

**Blackburnian Warbler**—It was all Dane County reports, from three separate locations, beginning on 26 April (Liss) through 28 April. The next county report came 29 April from Milwaukee at Wehr Nature Center (Szymczak). After another time gap, the next batch of reports came from Ozaukee and Waukesha Counties on 3 May. Sommer saw 9 birds at Riveredge Nature Center in Ozaukee 16 May. Somewhat unusual EOP from Milwaukee (Bontly, Wilson).

**Yellow-throated Warbler**—Simultaneous arrival in Milwaukee County at Lake Park (m. obs.) and Waukesha County (Szymczak) on 25 April (pg. 45). Not seen again until 2 May in Grant County (m. obs.) at their known breeding location of Wyalusing State Park. Wyalusing was also the location of the high count of 5 birds. A second Waukesha bird was seen by Bielefeldt 2 May approximately ½ mile from the location of the 25 April bird.

**Pine Warbler**—Slager saw the first 14 April in Trempealeau County. Reported the following

day in Dane County (McDowell). This species was not reported in earnest until 18–19 April. A high total of 14 birds was tallied by J. Baughman in Vilas County 19 May. Another high count, 10 birds, was reported by Kavanagh on 29 April in Florence County. The only southern EOP came from known breeding locations in Sauk and Waukesha Counties.

**Kirtland’s Warbler**—Unfortunately, no formal documentation was accepted by the Records Committee for this species. However, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service reports that Anich found two birds 12 May in Adams County. In all, 13 birds were found there EOP. The Service’s observer in Marinette County located a bird 20 May.

**Prairie Warbler**—A sighting 27 April in Ozaukee County (Schaefer) was reviewed and accepted by the Records Committee as the third earliest record. Next reported 6 May in Brown County (Tessen). Then it was seen 15 May in Winnebago County (Bruce). The final report came from Dixon in Racine County 20 May.

**Palm Warbler**—First seen 19 April in Dane (Jakoubek) and Richland (A. Holschbach) Counties. After that, individual county reports trickled in until 25 April when eight additional counties were added, including north to Oneida (Richmond). High counts of 150 birds were reported by Huf in Ozaukee County 3 May and by Fitzgerald and Prestby in Racine County 13 May. Reported EOP in Price County (Krakowski).

**Bay-breasted Warbler**—For the second year in a row, the arrival date was 6 May when it appeared in Brown (Swelstad), Dane (m. obs.), and Milwaukee (Bontly) Counties. The last report came from Waukesha County (Gustafson) 29 May. Thirty birds were seen in Door County 19 May (L. Graham).

**Blackpoll Warbler**—Lesak reported the first bird 27 April in Dane County. The next day Sontag reported one in Manitowoc County and Sommer saw one at Lion’s Den Gorge in Ozaukee County. There was a definite lull in sightings because the next report didn’t come until 5 May in Grant County. Then it was added in six additional counties 6 May. Skutek reported 50 in Portage County 13 May and L. Graham 30 in Door County 19 May. Last report from Dane on 30 May (Ellis) and Sheboygan (S. Baughman) Counties.

**Cerulean Warbler**—Romano reported six birds 27 April in Columbia County and Gustafson reported a bird the same day in

Waukesha County. Stutz reported an exceptional high count of 20 birds in Jefferson County 9 May during the "fallout." Seen in 25 counties, north to Polk.

**Black-and-white Warbler**—Seen 18 April in Dane (Martin) and Milwaukee (Hunter, Mooney) Counties. Reported in Polk County 27 April (Maercklein), which was the only sighting in the northern ½ of the state by that date. Gold had 20 birds 9 May in Dane and Hagner found 18 birds on the same date in Milwaukee. Southern EOP in Milwaukee (Wilson) and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties.

**American Redstart**—Arrived 27 April in Dane (Lesak) and Sheboygan (S. Baughman) Counties. The next report came 30 April in Ozaukee County (Boyle). S. Baughman also had the high count of 50 individuals 16 May in Sheboygan. Reports of 25 birds came from Columbia, Green Lake, and Milwaukee Counties.

**Prothonotary Warbler**—Seen in Rock (Paulios, Prestby) and Sauk (A. Holschbach) Counties 24 April. The next report came in Racine County (Fare) the following day. A high number of 5 birds was found in Trempealeau County on 21 May. Seen in a total of 16 counties.

**Worm-eating Warbler**—All reports in order of arrival date are: 25 April at Picnic Point in Dane County (Brabant), 1 May at Scout Lake Park in Milwaukee County (Szymczak), 1 May in Racine County (Fare), 6 May at Wehr Nature Center in Milwaukee, 9 May at Pheasant Branch in Dane (m. obs.), 11 May in Sauk County (Tessen), and finally EOP in Manitowoc County (J. Holschbach).

**Ovenbird**—A decisive arrival on 25 April in Dane (Brabant, Lorenz, Stutz), Milwaukee (Mooney, O'Connor), and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties. Kavanagh "smoked" her Oconto County total from 2008 (77 birds) with a high number of 132 on 21 May.

**Northern Waterthrush**—Arrived 18 April in Green County (Q. Yoerger). Next appeared 21 April in Grant County (Kolodziej). The third county added was Milwaukee the next day (Bontly). Stutz found 25 birds on 9 May in Jefferson County and Slager found 20 birds on 3 and 8 May in Trempealeau County.

**Louisiana Waterthrush**—The first reports on 18 April at Lake Park in Milwaukee (Hunter, Mooney) and at Scuppernong Springs in Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties were somewhat later than usual. The species made other

appearances in these two counties until Dane was the third county added on 24 April (McDowell). Brady located a remarkable bird at Copper Falls State Park in Ashland County 17 May. A high count of 8 birds was reported from Sauk County (m. obs.). Seen in 15 counties.

**Kentucky Warbler**—Seen in six counties. First reported 30 April from Lafayette County (m. obs.), which is one of only three April records for the species historically. Next seen 9 May in Grant County (m. obs.) and at Harrington Beach State Park in Ozaukee County (m. obs.). Tessen reported the high count of 4 birds 28 May from Grant.

**Connecticut Warbler**—A review of records from the previous five seasons shows all first arrival dates to be after 12 May; however, this year it was reported from two counties prior to that date. The first on 10 May in La Crosse County (Wiegel) and the second on 11 May in Ozaukee County (Strelka). EOP in Milwaukee County (Boyle, Wilson). Reports came from 17 counties.

**Mourning Warbler**—First reported from Milwaukee County 6 May (Szymczak). Seen the following day in Dane County (McDowell). Prestby found 14 birds in Oconto County 29 May. Betchkal found 12 in Bayfield County 30 May. Seen in 36 counties.

**Common Yellowthroat**—Seen in Dane (Martin, Stutz), Milwaukee (Wilson), and Rock (Klubertanz) Counties 25 April. Szymczak reported 60 birds from Waukesha County 16 May and Prestby had 40 birds from Oconto County 29 May.

**Hooded Warbler**—Reported 26 April in Dane County (Marschalek) and the following day in Waukesha County (Gustafson). Reported in 15 counties north to Dunn (P. Campbell) and Lincoln (Hoeft). Szymczak tallied the high counts of 29 birds at Scuppernong Ski/Hiking Trails in Waukesha EOP and 24 birds at John Muir Trails in Walworth County 15 May.

**Wilson's Warbler**—Arrived 1 May in Trempealeau County (Slager) followed the next day in Dane County (D. Graham, McDowell). The high count of 20 birds was reported 23 May from both Manitowoc (Domagalski) and Milwaukee (Mooney) Counties. Southern EOP in Dane, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, and Ozaukee Counties.

**Canada Warbler**—Returned to the state 7 May in Dane County (McDowell). It was seen the day after in Sauk County (Prestby). Mi-

grants were still moving through the southern part of the state EOP in Milwaukee County (Wilson, Zehner). Mooney saw 15 birds in Milwaukee 23 May.

**Yellow-breasted Chat**—A bird found 27 April in Manitowoc County would be the record early date; however, supportive documentation was not submitted to the WSO Records Committee for review. The first official report occurred 9 May at Colonial Park in Racine County (Fare). Last reported in Dane County 30 May (Stutz). Also reported in Columbia, Lafayette, Sauk, Vernon, Walworth, and Waukesha Counties.

**Eastern Towhee**—Seen 24 March at Schlitz Audubon in Milwaukee County and in Racine County (Kennedy). Slager reported 50 birds from Trempealeau County 23 May.

**American Tree Sparrow**—Found in 18 counties BOP. High counts of 50 (4 April, Szymczak) in Waukesha and 45 (2 April, Uttech) in Ozaukee Counties. Richmond found a bird 19 May in Burnett County and Cobb found the last in Door County on 23 May.

**Chipping Sparrow**—First reported 16 March in Lafayette by McDaniel. The only other March report was on the 28<sup>th</sup> in Dane County (Fissel). Kavanagh reported 79 in Florence County 9 May.

**Clay-colored Sparrow**—A definitive arrival with sightings 25 April in Dane (Stutz), Ozaukee (Wilson), and Vernon (Jackson) Counties. High counts of 50 birds were reported by Belter in Marathon County 9 May and by Anderson 13 May in Portage County. Reported EOP in Burnett, Dane, Fond du Lac, Iowa, Manitowoc, Marathon, Oneida, Ozaukee, Price, and Waukesha Counties.

**Field Sparrow**—McDaniel reported the first 17 March in Lafayette County, only a day later than she reported it in 2008. Next reported 22 March from Grant County (Prestby, Q. Yoerger). By the end of the month, reports came in from Dane, Manitowoc, Washington, and Waukesha Counties. Mueller reported 25 birds in Rock County 19 April.

**Vesper Sparrow**—Reported in Milwaukee County 29 March (Mueller, Wilson). Frank reported the next birds 2 April from Ozaukee and Sheboygan Counties. A high number of 8 birds was reported by Kavanagh in Pepin County on 16 April. Reported from 46 counties statewide.

**Lark Sparrow**—Seen in a total of 14 counties. The first reported by Kavanagh 17 April in Pierce County. The next report came 19 April from A. Holschbach in Iowa County. Prestby reported the greatest number, 10 birds, from Spring Green Preserve in Sauk County on 30 April. Reported EOP in Sauk (Trick), where Tessen had seen a bird carrying food earlier in the month.

**Savannah Sparrow**—Although normally appearing in the month of March, this year the species was not reported until 3 April in Dane (Bucci) and Waukesha Counties (Jackson). G. David had 40 birds at Buena Vista Grasslands in Portage County 4 May.

**Grasshopper Sparrow**—Unlike the previous species, this bird had a more traditional arrival on 23 April in Lafayette County (Romano). Next seen 26 April by Fare in Racine County. Before the end of the month it was added in Portage, Sauk, and Trempealeau Counties. Trempealeau was also the location of the 15 bird high count (Slager). Reported from 30 counties (versus just 12 in 2008) including the following northern counties: Burnett, Chippewa, Door, Dunn, Eau Claire, Oconto, and Taylor.

**Henslow's Sparrow**—Found in 23 counties this year, north to Burnett, Oconto, and Polk. The first reports came on 25 April from Dodge (Howe) and Lafayette (A. Holschbach) Counties. Prestby reported 12 birds from Green Lake County 23 May.

**LeConte's Sparrow**—First reported 25 April in Milwaukee County (Wilson). Next seen 27 April by Romano in Columbia County. Prestby found 7 birds on 4 May in Wood County. Peczynski counted 3 birds EOP at Thunder Lake Wildlife Area in Oneida County. Seen in 14 counties.

**Nelson's Sparrow**—A species name change didn't improve the species' scarcity, as it was only found in Burnett County (m. obs.) 21–23 May, coinciding with the WSO field trips to Crex Meadows.

**Fox Sparrow**—S. Cutright reported the first on 9 March in Ozaukee County. Next seen 14 March in Racine (Wilson) and Rock (Paulios) Counties. Tessen reported 50 birds in Outagamie County on 9 April. There was a Dane County report of 30 birds on 26 March (Marschalek). Last reported by Kavanagh on 9 May in Florence County.

**Song Sparrow**—BOP in Dane (Stutz) and Waukesha (Gustafson, Szymczak) Counties. Reports began in earnest on 6–7 March when 7 additional counties were added. Reached Ashland County 30 March (Maercklein). A 100 bird total from Trempealeau County (Slager) was the highest number.

**Lincoln's Sparrow**—A “scout bird” (?) was reported from Crawford County 14–25 April by Sandstrom. Suddenly on 25 April, the species was seen in five additional counties, and 15 birds were seen on 9 May in Milwaukee County (Corbo). An interesting late report came 28 May when Vargo saw 5 birds in Milwaukee while banding at the Urban Ecology Center. Peczynski saw 6 birds EOP in Oneida County.

**Swamp Sparrow**—Frank reported the first on 15 March in Milwaukee County. Next seen 17 March in Racine County (Willard). Prestby totaled 80 birds while surveying at Horicon Marsh in Dodge County on 14 May. Howe reported 57 birds in Walworth County 26 April.

**White-throated Sparrow**—Reported BOP in Dane, Dodge, and Waukesha Counties. Tessen reported 400 on 9 May in Dodge County. No southern EOP reports.

**Harris's Sparrow**—Seen 18 April by Q. Yoerger in Rock County. Last seen 12 May in Ashland County (Brady). Also reported in Bayfield, Burnett, Dane, Douglas, Eau Claire, Grant, La Crosse, and Trempealeau Counties.

**White-crowned Sparrow**—BOP in Waukesha County (Gustafson). Seen 3 March by Haseleu in Washburn County. Next reported from Dane County 18 March. Last reported 29 May in Milwaukee County (Huf). On 9 May, 120 bird high counts were reported from Sheridan Park in Milwaukee (Szymczak) and Wind Point in Racine County (Howe).

**Dark-eyed Junco**—The common “slate-colored” form was BOP in 23 counties. McDowell saw 100 birds on 21 March in Dane County. The final southern report came 16 May in Milwaukee County at Doctor's Park (Wilson). There was a single report of the “Oregon” form in Racine County 23 March (Kennedy).

**Lapland Longspur**—BOP in Calumet County (Tessen). The most remarkable report came from Hale in Jefferson County 11 April when she saw an estimated 10,000 birds in the air and on the ground at the Faville Grove Sanctuary. Last reported from Oconto County 25 May (Rickaby).

**Snow Bunting**—BOP in Dodge, Douglas, Racine, Sheboygan, Washburn, and Waukesha Counties. Last reported 29 April in Sheboygan (Brigham). Risch reported 500 in Taylor County 25 March.

**Summer Tanager**—A fantastic season for this species with sightings in 16 counties (pg. 44)! Other than Bayfield County on 9 May, all reports were from the southern half of the state. A bird found by Boyle in Milwaukee County 27 April was the earliest. Next seen the following day in Vernon County by Jackson. The month of April ended with reports in Dodge (Benton), Racine (Howe), and Waukesha (Gustafson) Counties. The final report came from Strelka 24 May at Lion's Den Gorge in Ozaukee County.

**Scarlet Tanager**—Seen 25 April in Racine County (Fare). Also reported in Calumet and Dane Counties before the end of the month. High counts of 15 birds came from Grant (17 May, Jackson), Monroe (19 May, Prestby), and Oconto (21 May, Kavanagh) Counties.

**Western Tanager**—After being absent from the 2008 report, Buehlman photographed one 27 April (pg. 45) in Mauston, Juneau County, to provide the 2<sup>nd</sup> earliest record ever. A second report came from Lubahn 8 May at Sheridan Park in Milwaukee County.

**Northern Cardinal**—Found in these northern counties: Ashland, Barron, Bayfield (1 sighting), Burnett, Douglas, Florence, Iron (1 sighting), Oneida, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Sawyer (1 sighting), Vilas, and Wood.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak**—Despite Wisconsin reports of March sightings of this bird, no documentation was sent to the Records Committee for review. Sommer reported an early bird in Ozaukee County 17 April, which ties the second earliest arrival date. Next seen on 22 April in Rock County (Heikkinen). Belter reported 40 in Marathon County 15 May. Kavanagh reported 36 in Oconto County 21 May.

**Indigo Bunting**—Popelka's 18 March (yes, March!) sighting in Milwaukee County was accepted by the Records Committee, see “By the Wayside.” The next reports came 27 April in Dane (Martin), Manitowoc (Sontag), and Waukesha (Gustafson) Counties. A high count of 35 birds came from E. Wood in Vernon County on 11 May.

**Painted Bunting**—Seen in the state for the third spring in a row. The Records Committee approved both the first report on 27 April (pg. 48) in Door County (*vide* Lukes) and the

second on 1 May in Sheboygan County (Thoresen).

**Dickcissel**—Made its first appearance 10 May in Sauk County (Romano). Next seen 17 May in Lafayette County (G. & Q. Yoerger). A. Holschbach found 7 birds in Sauk on 24 May for the high count. EOP in Iowa County (Romano). Reported from only 12 counties with a combined total number seen the entire season of approximately 40 birds.

**Bobolink**—First seen 28 April in Richland County (Forchione). Next reports came 1 May from Dane, Milwaukee, Racine, and Walworth Counties. High counts were 50 birds in Manitowoc County 10 May (Domagalski) and 60 birds in Dodge County 24 May (Rohde).

**Red-winged Blackbird**—BOP in Racine, Rock, and Waukesha Counties. Checklist reports experienced a pronounced “spike” on 5–6 March. High totals of 2,500 birds came from Dane County on 5 March (Paulios) and Walworth County on 10 March (Fitzgerald).

**Eastern Meadowlark**—First reported by Wilson in Kenosha County on 7 March. Next seen on 9 March at Havenwoods State Forest in Milwaukee County (Snider). Paulios counted 40 birds in Portage County 18 April.

**Western Meadowlark**—Schaufenbuel reported four birds 17 March in Portage County. Next seen by Romano in Iowa County 22 March. A high count of 12 birds was reported by G. David from Portage County 11 May. Seen in 22 counties, north to Ashland, Douglas, and Florence.

**Yellow-headed Blackbird**—First seen by Gustafson 10 April in Waukesha County, then on the 11<sup>th</sup> in Richland County (Duerksen), and the 12<sup>th</sup> in Fond du Lac County (Schaufenbuel). Stutz found 25 birds in Jefferson County on 9 May and Kavanagh found 20 birds in Brown County at Sensiba WMA on 29 May. Reported from 24 counties.

**Rusty Blackbird**—BOP in Racine County (Wilson). Next reported from Dane (50 birds, Paulios, Prestby) and Walworth (17 birds, Fitzgerald) Counties on 5 March. Fissel reported the high total of 300 birds from Dane 9 March. The “runner up” total was 250 birds in Manitowoc County 20 March (Schilke). Last seen 30 May in Adams County (Calvetti). Reported from 40 counties around the state.

**Brewer’s Blackbird**—First reported 7 March from Vernon County (Jackson). Next

seen 9 March in Racine County (Fitzgerald). Heikkinen’s 40 birds on 6 April in Sauk County was the highest number reported. Reported from 39 counties. EOP only in Oneida County.

**Common Grackle**—A. Holschbach saw the first on 4 March in Iowa County. Five additional southern counties were added the next day. Fissel counted 2,000 birds on 17 March and Prestby had this number on 1 April at Lake Farm County Park in Dane County.

**Brown-headed Cowbird**—BOP in Rock (Klubertanz) and Waukesha (Gustafson) Counties. By 5 March, Brown, Dane, Dodge, and Walworth Counties were added. On 27 April 200 birds were seen in Sauk County (Forchione).

**Orchard Oriole**—Frank saw the first bird in Ozaukee County 25 April, which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> earliest arrival date. Next seen 28 April in Racine County (Zdradzinski). Reported in 30 counties, with Marinette being the farthest north.

**Baltimore Oriole**—Made a dramatic appearance in the following four counties 25 April: Fond du Lac, Iowa, Racine, and Waukesha. Totals of 40 birds were reported from Adams (17 May, Anich) and Trempealeau (23 May, Slager).

**Pine Grosbeak**—The following constitute the only reports for the season: Bayfield County BOP (Brady), Forest County 5 March (Peczynski), and Vilas County 9 March (J. Baughman). Peczynski’s 3 birds were the most seen.

**Purple Finch**—BOP in these 7 counties: Crawford, Florence, La Crosse, Marinette, Monroe, Vernon, and Vilas. High counts came on 7 March in St. Croix County (58 birds, Persico) and 19 April in Portage County (45 birds, Matheson). EOP in Bayfield, Douglas, Florence, Iron, and Marathon Counties.

**Red Crossbill**—BOP in Douglas County and, somewhat unusual, in Iowa County where A. Holschbach reported 13 birds which was also the high count. On 4 April, 12 birds were reported in the Kettle Moraine State Forest, Sheboygan County (Popp). Last reported 29 May in Marinette County (Prestby). Seen in 10 counties.

**White-winged Crossbill**—This was an exceptional season for the species (pg. 48). It was reported in 32 counties, versus no reports in 2008. BOP in Dane, Douglas, Iowa, Manitowoc, Oneida, Vilas, Washington and Waukesha

Counties. The highest number, 45 birds, came from Dane County 14 March (Stutz). The last southern report was on 24 April from Milwaukee County (Szymczak).

**Common Redpoll**—Living up to its name for once, birds were found in 51 counties. Widely distributed in 22 counties BOP. Two counts of 250 birds on 11 March came from Bayfield (Brady, Prestby) and Marathon (Belter) Counties. Last reported from Oneida County 15 April (Karnosky).

**Hoary Redpoll**—Reports accepted by the WSO Records Committee in these counties: Bayfield (14 March–5 April, Oksiuta and 11 March, Brady, Prestby), Langlade (4 April, Richmond), and Manitowoc (8 March, Trick). See “By the Wayside.” Other reports from Douglas and Florence Counties may represent birds also seen during the previous winter season.

**Pine Siskin**—This widespread winter finch was found in 23 counties throughout the state BOP. Schaufenbuel found 230 birds on 5 March in Portage County. Counts of 100 birds came from Ashland, Brown, Florence, and Marinette Counties. Southern EOP in Milwaukee (Bontly, Zehner) and Waukesha (Szymczak) Counties.

**Evening Grosbeak**—BOP in Bayfield County (Brady). Martin reported 50 birds in Forest County 7 March. Reported in a total of 9 northern counties. Last seen 27 May in Florence County (Strelka).

## CONTRIBUTORS AND CITED OBSERVERS

Betsy Abert, Nick Anich, Derek Bakken, Jack Bartholmai, Scott Baughman, James Baughman, Fred-eric Beaudry, Dan Belter, Robin Benton, Steve Betchkal, John Bielefeldt, Marilyn Bontly, Owen Boyle, Craig Brabant, Ryan Brady, Mark Brandt, Dave & Margaret Brasser, Robert Brigham, Paul Bruce, Erik Bruhnke, Bob Bucci, Mary Butcher, Gwyneth Calvetti, Rory Cameron, Joan Campbell, Pamela Campbell, George Cobb, Sam Corbo, Noel Cutright, Seth Cutright, Luke Dahlberg, Guy David, Jerry DeBoer, Scott Diehl, Raymond

Dischler, John Dixon, Bob Domagalski, Brian Doverspike, Barbara Duerksen, Carl Eisenberg, Jesse Ellis, Eric Epstein, Judy Ettenhofer, Martin Evan-son, Rick Fare, Peter Fissel, Sean Fitzgerald, Erin Fleming, Glenn Forchione, Raymond Forsgren, James Frank, Scott Franke, Dave Freriks, Malcolm Gold, Mike Goodman, Dan Graham, Laura Graham, Maureen Gross, Dennis Gustafson, Charles Hagner, Karen Etter Hale, Brian Hansen, Judy Haseleu, Chuck Heikkinen, Ginny Helland, Tod Highsmith, Joyce Hoeft, Aaron Holschbach, Jim Holschbach, Eric Howe, Hoy Audubon, Bryan Huberty, Judith Huf, Paul Hunter, John Idzikowski, Daniel Jackson, Paul Jakoubek, Rebecca Jarvis, Scott Johnson, Brian Karnosky, Bill Kass, Kay Kavanagh, Sharon Kennedy, Memuna Khan, Dennis & Alice Kirschbaum, Douglas Kieser, Mark Klein, Tom Klubertanz, Nolan Kollath, Jim Krakowski, Dennis Kuecherer, Susan Kulinski, Steve & Laura LaValley, Adrian Lesak, Josh Liss, Dennis Lorenz, Steve Lubahn, Robin Maercklein, Daniel Marschalek, Chester Martin, Dale Matheson, Carol McDaniel, Mike McDowell, Bob McInroy, John McLeod, Matt Mendenhall, Tom Mertins, Jym Mooney, Anne Moretti, William Mueller, Peter Nichols, NLDC Birders, Mariette Nowak, Michelene O'Connor, Tim Oksiuta, Jim Otto, Dory Owen, Andy Paulios, Mike Peczynski, Larry Persico, Rick Pertile, Chris Petherick, Martin Pfeiffer, Bernice Popelka, James Popp, Tom Prestby, Helen Pugh, Bob Retko, Jay Reynolds, Nancy Richmond, Ryan Rickaby, Paul Risch, Riveredge Bird Club, Ronald Rohde, John Romano, Mike Sandstrom, Thomas Schaefer, Joseph Schaufenbuel, Darrell Schiff-



man, Paul Schilke, Thomas Schultz, Paul & Glenna Schwalbe, Carl Schwartz, Jim Schwarz, A Seiser, John Shenot, Greg Septon, Fawn & John Shillinglaw, Adam Sinkula, Dave Slager, Dale Snider, Joan Sommer, Charles Sontag, Bill Sonzogno, Robin Squier, Rowan Stamm, Alex Stark, Pete Steele, Jean Strelka, Aaron Stutz, Peder Svingen, Jack Swelstad, Andrea

Szymczak, Daryl Tessen, Steve Thiessen, Joel Trick, Joni Thoresen, Ken Uslabar, Tom Uttech, Andy Van Lanen, Tim Vargo, Jennifer Wenzel, Chris West, Gary Wiegel, David Willard, Todd Wilson, Marlyn Winter, John Winze, Eric Wood, Tom Wood, Geoffrey Yoerger, Quentin Yoerger, Judy Zarnoth, Norma Zehner, Constance Zdradzinski, Jeff Zuhlke.



Bay-breasted Warbler by Denny Malueg



*Veery by Denny Malueg*

## “By the Wayside”—Spring 2009

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*Some of the species documented this season  
as rare or uncommon include Brant, Cinnamon Teal, Barrow's  
Goldeneye, White-faced Ibis, Swainson's Hawk, Black-necked  
Stilt, Black-headed Gull, California Gull, Pomarine Jaeger,  
Chuck-will's-widow, Willow Flycatcher,  
Indigo Bunting, and Hoary Redpoll.*

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### BRANT (*Branta bernicla*)

**11 May 2009, D. C Everest Park, Marathon County**—I first noticed a small dark-looking goose through my binoculars. I set up my scope and saw that this was a Brant right away. Compared to the Canada Geese not too far away, this was a small goose that had a black head and beak, short black neck, and black breast when seen in the water. There was a white marking along both sides of the neck, just below the throat. The back color was a washed out gray until the folded primaries which were black. The sides were a grayish-white with several vertical grayish lines, especially back towards the rump. The rump area itself was whitish. When the bird was standing up on the muskrat house, I could see the dark legs. It kept to itself and didn't mingle with any of the other waterfowl present on the lake. Twice the bird took flight and flew to the south and out of sight, but would return a few minutes later to the same

area. Flight wingbeats were rapid.—  
*Dan Belter, Weston, WI.*

### CINNAMON TEAL (*Anas cyanoptera*)

**9 May 2009, ephemeral pond in Sauk County**—On a Sauk County Big Day with Quentin Yoerger and Paul Schilke, we made what was to be a quick stop at this pond to look for any shorebirds or ducks that we could put on the list for the day. After less than a minute of scanning the pond with binoculars, we all saw a bird about 50 meters away that shocked us. We immediately knew that the bird was a male Cinnamon Teal, swimming with a few Blue-winged Teal and Northern Shovelers. The whole belly, sides, neck, and head were a cinnamon/red color which turned to black near the rump. The feathers on the back were brown and black. We also noticed the red eye of the bird and the long shoveler-like black bill. After studying and admiring the bird for a couple minutes we noticed that the female next

to it looked different than the nearby female Blue-winged Teal. What caught our attention the most was that the profile of the head matched that of the male Cinnamon and not that of the Blue-wingeds near it. The head was longer and seemed to be more gradually sloped toward the bill than the Blue-wingeds' and the bill was heavy and long like that of the male Cinnamon. The shade of the brown was also warmer and sandier than that of the female Blue-wingeds. The bird's behavior seem to indicate that it was paired with the male Cinnamon as well because they seemed to be sticking very closely together. After studying this female for several minutes, we came to the conclusion that this was a pair of Cinnamon Teal.—*Tom Prestby, Wauwatosa, WI.*

**BARROW'S GOLDENEYE**  
(*Bucephala islandica*)

**8 March 2009, Lake Superior entry, Douglas County, Wisconsin**—An adult male Barrow's Goldeneye was observed from the breakwall at the tip of Wisconsin Point. Initially it was seen on the Minnesota side of the state line among a flock of 137 Common Goldeneyes and 31 Common Mergansers. The flock slowly drifted close to Wisconsin waters and may have crossed into the state before taking flight. All the waterfowl circled around the entry and were then definitely on the Wisconsin side of the state line. Based on plumage (especially the blunted tip of its shoulder spur) and my experience seeing this bird about a dozen times during the winter, I am confident that this is the same individual first found by me at Park Point 1 November 2008,

and seen throughout the rest of the winter and into early March in Duluth at Canal Park or along the Lakewalk.—*Peder H. Svingen, Duluth, Minnesota.*

**WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*)**

**9 May 2009, on Dike Road, Horicon Marsh NWR, Dodge County, Wisconsin**—A heron-type bird was seen feeding along the edge of an open area, sometimes moving out of sight in the cattails. It looked very dark at first, but in the scope a chestnut color was seen on the undersides, head, neck, and upper mantle. The lower mantle, wings, and tail were a glossy light green color. Size was between a Green and Great Blue Heron (slightly smaller than an American Bittern). The long down-curved heron bill was gray. The long legs were a very bright red, especially at the joints. Even at a distance, a thick white border was easily noted around the face and completely lining the back of the eye. The eye color could not be determined at that distance. Neither could the color in front of the eye, except that it was lighter, not darker, in tone. Later in flight the dark body, trailing legs, and long down-curved bill were very obvious. Glossy Ibis, the only other possibility, has duller red legs, browner bill, darker face, and a far less distinct light (but not white) border towards the eye.—*Dennis Gustafson, Muskego, WI.*

**SWAINSON'S HAWK**  
(*Buteo swainsoni*)

**4 April 2009, Stephen's Falls parking area at Governor Dodge State Park**—This was a large buteo with a

full, dark hood extending to the upper breast, contrasting with a light-colored body (no mottling observed on head, neck, or back). It had long pointed wings with dark flight feathers contrasting with whitish wing linings. It was first seen flying through the edge of a wooded area, then it came out over a large open field to the north, soaring and banking for several minutes, eventually coming from a few hundred feet away to within 40 yards or less at the closest view. Length of the observation was about 5 minutes.—*Peter Fissel, Madison, WI.*

**BLACK-NECKED STILT**  
(*Himantopus mexicanus*)

**8 and 9 May 2009, Dike Road, Horicon National Wildlife Refuge, Dodge County, Wisconsin**—The stilts (up to 3 birds) were easily identified, as soon as located, by their strong contrasting black and white pattern and extremely long-looking, very thin, bright red legs. The black extended from the front of the crown back down the neck, mantle, and wings to the primary tips. The white extended from the forehead (and a white area above the eye, somewhat circular) to the chin, up to the nape, down the front and sides of the neck, breast, belly, and undertail coverts. The long straight thin bill was black. The birds were picking food along the margin of the cattail mud flats. No other shorebirds were close in size but a Greater Yellowlegs was shorter, smaller, and heavier bodied.—*Dennis Gustafson, Muskego, WI.*

**26 April, 3 and 9 May 2009, Dodge County, Wisconsin**—These stilts were in the same location where they bred

last year so one hopes they will have success this year. These two large shorebirds had black backs, mantles, and crowns. The underparts were white as was the front of the face and throat. The rest of the face was black except for a large white circular spot above the eye. The legs were very long and pinkish red. The bill was long, thin, and black. In flight the tail was clean white and a white wedge extended forward over the rump. During my observations, there was a lot of movement from island to island in the pool north of Dike Road. Sometimes they were back in the cattails and difficult to see and other times they came so close to the road that binoculars were unnecessary. If one bird flew too far from the other, there was loud vocalization and soon one bird would fly in close to the other.—*Thomas Wood, Menomonee Falls, WI.*

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

**17 May 2009, dredge spoil bank at Manitowoc harbor, Manitowoc County**—This bird was with a group of sitting Bonaparte's Gulls but was slightly larger. It was smaller than nearby Ring-billed Gulls. The mantle was slightly lighter grey than the Bonaparte's Gulls. The legs were reddish-black and the bill was red-orange, straight not down-turned, and larger than the bill of the Bonaparte's Gulls. The hood was dark and looked the same as the Bonapartes' hoods with the white extending somewhat higher on the nape of the neck. There were very narrow white eye arcs. When the bird was sitting, no white was seen in the black primaries and there was a

sharp break between the primaries and the grey mantle. When the bird flew the dark primaries were easy to distinguish in the large flock of gulls.—*John Shillinglaw, Appleton, WI.*

**CALIFORNIA GULL**  
(*Larus californicus*)

**27 March 2009, Lake Michigan just north of State Line beach, Kenosha County, Wisconsin**—This bird was first found at the harbor at North Point Marina in Lake County, Illinois. It flew over the state line and into Wisconsin waters where it remained about 35 minutes before returning to Illinois. This was an adult California Gull with no streaking on the head/neck. The size of the bird was smaller than a Herring Gull but larger than a Ring-billed Gull. It had dark eyes and yellowish-green legs. The gape on the bird was typical California Gull with a red grin. The bill's gonydeal red spot had an anterior black band.—*Amar Ayyash, Frankfort, Illinois.*

**4 April 2009, on the dock at the Prairie Harbor Yacht Club, Kenosha, County, Wisconsin**—This was an adult gull, the size of a small [American] Herring Gull. It was definitely larger than any nearby Ring-billed Gull. Head, neck, body, and tail were clean white. Mantle color was noticeably darker than nearby Herring and Ring-billed Gulls, not so dark as to consider a Lesser Black-backed Gull. Primaries were black with white tips. One large white spot on p-10. I only had brief glimpses of open wings, but black on wing tips appeared to be more extensive than on Herring Gull, both on the top and bottom of the wings. Legs were orange-yellow down

to and including the feet. Bill was yellow with a red spot on the gonys and a black mark towards the tip of the bill. Red gape was visible at the base of the bill. The eye was very dark, looking to be almost black, with a noticeable red orbital ring. The bird spent the two and one half hours that it was observed preening, resting, and sleeping. It spent time both sitting and standing, the majority of the time it was standing. Only about 15 seconds were spent in the air circling the docks after a brief spat with some Herring Gulls. There were approximately 300 gulls at this location, numbers of Ring-billed, Thayers, Iceland, and Glaucous. Much to this observer's dismay, the bird never entered Illinois during the time of observation.—*Thomas Lally, Chicago, Illinois.*

**POMARINE JAEGER**  
(*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

**16 May 2009, Gull Bluff, Wisconsin Point, Douglas County, Wisconsin**—During a two hour-long "lake watch" from Gull Bluff, I spotted a Pomarine Jaeger chasing a Herring Gull approximately 500 yards north of my position. The winds were NW to WNW at 20 mph gusting to 30–35 mph and the temperature barely reached 40 degrees by noon. I had my spotting scope set up inside my vehicle in order to stay sheltered while counting gulls and terns streaming toward the Superior Entry at the tip of Wisconsin Point. This was an obvious jaeger based on its plumage and behavior. I watched it harass three different Herring Gulls, which allowed direct comparison of overall size and wingspan. The jaeger's wingspan was estimated

to be 15–20% less than the Herring Gull's wingspan; it was very similar to that of an average-sized Ring-billed Gull. The jaeger only harassed Herring Gulls even though hundreds of Ring-billed Gulls, dozens of Common Terns, and a few Caspian Terns were foraging along the beach.

As is typical for pomarinus, this bird showed a relatively broad inner wing and narrow outer wing. The overall impression was of a large, bulky jaeger with broad wings and powerful flight. It did not seem particularly agile while chasing the Herring Gulls and often "gave up" after a short pursuit. The bill was large-looking with a dark tip and paler base. The black cap included the lower face and jaw. The nape was paler than the rest of the upperparts (but I did not detect buff or yellow color on the nape or necksides). The mantle, rump, and tail were dark brown with no markings or contrast, except for whitish primary shafts on approximately six of the outermost primaries. The central pair of rectrices were thick and blunt-tipped and extended about 1½ inches beyond the tip of the tail and were not twisted. A complete breast band was well seen several times; it was dark brown and ragged-looking, but clearly extended across the entire breast. The lower breast and belly were whitish and the vent and undertail coverts were dark brown. I did not note whether or not there was barring along the flanks and never got good looks at the wing linings. There was an obvious and easily seen white flash along the bases of the underwing primaries. This individual was probably a third-year bird since its blunt-tipped central rectrices were not twisted and did not extend as far as

would be expected for an adult.—*Peder H. Svingen, Duluth, Minnesota.*

**CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW**  
**(*Caprimulgus carolinensis*)**

**31 May 2009, Staffon and Kirch Road, Jackson County, Wisconsin**—I stood in the same spot where I had heard this species last year. At 8:45 p.m. the silhouette of a large bird crossed the road from north to south and this bird landed in a very nearby tree. I heard a call unlike anything I have heard before and I can't remember it well enough to describe it. Then I heard a series of "cu, cu, cu, cu" calls not unlike a Yellow-billed Cuckoo or a trogon. It seemed unlikely that a cuckoo was in the same tree and calling after dark. I believe that the Chuck-will's-widow was making this call, even though I cannot find it described as I heard it in either A. C. Bent or Sibley. I suppose we all hear things differently and this could be the froglike croak they describe. These unusual sounds quickly ended and then for the next thirty minutes the expected four syllable call was given loudly and with only brief cessations. The song seemed to rise in pitch from the first to third syllable "chuck will wi" with the emphasis on the "wi" and then dropping down for "dow." Although there was no nearby Whip-poor-will for direct comparison, one was very close to the road on my departure route west on Staffon Road. This three syllable call was given much more rapidly and had emphasis on "whip" and "will," contrasting sharply with the call I had just listened to for about thirty minutes.—*Thomas C. Wood, Menomonee Falls, WI.*



**WILLOW FLYCATCHER**  
(*Empidonax traillii*)

**27 April 2009, Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin**—It was with a number of flycatchers and warblers on 27 April, which I know is very early. A small *Empidonax* flycatcher was observed snagging insects in a clearing near a pond where Willow Flycatchers nest in summer. I assumed at first that it was a Least Flycatcher which I had seen a few days earlier. Upon closer inspection, I noted that it had almost no eye ring, very unlike the Least. Also, the bill was a little larger and the primaries extended farther out. I was trying to decide between an Alder and a Willow Flycatcher when it gave a soft "whit" call note, very different from the "pip" call note of an Alder. Everything points to a Willow Flycatcher.—*Dennis Gustafson, Muskego, WI.*

**INDIGO BUNTING**  
(*Passerina cyanea*)

**18 March 2009, Glendale, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin**—I observed this bird feeding on the ground with the juncos; it appeared the same size as they were. It was solid light brown on the back with a black tail, light-colored seed-eating bill, large blue patch on each side of the breast, back eye with no markings around it, and a pale breast with tan and blue spots giving a mottled effect. The chin was light with a few dark streaks and an almost imperceptible cheek patch. I could find no other similar species and consider this bird to be in the molting stage. I've seen Indigo Buntings every spring come through the back yard, but in May, not March.

At that time they are in full spring plumage and feed at the birdfeeders six feet off the ground. I'm reporting this because an Indigo Bunting arriving here in March is earlier than normal.—*Bernice Popelka, Glendale, WI.*

**HOARY REDPOLL**  
(*Acanthis hornemanni*)

**8 March 2009, Manitowoc County, Wisconsin**—The bird was noticeably lighter than other redpolls seen during the same time period, and also noticeably lighter than the many Pine Siskins regularly present at my feeders. My attention was drawn to this bird by its lighter color and chunky appearance. This bird had a small bill in comparison to other redpolls seen. The area near the face had a noticeable brownish cast, which also stood out when the bird was close. I had seen what was possibly the same bird for more than a week, but it never stayed long and was very nervous, offering little opportunity for photos. On 8 March, we had heavy snow falling during the period the bird was observed, which seemed to motivate it to stay and feed heavily. This was the first time I had a good look at the undersides, which appeared nearly unmarked in the lower abdomen and undertail coverts. The rump was also difficult to see, but appeared to be unmarked or nearly so. The streaking on the sides of the bird was medium to light. The bird was fairly flighty and easily displaced at the feeders by aggressive Pine Siskins. When flushed from the feeder, the bird sat in a nearby tree near the Pine Siskins. Photos were taken and posted at my pBase web site: <http://www.pbase.com/>

/jtrick/hoary-redpoll.—*Joel Trick, Maribel, WI.*

**4 April 2009, Polar, Langlade County, Wisconsin**—This bird was observed with Common Redpolls, Pine Siskin, Purple Finch, and Dark-eyed Juncos. It was a substantially lighter colored bird than the flocks of Common Redpolls present daily throughout the winter. It was a small finch streaked white and grey/ brown. It had a red cap on the forehead, black just above and below the tiny, yellow bill. Its face and neck were very finely streaked with brown/grey and the belly and central breast were unstreaked, clean white. There were sparse, very fine streaks on the sides

and no streaks at all on the undertail coverts. The legs were black. Compared to the Common Redpolls this bird's tiny yellow bill looked pushed into the face, there was less black on the face, especially under the chin, the red cap was a bit smaller, and the upper back and scapulars had more white than the Common Redpolls. The feathers on the primaries had broader white edges and the overall shape of the bird was fluffier and rounder, not as long bodied. I was not able to see the rump. There was no red or pink wash on the chest and I concluded this was a female Hoary Redpoll.—*Nancy Richmond, Polar, WI.*



Dickcissel by Denny Malueg



Ovenbird *by Denny Malueg*

## 50 Years Ago in *The Passenger Pigeon*

The spring issue presented a few new records for Wisconsin. Before 1959 the only known breeding records for Le Conte's Sparrow were from Oconto County. William Southern reports finding Le Conte's during June 1959 at Crex Meadows Wildlife Area in Burnett County. During the 1995-2000 Atlas field seasons, the species was confirmed as a breeder in 9 counties and was detected as a probable breeder in 10 counties.

The first nest of a Boreal Chickadee was documented near the Pine River in Forest County by Martha and Roy Lound in June 1959. The parents were feeding young in a nesting cavity 10-feet-up in a dead white paper birch stub. Boreals were confirmed during the Atlas in 6 counties, including Forest.

A Black-throated Sparrow appeared at a Madison feeder on December 1959 and remained in the area until April 22, 1960. The species also was sighted in Illinois just south of the Wisconsin border in May 1959 and another was seen in Massachusetts in November.

The Field Notes section noted that no nest of the Evening Grosbeak had ever been found in Wisconsin and that finding the first nest would be a worthy goal for some birder to attain. [This worthy goal was attained in 1964 when the first nest found in the state was reported in Menominee County by Reinhold Link (Robbins, Wisconsin Birdlife, 1991).]

In another action of historical interest, during the morning registration for the 1960 WSO convention in Adams, the Wisconsin Chapter of the Nature Conservancy was organized and elected Paul Olson of Madison as its first chairman.

*Excerpt from Vol. 22(1), 1960 by WSO Historian Noel J. Cutright, 3352 Knollwood Road, West Bend, WI 53095. h. 262 .675. 2443, w. 262. 268. 3617, noel.cutright@we-energies.com.*



*Connecticut Warbler by Denny Malueg*

# Wisconsin May Counts—2009

*Jim Frank*

*10347 W. Darnel Avenue  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53224  
414. 354. 2594  
jcfbirdr@yahoo.com*

The 9 May Counts in 2009 are an average level of participation of the past 10 years, but about half of what was normal 15 years ago. Leading the way in participation as usual was Winnebago with 26 participants, followed by Marathon with 20. Winnebago and Milwaukee/Ozaukee tied for the longest lists with 174 species each, followed by last year's leader, Oconto, with 163 (Table 1).

The total species list of 234 compares with an average of 244 over the previous 20 years, paling in comparison with the record high of four years ago, 261. The 21 year total for species

remains at 297. An Eared Grebe was found on a May Count for the 4<sup>th</sup> time in the past 21 years, as were an Avocet and a Stilt Sandpiper. Franklin's Gull appeared for the 5<sup>th</sup> time and Iceland Gull for the 6<sup>th</sup> time (actually seen on 2 counts this year), although this was the 8<sup>th</sup> year for Summer Tanager in the past 21 years—unexpectedly three different counts found them (Table 2).

Missing from the tallies this year were Golden-crowned Kinglet, Tufted Titmouse, Willet, Common Moorhen, and Fox Sparrow.

Table 1. The 2009 Wisconsin May Counts.

Count	Date	Time	Sky	Wind	Temp	Observ.	Species
Winnebago	5/10	05:00–20:00	Clo.	NW 12	44–52	26	174
Bayfield	5/29	05:30–20:30	Fair	NW 12	58–68	17	131
Oconto	5/21	03:15–22:15	Pt Clo.	SW 10	58–72	11	163
Marathon	5/09	04:00–19:00		? 8	47–50	20	148
Waupaca	5/17	04:30–21:30	Fair	W 8	31–62	8	150
Oconomowoc	5/14		Pt.Clo.		54–64	11	94
Sheboygan	5/16	05:00–17:00	Pt Clo.	W 25		15	145
Milwaukee/Ozaukee	5/16		Pt Clo.	NW 25	50–59	12	174
Kenosha	5/09	05:00–19:00	Clo.	SW20	60–65	2	113

Table 2. Species of note for Wisconsin May Counts 2009.

Species	Count(s) recorded
Trumpeter Swan	Waupaca, Marathon
Tundra Swan	Kenosha
American Wigeon	Winnebago
American Black Duck	Waupaca, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Canvasback	Winnebago
Bufflehead	Winnebago
Common Goldeneye	Winnebago, Bayfield
Northern Bobwhite	Kenosha
Horned Grebe	Winnebago
Red-necked Grebe	Winnebago
Eared Grebe	Sheboygan
Least Bittern	Winnebago, Oconto
Cattle Egret	Winnebago
Red-shouldered Hawk	Oconto, Waupaca, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Rough-legged Hawk	Winnebago, Marathon
Merlin	Bayfield, Waupaca, Marathon
King Rail	Oconto
American Golden-Plover	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
American Avocet	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Hudsonian Godwit	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Marbled Godwit	Bayfield
Ruddy Turnstone	Kenosha, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
White-rumped Sandpiper	Oconto
Silt Sandpiper	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Wilson's Phalarope	Winnebago, Sheboygan, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Franklin's Gull	Winnebago
Thayer's Gull	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Iceland Gull	Sheboygan, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Great Black-backed Gull	Sheboygan
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Black-billed Cuckoo	Waupaca, Milwaukee/Ozaukee, Oconto
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Marathon
Common Nighthawk	Winnebago, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Whip-poor-will	Bayfield, Oconto, Waupaca
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Oconto, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Acadian Flycatcher	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Philadelphia Vireo	Oconto, Kenosha, Oconomowoc, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Carolina Wren	Winnebago
American Pipit	Winnebago, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Orange-crowned Warbler	Sheboygan, Winnebago, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Cerulean Warbler	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Prothonotary Warbler	Oconto, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Kentucky Warbler	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Connecticut Warbler	Winnebago
Hooded Warbler	Sheboygan, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
American Tree Sparrow	Bayfield, Oconto, Marathon
Grasshopper Sparrow	Sheboygan, Waupaca, Marathon
Henslow's Sparrow	Milwaukee/Ozaukee, Oconto
Le Conte's Sparrow	Bayfield, Oconto
Dark-eyed Junco	Bayfield, Winnebago, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Lapland Longspur	Winnebago
Summer Tanager	Milwaukee/Ozaukee, Waupaca, Sheboygan
Western Meadowlark	Waupaca, Oconto
Rusty Blackbird	Marathon
Evening Grosbeak	Oconto



# WSO Records Committee Report: Spring 2009

*Jim Frank*

*10347 W. Darnel Avenue  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53224  
414. 354. 2594  
jcfbirddr@yahoo.com*

**T**he WSO Records Committee reviewed 51 records of 28 species for the spring season, accepting 34 of them. Five additional previous season reports were evaluated and four of those were accepted.

Observers were notified of the committee's decisions by postcard in the instance of accepted records and by personal letter in the case of records not accepted.

## ACCEPTED RECORDS

### **Brant—**

#2009-016 Marathon Co., 11 May 2009, Belter (photo), Schaufenbuel.

This goose was smaller than the adjacent Canada Geese, with a black head, neck, and upper breast. There was a white patch on the side of the upper neck, below the throat. The back and sides were grayish, the sides exhibiting several darker gray "vertical" lines. The primaries and legs were also reported to be dark in color.

### **Cinnamon Teal—**

#2009-017 Sauk Co., 9 May 2009, Prestby.

This observer reported a duck of overall chestnut/cinnamon brown color with buffy back feathers edged in black. The black bill was slightly larger than that of a Blue-winged Teal, somewhat Shoveler-like. The crown, tail, and rear flanks were also black. The light blue wing patch was also evident. Finally, an orange-red eye was reported. Of note is the accompanying female duck was a "warmer, sandier" brown than nearby female Blue-winged Teal. More significantly, the slightly elongated head profile and longer bill matched the structure of the male Cinnamon Teal. Thus a pair of Cinnamon Teal is presumed to have been present.

### **White-faced Ibis—**

#2009-018 Dodge Co., 9 May 2009, Gustafson, Tessen; 1 May 2009, Franke (photo).

Slightly smaller than an American Bittern, this chestnut and glossy

green-bodied bird had a long, down-curved gray bill. Also evident were bright red legs, a thick white border entirely surrounding the facial skin.

**Tri-colored Heron—**

#2009–045 Dodge Co., 28 April 2009, Bartholomai (photo).

This photo was of a medium-sized heron in flight, with short, trailing yellow-green legs. The purplish-gray head, neck, and upper breast were apparent, contrasting with the white lower breast, belly, and underwing linings.

**Swainson's Hawk—**

#2009–019 Iowa Co., 4 April 2009, Fisel.

#2009–046 Polk Co., 21 May 2009, Schultz (photo-adult).

#2009–049 21 May 2009, Wenzel (photo-immature).

The Iowa Co. bird was a large buteo having a dark head with the dark coloration extending down onto the upper breast. This dark plumage was not mottled with lighter color on the head and upper back as would be expected on a Red-tailed Hawk. The white lower breast and belly did not exhibit any of the breast band streaking, again anticipated on a Red-tailed Hawk. In flight, the white coverts contrasted with the darker primaries and secondaries.

The adult photo exhibited the buteo shape, longer wings, upper breast darkness, and the dark flight feathers contrasting with the lighter underwing coverts.

The immature photo was of a perched bird. The primary extension beyond the tail was evident, as was the white forehead, and broken brown upper breast band.

**Black-necked Stilt—**

#2009–028 Columbia Co., 25 April 2009, Graham (photo).

#2009–029 Dodge Co., 26 April, 3, 9 May 2009, T. Wood.

#2009–029 Dodge Co., 8, 9 May 2009, Gustafson.

#2009–029 Dodge Co., 17 May 2009, Franke (photo).

These slender shorebirds were a contrast of black head, back of neck, wings, and back with a white throat, ventral neck, breast, and belly. The long legs were reddish-pink and the straight thin bill was black.

As many as three birds were reported in the Dodge Co. reports.

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper—**

#2009–027 Adams Co., 30 May 2009, Anich (photo), Tessen.

A relatively small, entirely buff-colored shorebird was evident. Darker, scaly markings were apparent on the back and coverts. The legs were yellow.

**Pomarine Jaeger—**

#2009–021 Douglas Co., 17 May 2009, Svingen.

This adult jaeger was considered large and bulky, but smaller than Herring Gulls it was seen to harass. The inner portion of the wings was rather wide, the outer portion narrower. The bill was considered large, exhibiting a dark tip, but lighter proximal portion. The cap was dark and extended down onto the face. The nape was paler than the cap or back. A complete dark, but "ragged" breast band was evident. The mantle and tail were dark brown, but the upper surface of the primaries did show about 6 white shafts to the outer primaries. The central retrices extended an inch or two

beyond the rest of the tail and were blunt-tipped, but not twisted.

This Wisconsin's second spring record of a Pomarine Jaeger.

**Black-headed Gull—**

#2009–022 Manitowoc Co., 17 May 2009, Shillinglaw.

Slightly larger than the associated Bonaparte's Gulls, the legs on this gull were reddish-black, the mantle a shade lighter gray than the Bonaparte's, and the bill was red-orange. The dark hood appeared similar in color to that of the Bonaparte's, but it didn't fall as far down the back of the neck. Narrow white eyelids were noted and the black primary tips showed no white. The dark underprimaries were evident in flight.

**California Gull—**

#2009–024 Kenosha Co., 27 March 2009, Ayyash; 5 April 2009, Lally.

These reports indicated a gull with an unstreaked head, smaller than a Ring-billed, but close to the size of a Herring Gull. The mantle was a bit darker than the mantle color of the Ring-bills and Herrings, but nothing like the darkness of a Lesser Black-backed. The yellow-green legs and dark iris were seen. In addition, a red spot was noted on the gonydeal area, with a black band anterior to it.

**Chuck-will's-widow—**

#2009–031 Jackson Co., 11 May 2009, Otto, Otto; 31 May 2009, T. Wood.

This 4 syllable song had a rising pattern to the notes from the 'chuck', through the 'wills' and up to the 'wid,' with emphasis on that third note. The last note 'dow,' dropped down in

pitch and scale again. It was repeated almost without cessation.

**Willow Flycatcher—**

#2009–048 Waukesha Co., 27 April 2009, Gustafson.

An *Empidonax* flycatcher was observed to have a very minimal eyering relative to a Least Flycatcher, a longer bill than a Least Flycatcher, and a longer primary extension than a Least Flycatcher. The call note was characterized as a "whit" rather than the "pip" of an Alder Flycatcher.

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher—**

#2009–030 Milwaukee Co., 5 May 2009, Milwaukee Co. (photo).

The pale head and breast, dark wings, and buffy flank patch were evident.

**Prairie Warbler—**

#2009–052 Ozaukee Co., 27 April 2009, Schaefer.

This warbler was at first thought to be a Yellow Warbler, but although the yellow face and breast with a yellow-green back did suggest this, the observer did notice light yellow wingbars, black streaks on the flanks, and a black line through the eye as well as a black crescent below the eye.

This is the third earliest spring date for the state, falling 2 days short of the record..

**Western Tanager—**

#2009–046 Juneau Co., 27 April 2009, Buehlman (photo).

#2009–053 Milwaukee Co., 8 May 2009, Lubahn (photo).

The striking yellow body, black wings, white wingbars, and red head

were evident as was the thicker bill of a tanager.

### **Indigo Bunting—**

#2009–036 Milwaukee Co., 18 March 2009, Popelka.

This brownish bird was similar in size to the juncos present. Its bill was light in color and indicated to be “a seed-eating” shape. What stood out on this bird were blue patches on each side of the breast, with scattered other blue feathers, and a dark tail.

This moulting pattern is one usually only caught at the tail end of the process as they arrive in Wisconsin in the spring. The early date suggests the possibility of an overwintering bird, perhaps difficult to detect until it exhibited a bit of “color.”

### **Painted Bunting—**

#2009–044 Door Co., 27 April 2009, (fide Lukes) (photo).

#2009–050 Sheboygan Co., 1 May 2009, (fide Prestby) (photo).

The underbody of the bird was red from the throat to the undertail coverts, as was the rump. The blue head was noted to have a red eyering and the upper back suggested light green in color.

Eight of Wisconsin’s 16 spring records fall between May 10–13. The only earlier record is a 23 April report.

### **Hoary Redpoll—**

#2009–006 Bayfield Co., 11 March 2009, Brady, Prestby.

#2009–039 Manitowoc Co., 8 March 2009, Trick.

#2009–043 Portage Co., 9 March 2009, Keyel.

#2009–040 Bayfield Co., 5 April 2009, Oksiuta.

#2009–041 Langlade Co., 4 April 2009, Richmond.

These reports were evaluated for five key points in Hoary Redpoll identification. The overall paleness of the plumage, a white, unmarked rump, minimally marked undertail coverts, minimally streaked flanks, and a smaller bill were important characteristics to report. Four of the five traits were looked for in accepting a report.

## **OLD RECORDS ACCEPTED**

### **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck—**

#2008–084 Brown Co., 17 November 2008, Mullen (photo); 27 November 2008, Wojtyla (photo).

This duck was thinner than an adjacent Mallard, had a black belly, a pink-orange bill, pink legs, a white wing patch, and a brown chest, back, and crown. The light gray face had a white eyering.

## **RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED**

### **Pacific Loon—**

#2009–067 Sheboygan Co., 30 March 2009.

Two loons were indicated not to be as large as a Common Loon, but no direct comparison to other species nor distance from the birds were given. The loons were dark above and white below and the neck color demarcation was not irregular as on a Common Loon.

No comparison to a Red-throated Loon was made with regard to its similar color pattern, nor was the bill’s size

and shape compared to a Red-throated Loon.

**Mississippi Kite—**

#2009–054 Milwaukee Co., 2 May 2009.

This bird was described as all gray with pointed wings, a dark, squared off tail, and black-tipped primaries. A relative size reference wasn't used; instead the bird was suggested to be 14 inches long.

A relative comparison in size is more useful than a precise 14 inches, which realistically isn't possible to use unless the bird is in hand and measurable. As this species is lacking in clearly different field marks, unless viewed from above, it is very useful to indicate the narrowness of the body, relatively longer tail, and narrowness of the wings. The entire outer wing might be more accurately described as black or dark, whereas "black-tipped primaries" is more expected terminology for a harrier or gull wing.

The lightness of the head relative to the gray of the rest of the body would be significant as well. If the wing was appropriately fanned the unexpectedly short first primary is an important notation to make.

Because these birds are not easy to describe in comparison to other species and when they are observed, the sightings are brief, too many of what are likely to be accurate identifications slip away.

**Broad-winged Hawk—**

#2009–020 Washington Co., 30 March 2009 (photo).

This photo was of a flock of reportedly hundreds of birds circling and drifting northward. The photo showed the birds to have pointed

wings, and a slight angle to their wing position both from a ventral aspect and from a head-on view. This wing shape is characteristic of gulls and not the flat, rounded wing contour of a buteo like a Broad-winged Hawk. These were assumed to be a flock of Ring-billed Gulls, although the species could not be discerned from the photo supplied.

Records of Broad-winged Hawks in Wisconsin prior to 15 April would be of significant interest to the Records Committee.

**Prairie Falcon—**

#2009–023 Rock Co., 4 April 2009.

This brief, in-flight observation was of a hawk perhaps less than ½ mile away—near a couple of high-flying unidentifiable buteos. It was felt to be smaller and slimmer than what were presumed to be Red-shouldered Hawks. The wings were "slightly rounded," "more than expected for a falcon." Dark axillaries were reported in contrast to light upper coverts and flight feathers. No color tones were indicated for any of the plumage.

With the distance and presumed backlighting of this bird in a sunny sky, the dark axillaries may not be as easy to presume as one would like them to be. The size assumption that this bird was smaller and slimmer than the possible "Red-shouldered Hawks" doesn't match the Prairie Falcon identification well. The length and width dimensions are very similar, but the slimness could deceive an observer into seeing the falcon to be smaller in these dimensions. The distance, backlighting, and comparison to unidentified hawks, makes it a tenuous identification when relying on suspect dark axillaries.

**Western Sandpiper—**

#2009–025 Winnebago Co., 16 May 2009.

#2009–026 Calumet Co., 19 May 2009.

Each report simply described the bird as a “peep,” having black legs, a gray body, a “marked” breast, along with a slightly drooped bill. Also noted was “reddish” coloration on the crown and scapulars.

Relative size and shape comparisons to other shorebirds were not reported. Rump pattern was not noted. Similar species such as Semipalmated Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, and even Dunlin weren’t referenced/eliminated in the report.

**Slaty-backed Gull—**

#2008–091 Sheboygan Co., 16 March 2009.

#2009–047 Manitowoc Co., 29 March 2009.

Both of these birds were reported to have a darker gray mantle, in line with that of a Lesser Black-backed Gull. Also noted were a large white tertial crescent and pink legs. Of confusion is the “huge-thick bill” or “huge, disproportionately large bill” on the Manitowoc bird. This doesn’t seem consistent with a Slaty-backed Gull in which the bill is similar to a Herring Gull in length and perhaps slightly thicker toward the tip. The observers did mention “four or five white spots” in the wing, but no indication of which feathers and in what position on those feathers these spots were observed was provided.

With more extensive description of the wings of these birds, there would be less concern about the identities. With some question about potential hybridization of Lesser Black-backed Gulls with Herring Gulls, careful

descriptions of the wings of all suspected Slaty-backed Gulls is warranted.

**Chuck-will’s-widow—**

#2009–031 Jackson Co., 11 May 2009.

The limited description of the song was of a bird singing ‘chuck-wills-widow.’ Description of the number of syllables, the emphasis on appropriate syllables, and rising or falling notes are useful in conveying a song without the use of recordings.

**Kirtland’s Warbler—**

#2009–032 Adams Co., 30 May 2009.

A warbler with a gray back, yellow breast and throat, streaking on the sides, white eyering and faint white wingbars was documented. The song was characterized as “some notes, then whistles.”

The brevity of the description doesn’t address the possibility of a Canada or Magnolia Warbler. The species was almost certainly correctly identified, but the description isn’t reflective of that.

**Western Tanager—**

#2009–033 Waukesha Co., 19–21 May 2009.

The description is limited to a yellow body, black wings, and red head, without referencing the body size or bill shape of the bird. Although the male Western Tanager may be difficult to misidentify, the description doesn’t supply enough to adequately eliminate a Cape May Warbler or an oriole.

**Blue Grosbeak—**

#2009–034 Columbia Co., 18 May 2009.

#2009–035 Sauk Co., 28 May 2009.

The Columbia Co. bird flew in front of a moving vehicle, then very briefly perched. Though the anticipated larger size, blue body, "large bill," and chestnut wingbars were all reported, the brevity of the sighting and lack of comparison to an Indigo Bunting fall short of acceptance.

The second report is of a bird presumed, but not at all indicated to be distant to the observer. Again, the above field marks were reported, but again no comparison to an Indigo Bunting was made. It is worth noting that first year Indigo Buntings can exhibit brown in their wings, thus a full look at the bird and other characteristics is essential. The shape as well as the size of the bill are useful traits to note as are the black lores.

#### **Scott's Oriole—**

#2009-037) Portage Co., 8 May 2009 (photo).

A photograph of an oriole at a nectar feeder was reviewed. The head, back, wings, and tail were black with a yellow breast and flank. White wing bars were also evident. The sides of the tail and tip of the tail were yellow.

The tail pattern was not consistent with the black tail of a Scott's Oriole, but was consistent with the pattern of a Baltimore Oriole. Some individual Baltimore Orioles are yellow rather than orange. This report is a good example of the importance of looking at the entire bird, not just the basic coloration pattern. The photograph as well as the brief written information demonstrated the important tail pattern information, but the overall color of the bird misled the initial identifi-

cation. Without that tail pattern, determining the identity of this bird would not have been possible.

#### **Chaffinch—**

#2009-038 Racine Co., 4 April 2009.

This slightly larger than a goldfinch-sized finch had a chestnut face and throat with a pale bill. The breast was buffy, the belly white, the rest of the head grayish. The wings were blackish with a white band across them.

This bird is assumed to be an escaped cage bird, along with numerous other European species reported in the past ten years in southeastern Wisconsin.

#### **Hoary Redpoll—**

#2009-042 Portage Co., 9 March 2009.

#2009-043 March 2009.

The first bird was lighter in color than the Commons with a smaller bill. The undertail coverts, rump and flanks were not specifically characterized.

The second redpoll was noted to have minimal streaking on the flanks, white undertail coverts, and overall light coloration; but did not indicate the bill size nor rump color.

#### **OLD RECORD NOT ACCEPTED**

#### **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck—**

#2008-084 Brown Co., 14-22 November 2008.

No description of the bird was presented; only an indication that it was seen and it had a red bill and "unique" markings.



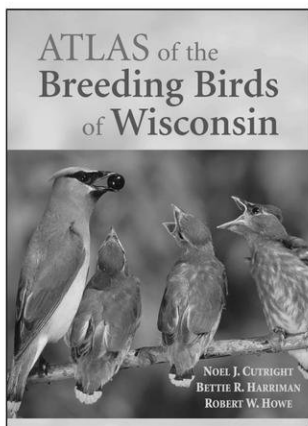
## About the Artists

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**Dennis Malueg** is an enthusiastic amateur bird and wildlife photographer who travels Wisconsin in search of his

subjects, as well as, working from his own “studio”—his backyard, prairie, and forest in Waushara County.

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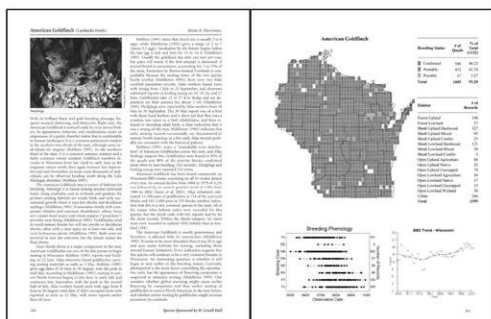
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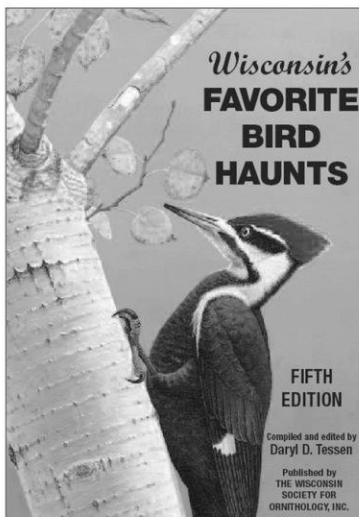
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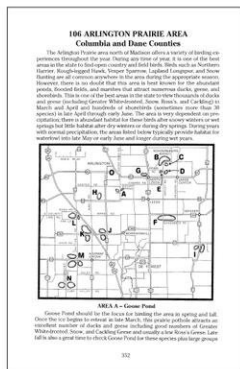
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### OFFICERS (2008–2009)

- President\*** Jesse Peterson, 726 Bear Claw Way, Apt. 311, Madison, WI 53717-2769; 608. 347. 5463; peterson.jesse@tds.net
- Vice President\*** Thomas R. Schultz, N6104 Honeysuckle Lane, Green Lake, WI 54941-9609; 920. 294. 3021; trschultz@centurytel.net
- Secretary\*** Jane A. Dennis, 138 S. Franklin Avenue, Madison, WI 53705-5248; 608. 231. 1741; jadennis@facstaff.wisc.edu
- Treasurer\*** Christine Reel, 2022 Sherryl Lane, Waukesha, WI 53188-3142; 262. 844. 8187; christinereel2@gmail.com
- Editors\*** Bettie and Neil Harriman, 5188 Bittersweet Lane, Oshkosh, WI 54901-9753; 920. 233. 1973; bettie@new.rr.com; harriman@uwosh.edu

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS (2008–2009)

- Annual Conventions** Scott Baughman, 3043 Rolling Meadows Drive, Sheboygan, WI 53083-8107; 920. 457. 5574; baughman@charter.net
- Awards\*** Daryl D. Tessen, 3118 N. Oneida Street, Appleton, WI 54911; 920. 735. 9903; bhaunts@sbcglobal.net
- Bird Reports Coordinator\*** Randy Hoffman, 305 Fifth Street, Waunakee, WI 53597; 608. 849. 4502; ecurlew@hotmail.com
- Badger Birder\*** Mary Uttech, 4305 Hwy. O, Saukville, WI 53080; 262. 675. 6482; muttech@asq.org
- Bookstore\*** Margaret Jones, N9162 Woodridge Court, East Troy, WI 53120-1620; 262. 594. 2021; wsobookstore@hotmail.com
- Conservation\*** William P. Mueller, 1242 S. 45th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53214; 414. 643. 7279; iltlawas@earthlink.net
- Education\*** Mariette Nowak, N9053 Swift Lake Road, East Troy, WI 53120; 262. 642. 2352; mmmnowak@wi.rr.com
- Field Trips\*** Thomas R. Schultz, N6104 Honeysuckle Lane, Green Lake, WI 54941-9609; 920. 294. 3021; trschultz@centurytel.net; and Jeffrey L. Baughman, W2640 Middle Road, Campbell-sport, WI 53010; 920. 477. 2442; jbaughman@csd.k12.wi.us
- File Keeper** Thomas C. Erdman, Richter Museum of Natural History, MAC 212, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, 2420 Nicolet Drive, Green Bay, WI 54911-7001
- Historian\*** Noel J. Cutright, 3352 Knollwood Road, West Bend, WI 53095-9414; h. 262. 675. 2443, w. 262. 268. 3617; Noel.Cutright@we-energies.com
- Honey Creek\*** Levi Wood, 4222 Mohawk Drive, Madison, WI 53711-3723; 608. 277. 7959; woodlevi@aol.com
- Hotline (262. 784. 4032)** Mark Korducki, 16290 W. Crescent Drive, New Berlin, WI 53151; 262. 784. 2712; korducki@earthlink.net
- Legal Counsel** David L. Kinnamon, 9507 N. Wakefield Court, Bayside, WI 53217-1245; 414. 277. 5000
- Membership\*** Jesse Peterson, 726 Bear Claw Way, Apt. 311, Madison, WI 53717-2769; 608. 347. 5463; peterson.jesse@tds.net
- Publicity\*** Ursula C. (Sandy) Petersen, P.O. Box 607, Stoughton, WI 53589; buboarcto@aol.com
- Records\*** Jim Frank, 10347 W. Darnel Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53224; 414. 354. 2594; jcfbirdr@yahoo.com
- Records Committee Archivists** John Idzikowski, 2558 S. Delaware Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207-1908; 414. 744. 4818; idzikoj@uwm.edu; and Brian Boldt, 1126 E. Pleasant Street #201, Milwaukee, WI 53202; 414. 225. 2543; bboldt@excelcomm.com
- Research\*** Sheldon J. Cooper, Department of Biology and Microbiology, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, 800 Algoma Boulevard, Oshkosh, WI 54901; 920. 424. 7091; cooper@uwosh.edu
- Scholarships and Grants\*** Michael John Jaeger, 1052 E. Gorham Street, Madison, WI 53703; 608. 335. 2546; jaegermj@charter.net
- Webmaster\*** Lennie Lichter, 24703 Lake Road, Cashton, WI 54619; 608. 269. 5847; lennieandmarie@yahoo.com
- Youth Education Coordinator\*** Barbara Duerksen, 17494 Merry Hill Road, Richland Center, WI 53581; 608. 538. 3820; bduerksen@mwt.net

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