The passenger pigeon. Vol. 67, No. 4 Winter 2005

Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Winter 2005

The Passenger PIGEON

Vol 67, No. 4 • Winter 2005

Journal of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology

THE *PASSENGER PIGEON* Vol. 67 No. 4 Winter 2005

EDITORS
Bettie R. and Neil A. Harriman
5188 Bittersweet Lane
Oshkosh, WI 54901
920. 233. 1973
bettie@vbe.com
harriman@uwosh.edu

BIRD REPORTS COORDINATOR
Randy Hoffman
305 Fifth Street
Waunakee, WI 53597
608. 849. 4502
ecurlew@hotmail.com

ASSISTANT EDITOR (Art)
David Kuecherer
726 Harvard Drive
Neenah, WI 54956
920. 725. 7915
dkuecherer@new.rr.com

FIELD NOTE COMPILER (Spring)
Karl H. David
6880 Beechnut Drive
Racine, WI 53402
david@msoe.edu

FIELD NOTE COMPILER (Summer)
Thomas K. Soulen
1725 West Eldridge Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55113
651. 631. 2069

FIELD NOTE COMPILER (Autumn)
Mark S. Peterson
1309 Brookside Parkway
Bartlesville, OK 74006
918. 331. 3884

FIELD NOTE COMPILER (Winter)
Kenneth I. Lange
1530 East Street
Baraboo, WI 53913
608. 356. 3658

The Passenger Pigeon (ISSN 0031-2703) is published quarterly (Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter) by The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, 2022 Sherryl Lane, Waukesha, WI 53188. Periodicals Postage Paid at Hartland, WI and at additional mailing offices, including Lawrence, KS 66044. Subscription rates are $25 domestic; $30 foreign. Back issues may be obtained for $8 each. "POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Passenger Pigeon*, Jesse Peterson, 810 Ganser Drive, Waunakee, WI 53597."

Membership rates per year are: Individual, $30; Family, $35; Sustaining, $75; Library, (*Passenger Pigeon* only) $25. Life membership (Single), $600; Life (Couple), $700; Patron, $1,000 are one time payments. Contact Jesse Peterson, Membership Chair, 810 Ganser Drive, Waunakee, WI 53597 with membership and mailing related questions.

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

Front Cover: Male Eastern Bluebird photographed by Jack Bartholmai. The first two articles in this issue will tell you more about this lovely species.

Birding Wisconsin in 2006

Where are your favorite places to bird in Wisconsin? Where are the best places to bird in Wisconsin and when should I go? These and similar questions are asked by birders annually, although with decreasing fuel supplies and the rising cost of fuel, we birders may need to investigate these questions more deeply. We may need to plan our outings more thoroughly to optimize our birding experiences, as well as conserve fuel, help reduce emissions, and save money. I challenge each of you to sit back and analyze how you might spend the New Year birding. Here are some suggestions to consider . . .

Build a list of primary birding locations, within walking distance, around your local haunts. Make frequent walks around your yard, neighborhood, or park. Walk some the rural roads in your area, as well as ask permission to hike some of the private woodlots, grasslands, and wetlands nearby. One thing I have been doing in recent years is starting my drive to work a half-hour to an hour earlier. I've created a systematic route that allows me to bird several different habitats along my five-mile drive to work.

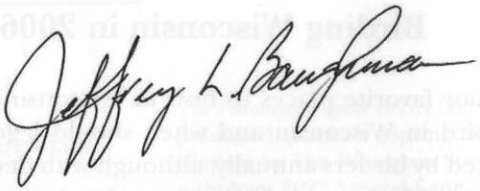
Buddy up. Find other birders, in your area, with whom you can share birding trips. This way you are able to reduce the amount of fuel used and to share the cost of the outing as well. Partners like this can share past experiences and their knowledge of the local avifauna, and it often makes the experience more productive as well.

If you're not an active member of a local bird club or group you may consider becoming one. Often there are organized field trips, to local birding areas, where members can car pool. It's often a great opportunity to learn regional hotspots, share your own favorite birding locations, and learn from the group's knowledge and experiences. These kinds of organizations often coordinate local or regional bird counts as well. Team up with them for Christmas Bird Counts, Migratory Bird Counts, and May Day Counts.

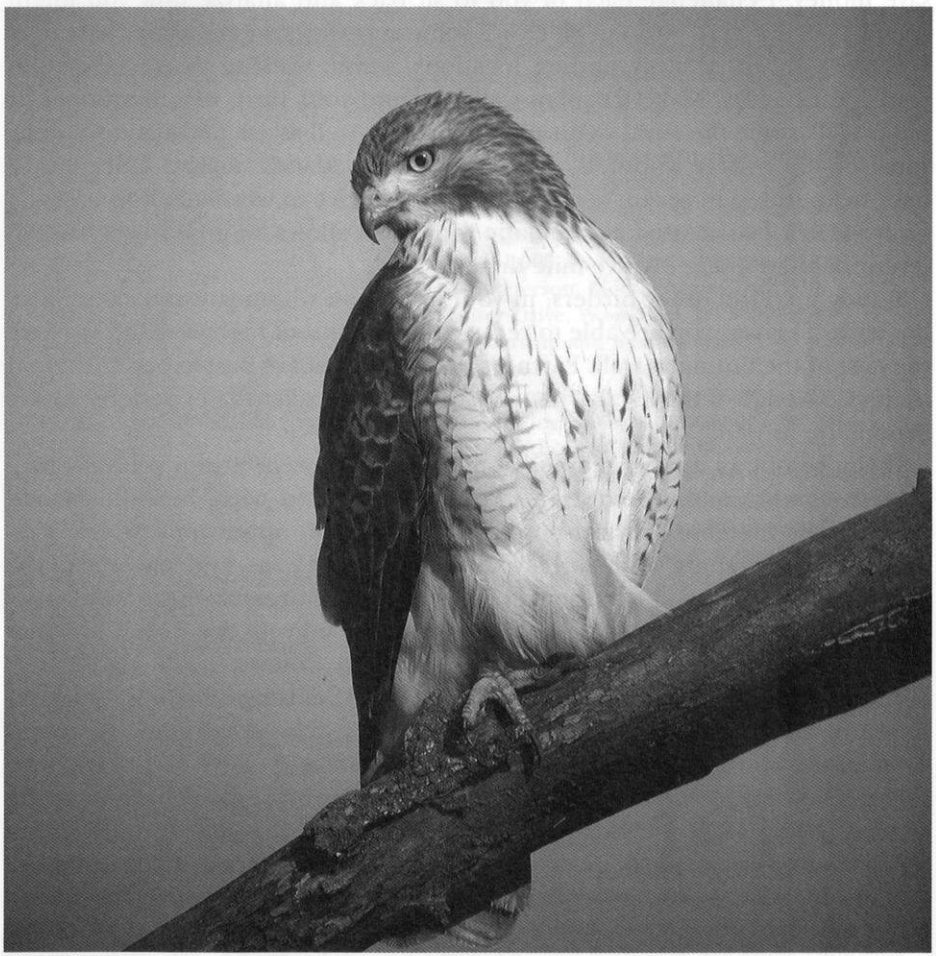
Attend WSO field trips. Just last year the WSO field trips, including the annual convention, recorded over 225 species. These trips are organized around some of the best birding locations around the state and at the best times to be there. They are attended by some of the most knowledgeable birders in the state, allowing all participants to ask questions, and thus benefit all who attend. We encourage participants to car pool to these events, and once at the starting location (when appropriate), we encourage car pooling during the event as well.

These are just a few suggestions for making your birding year more oriented toward fuel conservation, and still have it remain productive. I encourage all of you to think of additional ways to conserve fuel while enjoying our hobby. We need to think "quality" birding rather than "quantity" birding. I'm not sug-

gesting that you not chase the annual rare vagrants, but rather that you try to team up with others when you do.



President



Red-tailed Hawk seen near the Mississippi River by Gary Krogman.

Publication 2006

Those who attended the WSO business meeting during the 2005 Convention last May, heard two of the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas book editors (Noel Cutright and me) tell you that we were expecting the book to be ready by spring of 2006. Unfortunately, during this summer, the editors (the third editor is Robert Howe) learned that the University of Wisconsin - Press had pushed the date of publication to spring of 2007 (maybe). The three editors were not willing to wait that long for this book to reach Wisconsin's birding community. At the end of August, we retrieved the manuscript (and money) from UW-Press, and the WSO will become the publisher.

For the 10 weeks from the beginning of September until mid-November, the three editors and Tom Schultz, Photo Editor, spent many hours checking, rechecking, and checking yet again all text, graphics, and photos. Additional help was provided by some of the other photographers, Christine Reel (on money related aspects), Jennifer Davis, and the other half of *The Passenger Pigeon* editing team, Neil Harriman. I have no idea how many hours were spent during this time, but on 14 November 2005, the entire manuscript was sent to the company that will do page design and typeset the book. By the time you are reading this, we anticipate that the editors will have completed checking page proofs, and the book will be on its way to a printer.

It is the intention, and hope, of the three editors that you will have the finished *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Wisconsin*, all 600+ full-color pages, in your hands no later than mid-summer 2006. And maybe by the time you are reading this, information about purchasing the book will be reaching you shortly. Thanks for waiting so patiently. The Editors certainly believe the book will be all you expected and more.

Bettie and Neil Harriman, Editors

Gray Jay portrait by Dennis Kuecherer.

2005 Results of Aldo Leopold Audubon Society's Eastern Bluebird Study

Kent D. Hall

200 Pine Bluff Road
Stevens Point, Wisconsin 54481
kentsue@charter.net

In 2002, the Aldo Leopold Audubon Society (ALAS) decided to join the effort to restore the Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) to some semblance of its historic population. According to Breeding Bird Surveys compiled by the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, in Laurel, Maryland, the bluebird was in real trouble in Wisconsin from 1966–79 when it was losing 10.5% of its population each year (Table 1; www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs).

Alarmed with these trends, concerned citizens formed the North American Bluebird Society (NABS) and the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin. During the time period of 1980–2004, thousands of bluebird houses were built and monitored. As Table 1 shows, there has been a very positive trend of 3.9% increase per year in Wisconsin bluebird sightings over those 24 years, better than the 2.7% gain in North America during the same time period. This suggests that slightly over half of the population lost by 1979 has been rebuilt, partly due to the use of artificial nest box cavities. The Eastern Bluebird is gradually joining the Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Osprey and other bird species in their population recoveries.

ALAS members are proud to be a part of the recovery effort of a species that brings so much pleasure to people and that is a vital part of our natural environment.

In 2005, the ALAS bluebird trail was more than doubled (+197) to a total of 381 nest boxes. Our trail is in the vicinity of Stevens Point, Portage County, Wisconsin. This expansion was made possible by ALAS members and friends who constructed the boxes and box sponsors who paid for construction costs. Our trail is unique because it is monitored weekly by persons who collect data and submit comprehen-

Table 1. Population trends for the Eastern Bluebird and other cavity-nesting species in Wisconsin and North America based on Breeding Bird Surveys

	1966–1979: WI	1980–2004: WI	1980–2004: NA
Eastern Bluebird	–10.5%	+3.9%	+2.7%
Tree Swallow	+3.2%	–0.3%	–0.8%
Black-capped Chickadee	+1.1%	+1.0%	+0.7%
House Wren	+0.6%	+0.9%	+0.1%

Table 2. Bluebird productivity in 2002 (89 boxes), 2003 (164 boxes), 2004 (184 boxes), and 2005 (381 boxes)

	nesting attempts	nesting attempts as % of boxes	boxes with eggs	boxes with fledglings	nests with fledglings
2002	0.49/box	44 (49.4%)	42 (47.2%)	35 (39.3%)	36
2003	0.64/box	84 (51.2%)	74 (45.1%)	51 (31.1%)	71
2004	1.30/box	143 (77.7%)	130 (70.7%)	110 (59.8%)	176
2005	1.55/box	309 (81.1%)	272 (73.2%)	254 (66.7%)	425

	lost eggs & nestlings	total fledglings	double broods	ratio of bluebirds/ 100 Tree Swallows
2002	198/21=37.6%	118; 1.33/b	3 (3.4%)	81: 100
2003	57/25=19.5%	351; 2.14/b	21 (12.8%)	152: 100
2004	212/77=28.8%	719; 3.91/b	55 (29.9%)	307: 100
2005	512/135=26.2%	1732; 4.55/b	154 (40.4%)	318: 100

sive summaries. I then collate the data and put it into the form of a weekly report that is sent back out to monitors. This procedure allows us to communicate quickly about successes and failures, and answer questions we have at the time of their occurrence. The result is a highly motivated group of monitors, all or most of whom return from year to year. This year, 21 monitors assisted me on 11 routes covering 350 miles with a total of 381 nest boxes, collectively worked about 600 hours, drove about 6,000 miles and spent about $1,800 out of their own pockets. Sixteen of these monitors will return next year.

2005 Season

Our trail continues to mature. The 2005 nesting season was a record one for the ALAS Eastern Bluebird Trail (Table 2 compares our four years of production). In 2004, we broke all previous bluebird production records (based only on reports submitted to the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin [BRAW]) for trails over 100 boxes in eastern Wisconsin, and this year we broke all records set last year. In 2005, 1,732 bluebirds fledged from our boxes, an average of 4.55 birds per box (455/100 nest boxes). In addition, 40.4% of our boxes fledged double broods and 9 of these boxes even fledged rare, triple broods. Also, we produced a ratio of 318 Eastern Bluebirds to 100 Tree Swallows.

Table 3 summarizes occupancy of our boxes by songbirds for the 2005 season. All 381 boxes were occupied by birds this year, of which 380 boxes had nesting attempts by songbirds. Moreover, 357 of our boxes fledged song birds (93.7%). The total number of songbirds produced was 2,381 (1,732 bluebirds, 544 swallows, 63 chickadees, and 42 wrens). The 2,381 figure represents an average of 6.25 songbirds produced per box (ranked

Table 3. Occupancy rates for the ALAS Eastern Bluebird Trail (381 nest boxes), 2005 season.

%occupied (381/381)	100%
%songbirds (380/381)	99.7%
%fledged songbirds (357/381)	93.7%
Eastern Bluebirds fledged	1,732
Tree Swallows fledged	544
Black-capped Chickadees fledged	63
House Wrens fledged	42
Total songbirds fledged	2,381

2nd in Wisconsin this year for trails over 100 boxes: BRAW data only).

Table 4 compares our figures for this year to the figures obtained for the entire state for 2004. Please note that the statewide figures from 2005 were not available at the time of preparation of this report. It is expected that 2005 will be a better production year for the rest of the state than in 2004 and that the differences in our productivity and the rest of the state will not be as great as they were for the 2004 year.

Table 5 compares statistics of the most productive trails in Wisconsin for 2002, 2003, and 2004 with those of the ALAS Eastern Bluebird trail for 2005. By this comparison, the ALAS trail ranks 3rd in productivity and 3rd in double brood percentage (from BRAW data submitted in 2005). Joe O'Halloran has pointed out that eastern Wisconsin has a much higher Tree Swallow population than western Wisconsin because of the increased amount of surface water in the eastern part of the state. Since Tree Swallows are the main competitor with the bluebird for nest cavities, and because Tree Swallows prefer to hawk insects over water, the "East Zone" is at a disadvantage for bluebird production compared to the "West Zone," according to the "O'Halloran hypothesis."

In Table 5, the two right-hand columns address what "might have been" had the ALAS trail been located in the "West Zone" where Brieske, Marking, and Glanzman had their trails. Assuming that each loss of 1% surface water increases production of bluebirds by 1%, our trail would have produced 505 bluebird young per100 boxes on the trail of Brieske, 475 on the trail of Marking and 507 on the trail of Glanzman, very comparable productivities to those of Marking and Glanzman but considerably below that of Brieske.

Table 4. Comparison of statewide (2004) & ALAS (2005) Eastern Bluebird production. (Data provided by Joe O'Halloran, statistician for BRAW)

	State Averages	ALAS Trail
bluebirds fledged/100 boxes	336	455 (+35%)
% bluebird occupancy with eggs	60	73.2 (+22%)
% bluebirds in crop*	72	76 (+5.5%)
% doubles (of total boxes)	16	40.4 (+153%)

* "crop" is defined as bluebirds + swallows; wrens and chickadees are ignored

Table 5. Comparison of highly productive trails of over 100 boxes in Wisconsin, 2003–2005 (data provided by Joe O'Halloran).

Trail Monitors	Birds fledged /100 boxes	% double broods	% surface water in counties	Tree Swallow adj. productivity
Brieske 2005	689	62.0%	9.4 (–11%)	505
Glanzman 2003	484	41.0%	8.9 (–11.5%)	no data
Marking 2005	481	50.0%	16.0 (–4.4%)	475
ALAS 2005	455	40.4%	20.4%	- - - -
Glanzman 2005	446	32.3%	8.9 (–11.5%)	507
Marking 2004	414	42.0%	16.0 (–4.4%)	no data

Nest Failures

Table 6 summarizes some possible causes of nest failure. Unless one is near the nest when it happens, it is essentially impossible to determine the cause of nest failure in any nesting bird. So most data in Table 6 are best guesses for nest failure in bluebirds. Tree Swallows were assumed to be the major nest destroyer of bluebirds. But this was determined by finding bluebird eggs on the ground in front of the box and a swallow occupying it. Most of this behavior occurred after a severe cold spell. I assume that the bluebird female could not incubate the eggs and keep herself alive, so she chose to live to lay eggs another day. Could she have dropped the eggs out of the nest and then abandoned it? Perhaps the swallow simply inherited a box that was available instead of outcompeting the bluebird.

Second on the list is the bluebird itself. This season we found four bluebird nests built on top of a full clutch of bluebird eggs. Three of these upper nests had eggs laid in them that eventually hatched and fledged young. One suspects that competition between bluebird pairs explains much more of our egg and nestling mortality than we imagine.

Other alleged competitors include wrens (lower rate than expected since we doubled nest boxes), the first-ever competition from chickadees, a major

Table 6. Possible causes of Eastern Bluebird nest failures, 2002–2005

Species	2002	2003	2004	2005
Tree Swallow	1	7	1	8
Eastern Bluebird	?	?	?	4
House Wren	2	8	4	3
Chickadee	0	0	0	2
House Sparrow	0	0	8	2
European Starling	1	0	0	0
Raccoon	1	1	0	1
Bear	0	0	0	1
Human beings	0	0	0	7
Totals	**5**	**16**	**13**	**28**

reduction in nest failure from House Sparrows, a surprising destruction of a nest box by a black bear (it ate 4 nestlings) and our first major problem with human beings.

Most of our human vandalism was by children at play. Our "keeper nail" made it easy for them to open the boxes and peek inside. Most of the mischief that resulted did not have malicious intent, but destroyed our nests anyway. To combat this problem, we have either moved boxes from areas of high human traffic or put a screw into the nail hole that requires a Phillips screwdriver to open. We judge that this roadblock will place the opening of boxes beyond the motivation of most human nest destroyers.

In Table 6 one notices the lack of any suspected predation by cats, squirrels and snakes, and a minimum of suspected predation by raccoons. These results are thought to be a consequence of putting predator guards on all support posts.

Nest Competition

In Table 7 are data summarizing the breeding biology we observed this season for the four main cavity-nesting songbirds and the sparrow. Sparrows were not permitted to incubate eggs and raise young in our boxes because they can out-compete the cavity-nesting songbirds listed and were eliminated when discovered. Therefore, the length of their reproductive potential is a "best guess." The rest of the data, however, are accurate to within a few days.

In the early part of the nesting season (April), bluebirds have two competitors for nest boxes: chickadees and House Sparrows (if hole size is small enough to exclude starlings). If nest boxes are placed in the proper locations (see below), both species should be a minor problem.

Chickadees will attempt nesting in boxes when placed too close to wooded areas. However, our boxes were placed in locations so undesirable that only 11 of 34 nesting attempts were successful this season. House Sparrows are often a nuisance in subdivisions, where well-intentioned landowners feed them with food mixes including millet and corn; nearby livestock also attract House Sparrows. If placed properly, nest boxes will only be a minor attraction for these sparrows. We find that de-

Table 7. Reproductive landmarks of songbirds and House Sparrows in the Central Wisconsin area, 2005 data; in some instances, the actual dates may be off by a few days.

Species	Arrival Date	1st Nest Built	1st Egg Laid	1st Hatch	1st Fledge	Last Fledge	Reprod. Span
Eastern Bluebird	24 Mar	1 Apr	10 Apr	30 Apr	20 May	10 Sept	163 days
Black-cap. Chickadee	resident	7 Apr	18 Apr	5 May	25 May	25 July	110 days
Tree Swallow	29 Mar	1 May	12 May	8 June	28 June	21 July	82 days
House Wren	20 Apr	15 May	23 May	20 June	20 July	2 Sept	107 days
House Sparrow	resident	1 Apr	10 Apr	does not apply	does not apply	does not apply	163 days, est.

Table 8. Fledging success in bluebirds after initial failure of nests, or failed clutches, or loss of nestlings.

	Fledged Young	Did Not Fledge Young
Failed nest	30.0% (6)	70.0% (14)
Failed clutch	87.5% (38)	12.5% (4)
Lost nestlings	83.3% (5)	16.9% (1)

stroying nests for 1–3 weeks in a row usually discourages them to the point that native songbirds can nest without interference.

Although arriving soon after the bluebird, the swallow did not start egg-laying until 32 days after the bluebird arrived. In our study this year, 93% of our boxes with nest attempts by bluebirds were started in April. Therefore, swallows are not a major competitor for the first nest attempt in bluebirds. And wrens start egg laying 9 days later than Tree Swallows. Wrens are a competitor with bluebirds only in their 2nd and subsequent egg-laying attempts.

The bluebirds are remarkable nesters. They start early and end late. In 2005, nest building began on 1 April and ended on 10 September, about 5.5 months. If nesting sites are available, this species has a tremendous advantage over other species in that it can lay up to three successful clutches of eggs in one cavity vs the typical one clutch of the chickadee and swallow. This year we had 154 successful double broods and 9 of these were also triple clutches (one produced a perfect 14 young from 14 eggs).

Bluebirds are also resilient breeders. This season, 87.5%% of our nests where eggs failed to hatch (Table 8) had subsequent re-nesting and fledged young and 83.3% fledged young if they had lost a brood. [It should be pointed out that no data were collected to confirm that the same bluebird pair was involved in 2nd & subsequent nestings]. Because of this multiple nesting ability, the bluebird can raise a greater number of fledglings per occupied box than the Tree Swallow. This season the ratio of fledglings was 5.61 bluebirds: 4.99 for swallows. This result is true in spite of the fact that swallows lay a single clutch of eggs that averages about 2 eggs more per clutch than the bluebird.

The chickadee also lays a single clutch of eggs per season and in our boxes produced 5.73 fledglings per occupied box, comparable to the bluebird. The wren also produces multiple clutches but usually not more than two in central Wisconsin because of the shorter breeding season here. None of our boxes produced more than a single clutch of wren eggs and they averaged 4.2 fledglings per occupied box.

It should be pointed out that all routes were well above the state averages (from 2004) for fledgling production and double broods. The least productive route on our trail still produced 367 fledglings/100 boxes compared to the 2004 state average of 336. And the route with the fewest double broods fledged, 25% was still well above the state average of 16%.

Four of our routes were extremely productive. Each of these had averages above 500 fledglings/100 nest boxes, firsts for our 4-season history. They included those of Maureen Brocken (565), Pat and Toni Wanserski (546), Kathie and Camille Plaisance (504), and Bonnie Waack (500). In addition, the Wanserskis had a route that produced a truly remarkable 57.1% double broods (state average = 16%).

The most difficult thing I have learned in the four seasons I have coordinated the ALAS Eastern Bluebird Trail is to "listen to what bluebirds tell you about the site you have selected for them to nest in." We might go to all the trouble of asking a land owner for permission to put up a box, carefully put it in place, and have the highest of expectations for its promise as a nest site. But if bluebirds don't choose it as a nest site, move the box and try again. I suggest that to not move it simply means your ego is involved and you can't admit that you made a mistake with the original site selection.

For the beginning bluebirder, a maximum of one season is enough to tell whether your box appeals to bluebirds. If you have not gotten any bluebirds in it/them in a season, move it to another site using the criteria shown below. This season, 93% of the boxes that were used were occupied by bluebirds in April. If, by the end of April, you have no bluebirds in your box(es) and you had no bluebirds in it the season before, you should move it (them) to another site. Certainly, you can do no worse than you have done up until that time. "Listen to what the bluebirds are telling you."

Increasing Bluebird Productivity in Nest Boxes

Major tips

- Location: Open (sun on box from dawn to sunset); short, sparse grass for hunting; perch sites: a few trees in front of box (no higher than 15–20′ preferred—areas with jack pines are ideal), electrical wires (no higher than 15–30′ preferred) clotheslines, fences (especially barbed wire), posts; 100′ from nearest dense vegetation (wrens) or woods (chickadees) and not near livestock, millet/cracked corn feeders, or Purple Martin houses (sparrows).
- Relocate boxes that do not produce: 93% of our bluebird-occupied boxes this year had nest attempts in them by the end of April—I recommend moving your unoccupied boxes by the end of April (a compromise is moving them the 2nd season they are in place—by the end of April).
- Locate boxes no closer to each other than 100 yards (farther apart preferred): Bluebird territory is 0.5–3.5 acres (Gowatty and Plissner 1998); careful spacing prevents competition that could end up with neither pair nesting successfully. Above all, do not pair your boxes, as that encourages production of swallows. This spacing rule can be modified if boxes are separated by tall vegetation or a cluster of buildings as pairs tend to use only the territory on one side or the other of these sites.
- Nest platform location within box: 4–5″ below bottom of the hole; 12–16 square inches of surface area; this practice is extremely critical as

"cavity depth" dictates how readily a bluebird hen will accept an artificial cavity.

- Predator guard: Do not erect boxes on wooden posts or electrical poles. Instead, use pvc pipe or irrigation pipe over your fence post or rebar. This technique will reduce predation by raccoons, cats and squirrels.

Minor But Still Important

- Leave box up all year (takes advantage of curiosity of migrant birds and some return to nest the following spring)
- Oval hole with these dimensions: 2 1/4″ × 1 3/8″ (excludes starlings and cowbirds)
- Waterproof box (wet nests are one of the biggest reasons for nest failure in cavity nesters)
- Peterson or NABS East/West style boxes (dimensions are more important than box style)
- Put opening toward SE (typical direction of woodpecker holes, the natural cavities of bluebirds); facing south, east, or north will also work; minimizes wind-blown rain which can moisten nests
- Use a metal fence post (less swaying) or rebar/conduit system (more convenient)

Pay careful attention to the criteria listed above for successful bluebird production, and you should show positive results—in time. Don't expect instant success as bluebirds tend to return to the nest sites where they have had success the season before (or close by nest boxes) and it takes time to attract them to your box in the first place.

Effects of Weather on Productivity in Bluebirds for the 2005 Season

The 2005 season was one of extremes. In late April and early May, a two-week cold spell hit central Wisconsin that caused the loss of 30% of our eggs laid up until that time. Since it is known that fertile eggs can lie in a nest for up to 13 days without being incubated and then be incubated and hatched successfully (from 2004 data), the loss of these eggs was most likely due to a lack of energy to keep the female alive *and* to provide for incubating eggs. Under such circumstances, the female has no choice but to "save herself." This strategy is the best course of action since 87.5% of females that lose eggs return to lay 1–3 more clutches of eggs later in the season (from 2005 data only). Of course, abandonment of the nest box opens it up for occupancy by other birds, especially swallows.

Later in the season, hot and dry conditions hit central Wisconsin. We went weeks without rain and had ten 90F+ days, up from our usual of 2–3 such days. Mortality from such weather was considerably less than from the cold spell, however. Because of the large number of eggs laid and more favorable weather, our final egg/nestling loss totaled 26.2% compared to 28.8% from the 2004 season. Since last season was the coldest, wettest growing season in the last 10 and since our birds rebounded so nicely from the severe egg loss this spring, our current hypothesis is that bluebirds can tolerate hot and/or dry weather better than they can tolerate cold and/or wet weather.

There were several indicators that 2005 was an exceptional breeding sea-

son for bluebirds (2004 figures adjusted for numbers that could have been expected if box numbers had been increased to those of this year). These indicators are:

1) Premature bluebird nests (nests started before old nest could be removed): 33 (11 in 2004)

2) Bluebird nests which fledged young in the same box that first fledged Tree Swallows: 18 (11 in 2004)

3) Bluebird nests which fledged young from the same box that first fledged Black-capped Chickadees 6 (0 in 2004)

Quite simply, these birds were more motivated to nest this season than last. Undoubtedly, warm, dry weather was a major contributor but still might have been too harsh for maximum reproduction.

White Eggs

The literature reports that white eggs laid by Eastern Bluebirds are rare (Erhlich et al. 1988). This year, our number was 92 of 2,478 eggs laid = 3.7%. But 25 of these eggs were laid in only 4 of 9 nest boxes located in the area of two cemeteries in Wisconsin Rapids. That means that 67 white eggs were laid in 372 boxes = 0.18 eggs/box compared to the 25 in 9 boxes in and near the cemeteries = 2.78/box. The production of eggs in and around the cemeteries was therefore 15× that expected from the concentration in the rest of the bluebird trail (2.78/0.18). This means there is a much higher concentration of white egg-laying birds in this area than expected. It will be interesting to see if this unique population continues to frequent that area in the future.

High Temperature Effects on Feeding and Egg Development in Eastern Bluebirds

Feeding: 22 nests were found on my route with 1–100+ black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) pits in them. Because I did not start finding them in my nests until late in the summer, I did not ask other monitors to look for them. It is my guess that many others would have found these pits had I asked them to look. The literature indicates that less than 0.5% of all broods are fed plant materials during development (Gowaty and Plissner 1998). Since 21 of my 121 boxes were found to hold these pits (17.4%), I found plant materials at 35× the rate expected.

This behavior cannot be by accident. First of all, I made no special effort to put up my boxes near black cherry trees. That means that some young were being fed cherries as a result of adults making an extraordinary effort to find them. Why were they doing this? The cherry pits were completely devoid of their succulent covering. Since they were found only in nests constructed in the hot parts of the season, could they have been given for supplemental moisture? And why weren't these pits a part of the fecal sac that was carried off by the parents? Perhaps in time we will have an answer to this puzzle.

At least 6 different nests were discovered (all 2nd broods) this summer with 1–2 nestlings that were 1–3 days younger than the rest of the brood. This implies asynchronous incubation, common in swallows but not in bluebirds. The literature indicates that eggs will start incubation spontaneously if average nest temperatures are over 77F, more common in

July/August than earlier in the year. Others have found that hot weather can cause up to two days' difference in age in summer broods due to the early onset of egg development due to heat (Gowaty and Plissner 1998; Berger et al. 2001).

Summary

The 2005 season was a spectacular one for the ALAS Eastern Bluebird Trail and exceeded our production goals for the season (400 fledglings/100 nest boxes and 1,500 total fledglings). Our trail made an improved contribution to the conservation of both bluebirds and other native cavity nesters. I think that the monitors gained an appreciation for the biology of four cavity-nesting songbirds and felt privileged to take part in this conservation effort. Many monitors have also been able to educate homeowners and friends about the importance of conservation efforts on behalf of cavity nesters. We look forward to continuing our part in the conservation of these magnificent birds into the future.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to the following Monitoring Assistants for their dedication to this project: David and Patti Becker, Maureen Brocken, Anne Graham, Larry and Eileen Guthrie, Sue Hall and Tricia Schaufenbuel, Bob and Louise Juracka, Leo Leibl, Roly and Carol Moore, Richard and Karen Olsen, Kathie and Camille Plaisance, Joe Schultz, Bonnie Waack, and Pat and Toni Wanserski.

Literature Cited

Berger, C., K. Kridler, and J. Griggs. 2001. The Bluebird Monitor's Guide to Bluebirds and Small Cavity Nesters. Harper Collins Publishers, Inc., New York, NY.

Ehrlich, P. R., D. S. Dobkin, and D. Wheye. 1988. The Birder's Handbook. Simon & Schuster, Inc., New York, NY.

Gowaty, P. A. and J. H. Plissner. 1998. Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*). *In* The Birds of North America, No. 381 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia.

Kent Hall is an Emeritus Professor of Biology from UW-Stevens Point. During his 30 years at UW-SP, he specialized in Environmental Physiology with an emphasis in cold temperature biology. After his retirement in 1998, he turned his attention to birdwatching in the ABA area (701 Life Species) and the World (2,533 Life Species). In the last few years his attention has turned to a variety of conservation projects, including the one in this article and fund raising for two wildlife center buildings and a natural area ($2.1 million raised). He serves on the Boards of the Aldo Leopold Audubon Society, Friends of Mead-McMillan Association, and the Bluebird Restoration Association of WI and is a Life Member of WSO.

Temperature Effects on Eastern Bluebird Migration and Early Egg Laying in Wisconsin

Martin E. Murphy

Wildlife Biologist/GIS Specialist
61810 Hidden Meadow Rd.
Ferryville WI. 54628
608.734.3554
memurphy@mwt.net

Abstract

During the years 1997–2004, Eastern Bluebird egg layings were recorded to study the influences of temperature changes on bird behavior. During the course of these recordings, the earliest bluebird egg laying record date for Wisconsin occurred on 29 March 2000. The Wisconsin bluebird egg laying record date was most likely influenced by the warming late winter and early spring temperature conditions. This paper is part of ongoing systematic studies relating avian physiological characteristics with behavioral adaptations. Temperature fluctuations are just one of several variables that affect migration and avian egg laying dates.

Introduction

Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*) migrate into Wisconsin from mid-March to late April (Robbins 1991). After completing their diurnal migration, the male bluebirds establish territories in prairie landscapes or forest edges where nestboxes or tree cavities are available for nesting. While there are other migrating cavity-nesting passerines in this area such as the House Wren, Prothonotary Warbler, and Tree Swallow, no other native songbird has demonstrated the early nesting behavior of the Eastern Bluebird. The cavity-nesting birds competing for these nest sites are "English" House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*), and House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*).

Wisconsin conservationists have understood the importance of bluebird preservation since the early 1960s, when concerned citizens established a nestbox network for cavity-nesting birds. Since that time, bluebird populations have increased substantially. Responsible, conservation-minded Wisconsin citizens formed the Bluebird Restoration Association (BRAW) in 1986. This organization along with the North American Bluebird Society (NABS) is dedicated to conserving bluebirds.

The extensive establishment of nestbox trails in Wisconsin provided a

means for recording species, nest building, egg laying, and nesting success. I participated in the Cornell Lab of Ornithology Nestbox Network (CNBN; www.birds.cornell.edu) starting in 1997 where volunteers monitor and report on bird nestbox activity. The monitoring and reporting included bird species, egg laying and numbers, color, predation, blow fly occurrence, productivity, and survival of the hatchlings. The objective is to provide data for ornithological research. The nestbox network participants record their findings and report them to the network at Cornell. From CNBN, national reports of species numbers, occurrence, habitat preferences, and locations assist in defining conservation management techniques. The egg laying records by many bluebird enthusiasts from these organizations provide useful data on many aspects of nesting activity that can be used to evaluate the effects of climatic or weather conditions and the availability of food.

I report here the earliest nesting activity of an eastern bluebird in Wisconsin. I discuss relationships of early nesting behavior and subsequent egg laying to the weather patterns that existed from 1997–2004 as well.

Methods

As a part of CNBN and the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology (WSO), I monitored and recorded egg laying and the nesting success of cavity nesting birds in 15 nestboxes located in the Crawford County driftless area. The boxes were placed in the 210-ha subdivision called Eagle Mountain, 330 m above sea level along the bluffs of the Mississippi River above the town of Ferryville in southwestern Wisconsin. This location is a primary stopover and nesting location for migratory birds along the Mississippi Flyway. The steeper portions of the bluffs are wooded. Some clear-cutting for development has occurred on the top; there are flat areas of nearly 114 hectares—old fields and mowed lots transected by gravel roads. The boxes were located in old fields and at least 30.5 m from nearby trees and shrubs where winter berries, woody vines, and insects provided available food sources.

Fourteen of 15 nestboxes were of standard bluebird design with 10.16 × 10.16 cm floors, 0.635 cm air holes for drainage and ventilation, with round entrance holes 3.8 cm in diameter. The other nestbox was a Troyer's nestbox with a rectangular opening 2.54 cm long and 7.62 cm wide. This nestbox opening is the only variation among the 15 standard nestboxes. All nestboxes were set at 1.73 m above the ground on 1.27 cm diameter metal posts with 15.23 cm diameter antipredator baffles.

I monitored nestboxes every other morning from 15 March through 1 August when weather conditions were favorable. Nestbox intrusion during colder mornings in the spring was limited to only those times when the sun was warming the nestboxes. Female bluebirds incubating their eggs were not disturbed and nestboxes were monitored only after the female left the box.

I evaluated early egg laying dates and nesting behavior in the Eastern Bluebird relative to daily maximum, minimum, and average temperatures from 1 March to 30 April, 1997–2004.

I obtained temperature and precipitation data from the National Weather Service Office (NWS) for Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, which is 70 kilometers from the study area. Associated weather reports from Madison, Wisconsin were referenced for temperature confirmations.

Results and Discussion

I recorded an Eastern Bluebird female laying its first egg on 29 March 2000, a record for this state (Table 1). The next earliest egg laying date recorded during 1997–2004 was 4 April 1997, 6 days later. In most years egg laying occurs after 10 April (Table 1).

The female bluebird in the Troyer's nestbox laid its first egg on 29 March. Four more eggs were laid, one on each succeeding day. By 16 April, the first egg hatched; the 4 other eggs hatched by 20 April. The adults continually fed the hatchlings with foraged insects, larvae, mayflies, and grub worms. Finally, all five bluebirds from this box fledged on 10 May into a nearby tree. The female bluebird in the standard bluebird box laid its first egg on 1 April and laid four more eggs, one on each succeeding day. The standard nestbox with all five bluebird eggs was later abandoned. An adult bluebird pair was seen nearby, but no recorded nestbox activity was observed after 10 April. The other 11 nestboxes were occupied by Eastern Bluebirds from 7 April to 25 April and one box was occupied by a Tree Swallow on 13 May. One nestbox was not occupied for the entire season.

Table 1. Earliest recorded egg laying dates for Eastern Bluebirds in Wisconsin.

Year	Date
1997	4 Apr
1998	12 Apr
1999	17 Apr
2000	29 Mar
2001	13 Apr
2002	11 Apr
2003	15 Apr
2004	18 Apr

The early nesting activity in 2000 appeared to be associated with unusually warm temperatures. During 1–9 March, above-normal temperatures existed throughout southwestern Wisconsin (Table 2). The National Weather Service office (NWS) in southwestern La Crosse, Wisconsin recorded the sixth warmest spring temperature on record of 10.55 C, in 2000. There were also exceedingly warm, near-record temperatures in early March reaching 26.6 C. However, temperatures declined after 7 April and freezing conditions developed on 10, 11, and 12 April that included minor amounts of precipitation (snowfall of less than 2.54 cm). The temperatures for the month of March 2000 were the highest monthly average recording from the 1997–2004 study (Table 2).

This early-April cold trend may have contributed to nesting failure of the standard bluebird nestbox. Anecdotal evidence from 2005 surveys found that three bluebird nestboxes totaling 14 hatchlings between two to five days old perished. As in 2000, when hatchlings perished after seven days or more of temperatures reaching the freezing mark, the 2005 cold trend with freezing temperatures in late April most likely contributed to hatchling deaths by mid-May. The nestbox surveyors suggest that adult foraging times between hatchling

Table 2: Temperatures from 2000 (indicated first) followed by 1997–1999 and 2001–2004 were recorded by the National Weather Service office in degrees Fahrenheit.

March	2000			1997			1998			1999			2001			2002			2003			2004		
Day	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg
1	46	34	40	45	31	38	35	30	33	41	29	35	36	18	27	26	13	20	39	14	27	56	39	48
2	45	27	36	37	25	31	36	30	33	40	31	36	39	24	32	24	15	20	31	3	17	42	36	39
3	50	23	37	36	23	30	32	29	31	35	21	28	44	19	32	15	-4	6	27	2	15	39	35	37
4	63	32	48	35	29	32	33	27	30	33	16	25	31	20	26	12	-8	2	28	12	20	40	35	38
5	70	34	52	35	22	29	36	29	33	31	21	26	28	15	22	26	-1	13	18	8	13	45	34	40
6	70	34	52	26	15	21	36	28	32	24	8	16	34	20	27	29	20	25	26	4	15	44	33	39
7	79	55	67	39	13	26	42	22	32	29	3	16	35	19	27	34	23	29	36	24	30	42	32	37
8	75	54	65	39	23	31	35	31	33	30	20	25	31	26	29	51	34	43	28	6	17	37	27	32
9	52	30	41	44	30	37	32	13	23	30	23	27	35	26	31	56	15	36	11	-2	5	43	24	34
10	32	27	30	51	30	41	18	7	13	32	12	22	42	20	31	27	9	18	16	-5	6	48	27	38
11	43	23	33	43	28	36	18	4	11	33	14	24	34	22	28	46	23	35	39	14	27	34	14	24
12	43	23	33	37	24	31	23	5	14	38	11	25	40	27	34	52	21	37	35	23	29	32	10	21
13	43	30	37	33	25	29	37	17	27	41	15	28	40	29	35	53	35	44	34	21	28	45	16	31
14	52	30	41	28	14	21	27	13	20	42	19	31	42	27	35	39	33	36	50	24	37	38	31	35
15	46	32	39	18	5	12	27	11	19	45	21	33	39	31	35	38	29	34	59	29	44	35	22	29
16	37	25	31	37	4	21	33	7	20	56	34	45	32	29	31	45	21	33	66	34	50	39	25	32
17	41	23	32	48	33	41	34	22	28	58	36	47	40	22	31	38	25	32	72	37	55	36	28	32
18	34	30	32	36	23	30	36	33	35	43	25	34	45	18	32	45	31	38	47	36	42	38	23	31
19	34	32	33	44	19	32	33	30	32	46	22	34	45	23	34	41	28	35	42	34	38	50	21	36
20	41	34	38	54	27	41	36	29	33	55	26	41	49	21	35	46	33	40	50	39	45	55	27	41
21	52	39	46	63	37	50	41	23	32	45	28	37	49	25	37	33	12	23	42	35	39	34	21	28
22	55	39	47	45	33	39	44	21	33	46	24	35	52	24	38	34	12	23	49	34	42	38	14	26
23	63	39	51	36	22	29	44	28	36	54	21	38	48	27	38	44	26	35	64	26	45	59	29	44
24	61	50	56	35	21	28	48	23	36	45	24	35	28	18	23	38	19	29	65	48	57	59	45	52
25	57	36	47	39	33	36	59	40	50	37	21	29	22	15	19	32	16	24	56	29	43	60	53	57
26	63	30	47	61	30	46	73	55	64	49	18	34	34	14	24	40	19	30	55	28	42	64	48	56
27	55	34	45	73	34	54	72	55	64	57	23	40	43	25	34	50	19	35	54	38	46	63	43	53
28	50	32	41	57	44	51	60	45	53	54	34	44	48	26	37	53	34	44	43	32	38	66	44	55
29	55	27	41	44	39	42	78	39	59	60	31	46	45	33	39	58	30	44	36	22	29	58	40	49
30	57	28	43	46	34	40	66	51	59	72	41	57	49	32	41	51	31	41	45	17	31	45	35	40
31	70	30	50	50	28	39	55	40	48	72	50	61	55	32	44	47	26	37	53	20	37	45	30	38
Ave:	**52.7**	**32.8**	**42.9**	**42.4**	**25.7**	**34.3**	**41.3**	**27.0**	**34.4**	**44.3**	**23.3**	**34.0**	**39.8**	**23.5**	**31.9**	**39.5**	**20.6**	**30.4**	**42.5**	**22.1**	**32.5**	**46.1**	**30.4**	**38.5**

April	2000			1997			1998			1999			2001			2002			2003			2004		
Day	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg	Max	Min	Avg
1	52	43	48	63	30	47	44	37	41	64	53	59	47	28	38	35	26	31	74	38	56	51	25	38
2	60	32	46	67	34	51	42	37	40	75	51	63	54	27	41	34	31	33	50	34	42	58	27	43
3	57	37	47	63	49	56	53	33	43	61	50	56	48	30	39	34	25	30	37	32	35	52	28	40
4	45	28	37	74	48	61	56	27	42	58	43	51	56	29	43	34	23	29	33	22	28	51	28	40
5	65	24	45	62	53	58	61	36	49	54	41	48	53	38	46	42	20	31	31	19	25	56	24	40
6	59	42	51	57	24	41	63	38	51	57	42	50	55	43	49	46	19	33	38	16	27	72	44	58
7	45	27	36	36	22	29	46	41	44	72	35	54	77	43	60	45	35	40	30	26	28	64	34	49
8	43	22	33	30	16	23	50	38	44	63	34	49	68	40	54	49	45	47	35	16	26	53	33	43
9	53	29	41	38	18	28	57	30	44	50	36	43	48	40	44	54	38	46	50	10	30	55	29	42
10	39	29	34	39	25	32	65	32	49	52	30	41	62	41	52	63	38	51	62	24	43	49	29	39
11	42	28	35	38	30	34	72	50	61	44	39	42	67	46	57	73	51	62	71	29	50	42	26	34
12	49	27	38	33	27	30	62	51	57	50	29	40	63	44	54	60	42	51	56	33	45	42	22	32
13	60	38	49	44	15	30	66	47	57	61	29	45	58	36	47	67	32	50	67	26	47	54	21	38
14	75	46	61	50	28	39	49	38	44	63	34	49	63	42	53	74	46	60	84	50	67	70	28	49
15	60	37	49	63	36	50	40	34	37	57	43	50	56	36	46	87	50	69	84	49	67	72	36	54
16	42	34	38	46	32	39	55	32	44	59	44	52	36	28	32	86	66	76	49	34	42	81	55	68
17	39	35	37	53	28	41	61	42	52	51	40	46	49	30	40	78	54	66	49	34	42	73	49	61
18	54	37	46	48	28	38	62	36	49	49	34	42	55	27	41	85	54	70	47	37	42	79	52	66
19	49	41	45	48	40	44	61	38	50	53	32	43	64	36	50	63	42	53	69	38	54	71	40	56
20	47	39	43	58	31	45	56	41	49	52	32	42	74	51	63	51	37	44	61	47	54	55	38	47
21	61	35	48	56	33	45	66	34	50	56	39	48	74	50	62	38	32	35	48	39	44	57	36	47
22	66	29	48	57	29	43	71	40	56	46	40	43	68	46	57	40	32	36	61	33	47	52	33	43
23	60	39	50	55	33	44	76	43	60	52	37	45	73	42	58	59	31	45	62	27	45	62	29	46
24	66	35	51	58	35	47	67	40	54	58	32	45	62	37	50	69	38	54	63	30	47	53	36	45
25	65	32	49	62	32	47	53	38	46	63	32	48	60	46	53	50	36	43	64	36	50	56	43	50
26	70	32	51	63	35	49	57	32	45	69	36	53	78	48	63	52	31	42	64	31	48	52	35	44
27	73	39	56	61	43	52	61	30	46	54	45	50	68	41	55	44	38	41	74	45	60	51	29	40
28	73	36	52	65	34	50	63	40	52	63	41	52	71	43	57	44	37	41	71	45	58	82	47	65
29	68	39	48	72	52	62	66	46	56	66	37	52	77	51	64	63	40	52	63	41	52	75	47	61
30	68	34	51	63	34	49	64	42	52	68	37	53	81	57	69	60	40	50	50	42	46	47	44	46
Ave:	**56.8**	**34.2**	**45.4**	**54.1**	**32.5**	**43.5**	**58.8**	**38.1**	**48.8**	**58.0**	**38.2**	**48.5**	**62.2**	**39.9**	**51.2**	**56.0**	**37.6**	**47.0**	**56.6**	**32.8**	**44.9**	**59.6**	**34.9**	**47.5**

Note: The year 2000 is listed first to highlight the important (temperatures underlined) anomalous temperatures that year.

feedings were lengthy in their daily 2005 watch periods. However, no specific time recordings were made to verify these statements. None of the other 12 nestboxes were occupied during this time.

The bluebird nestbox preferences, territorial establishments, mating, and egg laying were 6 days earlier than the next earliest nesting date of 4 April 1997 and dramatically earlier than the other first egg laying recordings from 7–18 April in other years. In addition, the earliest recording of an Eastern Bluebird egg laying by the WSO was on 7 April (Jim Frank, WSO records, Mequon, WI, personal communication). The advent of early March warming trends may have "encouraged" the bluebirds into pair bonding and egg laying. More data with accurate egg laying times may show distinct relationships between egg laying and temperature changes among short-distance migrants.

Multiple factors influence bird migration and early breeding activity. Because bluebirds are short-distance migrants, they are more responsive to weather conditions. The effects of rapid spring temperature changes that accompany localized bird movements are more easily studied for regional short-distance migration occurrences and are not readily recognizable in long distance migrants. Shorter migration distances occur when birds react more directly to single local weather condition (Elkins 1983). During the 2000 temperature changes, there was a more immediate effect on bluebird behavior.

Dorst (1962) has stated that there are many stimuli that can effect migration and that wind and precipitation are most likely the more immediate factors. Past research had also indicated that there are multiple variables that influence bird migration (Furness and Greenwood 1993). Further, there are few systematic studies that verify the differences or similarities between short- and long-distance migrants. In this study, it is widely known that bluebirds are relatively short-distance migrants with some occurrences of overwintering in Wisconsin.

Berthold (2001) stated that "migration interruptions occur in poor weather conditions" and more importantly "weather conditions affect migratory intensity." In the early warming trend March 2000, there were many reported sightings of bluebirds moving north through Illinois and into Wisconsin. WSO members confirmed these early northward movements through e-mails and personal communications.

The previous research of Berthold et al. (1992) and Dorst (1962) stated that extreme or unusual temperature changes influence bird behavior. In this study, I infer that the bluebird egg laying of 29 March 2000 was due to unusually favorable weather conditions. However, more data over several years will need to be collected to present statistical verification on first egg laying dates. A more appropriate approach might be to record first egg laying dates from all bluebird spring nesting attempts.

Nesting bluebirds using nestboxes can be easily surveyed and contribute to research dedicated to understanding the effects of warming trends on migratory bird populations. The warming conditions that existed in early March 2000 most likely contributed to earlier than normal bluebird migration. The early recording of

egg laying events such as one recorded on 29 March may lead to better evaluations of global environmental changes by observing bird behavior and their physiology during extreme or unusual weather conditions. It is also noted that the abrupt temperature changes from warm to freezing conditions may be one of several factors causing birds to abandon their nesting, especially if their food source is limited. Further research is needed to compare short- and long-distance migratory behavior with temperature changes.

Acknowledgments

I thank Jane Austin at the USGS Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center in Jamestown, ND for encouragement and advice on this research paper. I also thank Jim Frank for providing bluebird record dates. The dedicated Eagle Mountain residents participated in and confirmed my bluebird records. My data collection and work for our Eagle Mountain bluebird trail were assisted by Pamela Murphy, Mike Bourgo, and Alfred Healy. To date, over 400 bluebirds have fledged on our trail since 1997.

Literature Cited

Berthold, P. 2001. Bird Migration: A General Survey. 2nd ed. Oxford Ornithology Series: #12. Oxford University Press.

Berthold, P., A. J. Helbrig, G. Mohr, and U. Querner. 1992. Rapid microevolution of migratory behaviour in a wild bird species. Nature 360: 668–670.

Dorst, J. 1962. The migration of birds. The Riverside Press.

Elkins, N. 1983. Weather and bird behaviour, T. and A.D. Poyser, Calton.

Furness, R. W. and J. J. D. Greenwood, eds., 1993. Birds as Monitors of Environmental Change. Chapman and Hall, London and New York.

National Weather Service office, La Crosse, WI., http://www.crh.noaa.gov/arx/climo/spring.1 se.shtml

Robbins, S. D. 1991. Wisconsin Birdlife. University of Wisconsin Press.

Martin Murphy is a wildlife biologist/GIS specialist currently working on his organic farm in northwest Illinois. In the near future he will be performing bird habitat modeling for UW Madison.

This Blue Jay in an ice storm was photographed by Dennis Kuecherer.

Traditional Nesters Project: Investigating Traditional Nesting Chimney Swifts and Their Habitat

Kenneth Damro

PO Box 543
Florence, WI 54121
traditionalnesters@yahoo.com

Introduction

Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*), as its common name implies, most often nests and roosts in chimneys throughout its breeding range. The USGS Federal Breeding Bird Survey (a long-standing survey performed on birds' breeding grounds) shows Chimney Swift population trends declining 0.8% (blue) (1) across its Great Lakes Transition Region; declining 0.4% (blue) across its Great Lakes Plains Region; declining 5.0% (yellow) (2) across its Northern Spruce Hardwood Region, and declining 1.5% (blue) survey-wide from 1966–2002 (Sauer et al. 2004). In addition to reflecting a reduction in its traditional forest habitat, this survey is likely exhibiting a decline in old buildings, which have been a nesting stronghold for this species during the past century. This research addresses part of a larger question involving Chimney Swift genetics (see *Opportunities for Future Research* below).

Much time, energy, and money has been spent in recent years, investigating and debating proper management of our forests and woodlots nationwide. Some forest plans protect and encourage dead and dying trees for wildlife habitat. The Chimney Swift is a cavity-dependent species which requires large-diameter hollow trees (Blodgett and Zammuto 1979, and Nature Conservancy 2001) and may be overlooked as a forest dweller and therefore not taken into consideration when drafting forestry plans.

We've wondered for years, as we heard and saw Chimney Swifts over managed and unmanaged forest, if any could be nesting or roosting traditionally in hollow trees or if they are all nesting in human-made structures. In 2003–2004, a group of dedicated volunteers set out in hopes of answering the question—are any Chimney Swifts currently nesting or roosting traditionally in hollow trees within Wisconsin or Upper Michigan?

If we were able to find an active traditional roost or nest site, we wanted to answer the following questions as well:

—What is the ownership of the land and what is the primary goal or plan of this property (preservation, silviculture, recreation, development, etc.)?

—Is habitat adjacent to this site part of a forest or wood lot?

—Is it fragmented, contiguous, residential, fence row, lone tree, lowland, upland, plantation, select cut?

—What is the habitat age and forest structure within fifty meters (m) of a nesting / roosting site?

—What is the density and structure of the canopy over and around a nesting / roosting site? Do the swifts need a clear flyway to enter a cavity or will they negotiate foliage?

—What species of tree is being used and what is its approximate age?

—What is the diameter at breast height (dbh) and the overall height of the tree and cavity entrance? Is the entry to the cavity at the top or elsewhere in the tree?

—Has the nesting/roosting tree been effected or damaged by fire, wind, harvest, or rot? What condition is the site in; live, dead, in transition? Are there any other holes in the cavity other than the one being used by Chimney Swifts?

—Are there any other bird species, mammals, reptiles or amphibians using the same site?

Materials and Methods

A group of four volunteers set out to answer the above questions during the 2003 nesting season; two volunteers participated in 2004. The volunteers were experienced birders who could identify Chimney Swifts by sight and sound and had some experience orienteering in a forested landscape. All the researchers involved in this project had previous avian field research experience.

The volunteers were instructed to search for possible nesting or roosting Chimney Swifts in any wooded habitat containing large-diameter trees including farmland with wooded fence rows and wooded residential areas. Research performed by the North American Chimney Swift Nest Site Research Project suggests the minimum inside dimensions of a Chimney Swift cavity could be no less than 27.94 cm (11 inches) in diameter and 2.44 m (8 feet) deep. The Birds of North America series (Cink and Collins 2002), the Wilson Bulletin (Blodgett and Zammuto 1979), and Nature Conservancy (2001) document minimum cavity opening as 25 cm (roughly 10 in.). We used this as our guide when site searching. Volunteers were discouraged from searching urbanized areas where swifts were likely nesting in chimneys, air shafts, or other human-made structures. No minimum time or effort parameters were set. Some volunteers planned to be out in the field performing other research and would stay aware of swifts during that time. Others set out specifically to find traditional nesting or roosting swifts and targeted areas they knew where large trees or stands of old growth existed. Search methods included listening and watching for swifts over adequate habitat; finding a suitable-looking tree and monitoring it for at least 30 minutes during nesting season; and visually following swifts which may be carrying nest sticks or food for young. Phone calls were made and e-mails were sent to foresters, conservationists, wildlife managers and anyone else who might know of active traditional

Chimney Swift sites. Volunteers were instructed to record their miles and hours by vehicle, foot, and boat, if used. A project overview was issued to each volunteer accompanied by a nine-page, 50-question field data form and a three-page instruction/explanation sheet.

The field data form included instructions on marking a nest/roost site if one was found, a section for recording the time and date the site was found, and questions pertaining to the ownership, physical location, and characteristics of the site. There was room on the field data form for sketching the habitat within a 50 m circle of the nest site using various views. Nine questions were asked about the immediate habitat surrounding an active site, and eleven questions pertained to the behavior of the swifts at the site. Ten questions were asked about the physical characteristics of the tree itself and room was set aside for any drawings or photos. The last section included questions regarding the volunteers' effort. Other documents issued to each field worker included, a letter to the landowner explaining the project, in hopes of gaining access to private lands; a guide listing Chimney Swift nest searching tips; a checklist of items to possess while in the field; a metric/English measurement and conversion table; a canopy density chart, obtained with permission and used by Cornell University in their *Birds in Forested Landscapes* (2005) project; and a sheet on which volunteers could record their effort and personal information in the event they were not successful finding an active site. The effort sheet was to be completed and sent in at the end of each field season.

This project focused on the forests and landscapes of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, where all the recorded effort for this project took place. Anyone wanting to search outside the primary project site was encouraged to do so. Finding an active traditional Chimney Swift site anywhere would be beneficial to this project; however, I could not commit to personally field checking sites outside the primary area.

This project was active for the 2003–2004 nesting seasons; the volunteers were encouraged to search May through August. Key search times were May and June when swifts would be hauling sticks to nest sites, and July when feeding young.

Results

During the 2003 nesting season, four volunteers searched a total of 273 hours; drove 2352 miles in vehicles; walked 155 miles; and traveled 39 miles while searching by boat. During the 2004 nesting season, two volunteers searched a total of 86 hours; drove 1763 miles in vehicles; walked 37.5 miles; and traveled 3 miles while searching by boat.

The first active Chimney Swift site was officially discovered on 13 July 2003, at 10:00 a.m. Its location was recorded as: SE corner of the west part of Westboro Township, Taylor County, Wisconsin. This land is owned and managed by the U.S. Forest Service, used primarily for silviculture, and is considered public land. This active tree site exists on a contiguous block of forest, and the habitat within a 50 m circle of this site was recorded as heavily forested. The nearest forest edge, a

Figure 1. Traditional-nesting Chimney Swift exiting the nest cavity in a red maple (look for the gray blur in the center of the caviety), Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest, July, 2003. Photo by Jon Zellmer.

graveled road, was 30.5 m (100 ft) away. The forest type within a 50 m circle of this site was described as deciduous dominant and could be classified as uneven aged. The five most dominant tree species within a 50 m circle of this site, beginning with the most dominant, were white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), American hornbeam or ironwood (*Carpinus caroliniana*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), and yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*). The most dominant species existing as high as or higher than the entrance to the Chimney Swift cavity beginning with the most dominant were white ash, red maple, and black cherry. Within a 50 m circle of this site, the canopy density was estimated at 52% (on average). Of this 52% canopy, 95% was 5 m higher (on average) than the Chimney Swift entrance to the cavity; dead wood existed 2 m from the entrance and was part of the active tree site itself. This tree site was 100% dead, its bark was intact and in good condition. It measured 201.26 cm (79.25 in) in circumference, and 64.14 cm (25.25 in) dbh. This tree site is a red maple (Fig. 1) which has rotted internally and has been broken off by wind or snow/ice load. The overall height of this tree site was estimated at 10.98 m (36 ft); the entrance hole the swifts were using was estimated at 9.15 m (30 ft) above ground. The swifts were entering in an opening in the south side of the cavity

created by a limb which fell, or was torn off the tree by wind, snow, or ice load. There were two other holes in the tree site: one approximately 5.08 cm (2 in) in diameter; the other, approximately 7.62 cm (3 in) in diameter, and presumed created by a Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*). No other bird or mammal species were using this tree site as far as we could tell, and there were no signs of predator activity on the tree itself. The swifts at this site were assumed nesting. We observed swifts entering the cavity 4 times per hour, presumably feeding young, which was consistent with parental care as outlined in Cink and Collins (2002). As many as 6 adult Chimney Swifts were seen near this site at once on this day.

On 23 July 2003, a volunteer revisited the nest site and recorded the following data. "There were as many as 9 individual Chimney Swifts flying over the site (possibly helpers) (Cink and Collins 2002) at 8:10 pm. The swifts entered the cavity 11 times within the next 45 minutes, exiting each time within 12 seconds, on average. At 8:55 p.m., two swifts entered the site and stayed in for the night." Drawings, photos and video were submitted with this site report.

On 9 July 2004, at 4:15 p.m., a second Chimney Swift site was recorded. Its location was recorded as: Northern Edge of Sylvania Wilderness tract, Gogebic County, Michigan. This land is owned and managed by the U.S. Forest Service and is designated wilderness. This active tree site exists on a contiguous block of forest which was described as heavily forested. Habitat within a 50 m circle of this site was described as mixed old growth forest. The nearest forest edge, which is a paved roadway, was measured at 15.24 m (50 ft) away. The three most dominant tree species within a 50 m circle of this site, beginning with the most dominant were Eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), yellow birch, and red maple. These were also the three most dominant tree species within a 50 m circle of this site which were as high as or higher than the entrance to the cavity. Within a 50 m circle of this site, the canopy density was considered to be 85%–90% (on average). Of this 85%–90% canopy, 20% was 2 m higher, on average, than the Chimney Swift entrance, and there was foliage existing 2 m from the entrance, which was not part of the site tree itself. This tree site was 100% dead, its bark was 75% intact, loose and falling. It is an Eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*) which appears to have been struck and broken off by lightning. It measured 378.46 cm (149 in) in circumference and 120.52 cm (47.45 in) dbh. The overall height of this tree site was estimated at 13.72 m (45 ft); the entrance hole that the swifts were using was at the top of the tree where it was broken off. There were six other holes in the tree site, ranging in size from approximately 5.08 cm (2 in) to 15.24 cm (6 in) in diameter. Brown Creepers (*Certhia americana*) were reported as using the exterior of this nest tree for foraging, and red squirrels (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) were reported as being on and around the tree site. The swifts at this site were not reported as nesting, but since behavior among Chimney Swifts is not well documented (Cink and Collins 2002), we assumed they were investigating, displaying mock courtship or play. As many as 8 Chimney Swifts were seen at once in the immediate area of this site; only

one swift entered the top of the cavity for a short time period (approximately 3 seconds) and then flew out. Drawings and photos were submitted with this site report.

Analysis

In two years of searching, two active Chimney Swift sites were found. This is not to suggest that these are the only two sites in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan; however, after analyzing the effort put forth, we can assume such sites are generally quite rare across the primary project landscape. The 2004 nesting season was a particularly cool, damp period, which could have caused failed nesting attempts and a false indication that swifts were not using a particular site or area.

No systematic search was performed; therefore, potential Chimney Swift site areas could have been overlooked. Results from the *Nicolet Bird Survey* (2004) were analyzed and some searching corresponded with areas where swifts were heard or seen during multiple survey years. It is unclear though, whether swifts counted during such surveys are those using chimneys in remote hunting type shacks (for instance) or those using natural tree sites.

With just two active sites found, we could not document preferences for particular tree species, size, surrounding habitat, or region. No conclusions could be made concerning whether swifts would use sites crowded with canopy foliage, sites where predators or cavity competitors may have been present, or where any number of factors may influence their success or decision to use a particular site.

We can safely document however, that Chimney Swifts do nest in managed forest if proper habitat is available. In addition to the following previously documented tree species; American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*), silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), and water tupelo (*Nyssa aquatica*) (Blodgett and Zammuto 1979 and Nature Conservancy 2001); we've established that two other species, red maple and Eastern white pine, are selected and used by Chimney Swifts. We have learned that Chimney Swifts nest successfully in traditional habitat in Wisconsin and most likely in Upper Michigan. We know that trees with a dbh of at least 64.14 cm (25.25 in) and an approximate height of at least 9.15 m (30 ft) are selected as nest sites by swifts. We know that swifts will accept a site with dead wood; a roadway at least 15.24 m (50 ft) away from the site tree; a tree with multiple (woodpecker sized) holes into the cavity; and foliage within 2 m of the site entrance.

Discussion

Throughout this survey, a good amount of Chimney Swift presence and activity was reported during the nesting season in designated wilderness areas including Sylvania Wilderness and the Porcupine Mountains, both in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Since it is unlikely these observed swifts are nesting in human-made structures due to the remoteness of these areas, we can assume they are nesting and/or roosting in large hollow trees. On 10 July 2004, a volunteer

searcher observed an adult Chimney Swift with two young fledglings near the Escarpment Trail in the Porcupine Mountains, suggesting successful nesting within the wilderness there. On 23 July 2004, an adult Chimney Swift was seen with fledged young in the Huron Mountain area of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, again suggesting there may be traditional nesting taking place in these more remote, well-timbered areas. Other areas where swifts were regularly reported during the nesting season are; the Argonne Experimental Forest/Headwaters Wilderness areas within the Nicolet/Chequamegon National Forest, and the Trap Hills area in the Western Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

The nest site discovered in Taylor County is of particular interest due to its existence in managed forest. This sheds light on the possibility for future forest management to include Chimney Swifts. It appears as though traditional nesting Chimney Swifts do not necessarily require designated wilderness, but require large-diameter hollow trees.

While forest and woodlot managers have come to realize the importance of preserving dead and dying trees for wildlife, education is needed regarding preservation of live growing trees which have potential of becoming large-diameter cavity trees in the future. As old buildings continue to be demolished to make room for modern construction, providing traditional habitat becomes more crucial for the Chimney Swift (Cink and Collins, 2002). Selecting, designating, and preserving such potential trees will insure that tomorrow's forests contain habitat for traditional nesting Chimney Swifts.

Opportunities for Future Research

This research has but touched the surface of a sea of questions and answers regarding Chimney Swifts, their habitat, and their genetics.

*It would be valuable to know whether Chimney Swifts born and raised in chimneys and air shafts, would nest in hollow trees as adults or if chimney nesting adults would nest in traditional habitat given the opportunity.

*Since the great pine forests of the Great Lakes States have been felled for over 100 years, has human-made habitat been imprinted on a given population of Chimney Swifts so they are unable to recognize traditional habitat should it exist, as happened with the eastern race of the Purple Martin (*Progne subis)* (Hill 1994)?

*If the answer to the previous question is yes, is the current traditional nesting race or subspecies of Chimney Swift at risk of extinction due to its small population and lack of habitat?

*What symbiotic relationships, if any, do Chimney Swifts have with their traditional micro habitat?

*Are traditional nesting swifts any more or less successful with reproduction and survivorship than their urban counterparts?

*Will Chimney Swifts negotiate forest canopy and obstacles to access a site in mid or understory?

*How much disturbance (predator or otherwise) can occur at a particular site before it affects traditional nesting swifts?

*Can Chimney Swifts co-exist in the same cavity with other bird species; bat and other mammal species; reptile/amphibian species?

*If we are to manage our forests to include Chimney Swifts, which tree species should be promoted? Which tree species stand longer, have heart rot characteristics, and are most beneficial for swifts? How many trees (on average per acre) should be preserved in order to insure that some eventually achieve adequate Chimney Swift nesting size?

*Do trees which are designated and preserved as wildlife trees remain protected and unharvested over time?

Recommendations

Since the Chimney Swift requires large-diameter hollow trees for nesting, more emphasis and protection should be placed on live, growing trees which may become swift sites in the future. The chance for any given forest tree to survive long enough, achieve adequate diameter, hollow uniformly, and remain vertical over many years is small; thus, an adequate number of trees must be selected and preserved (on average per acre) to insure suitable habitat and successful management for the traditional nesting Chimney Swift.

Acknowledgments

A special thank you to Kathy Reiser, Jon Zellmer, and Mike Reigert who used precious personal time, money, and vehicles to pursue the research on this species and its habitat. Thank you to Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Dottie Beeching and Wild Bird and Nature Store in Mechanicsburg, PA., Barb Schieffer, Mark MacKay, Joni Rittag, and others for their help and support.

Literature Cited

Blodgett, K. D., and R. M. Zammuto. 1979. Chimney Swift nest found in hollow tree. Wilson Bulletin 91(1): 154.

Cink, C. L., and C. T. Collins. 2002. Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*). *In* The Birds of North America, No 646 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, PA.

Cornell University. 2005. Birds in Forested Landscapes Project. Ithaca, NY. (http://www.birds.cornell.edu/bfl/index.html)

Hill, J. R. III. 1994. Social cavity nesters, species profile: Purple Martins (*Progne subis*). Wildbird 8(3): 38–41.

Kyle, P., and G. Kyle. 2005. Conservation challenge. North American Chimney Swift Research Project, Texas Parks and Wildlife, Driftwood Wildlife Association, Austin, TX. (http://www.concentric.net/~Dwa/page6.html)

Nature Conservancy. 2001. Species management abstract, Chimney Swift, *Chaetura pelagica*. Arlington, VA. (http://www.conserveonline.org/200/03/m/en/chsw.doc)

Nicolet Bird Survey. 2004. Nicolet Bird Survey results. University of Wisconsin Green Bay, Green Bay, WI. (www.uwgb.edu/birds/nnf/index.htm)

Sauer, J. R., J. E. Hines, and J. Fallon. 2004. The North American Breeding Bird Survey, results and analysis 1966 - 2003. Version 2004.1. USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, MD. (http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/html)

Changes in the Numbers of Visible Migrants at Cedar Grove 1961–1964 and 2000–2003

Helmut C. Mueller

Department of Biology and Curriculum in Ecology
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3280
hmueller@email.unc.edu

Daniel D. Berger

1806 Greevalia Street
S. Pasadena, CA 91030

Nancy S. Mueller

409 Moonridge Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

John L. Kaspar

Department of Biology
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
Oshkosh, WI 54901

The numbers of breeding birds changed in 56 percent of the 117 species that were sampled in the years 1966–1991 in Wisconsin (Robbins et al. 1996). Less is known of population changes in migrants. We have watched for and counted hawks at Cedar Grove since 1951 (Mueller et al. 2001). In a few of these 53 years we have also attempted to identify and count, or estimate, the numbers of other species of birds seen flying past the Cedar Grove Ornithological Station during our dawn-to-dusk watches for hawks. The primary incentive for these watches was to trap hawks, and thus we watched constantly from our blind. We watched every day from 26 August through 21 November in the years 1961–1964 and 2000–2003 except for 1961 when we watched on only 12 of the 20 days after 29 October, and in 2001 when observations ended on 14 November. Since relatively few birds were seen migrating in late November, this does not appreciably affect the totals.

We compared the annual totals for

each species, or group of species, using the Mann-Whitney *U* test on the two sets of four years. This test basically compares the median values of each of the two sets of four years. We also performed a chi-square goodness-of-fit test which compares the total individuals observed in each of the two sets of four years. Statistics were performed in SYSTAT (Wilkinson 1989) on a MacIntosh G3 computer. The mean number of individuals for each year, the *U* score for the difference between the two sets of years, and *P* values are given in Table 1. Differences were considered significant if $P < 0.05$, marginal if $P < 0.10$, and suggestive if $P < 0.15$. The statements on statistics are from the Mann-Whitney *U* test. Results of the chi-square test were significant in all but two species (Table 1).

Species Accounts:

Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*)—A suggestion of an increase in migrants. This may be because of a shift in the route of migrants. The swans migrate southeast over Cedar Grove in the fall and now winter primarily in North Carolina instead of Chesapeake Bay (Limpert and Earnst 1994).

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)—A significant increase in the number of migrants, in breeding birds in Wisconsin, in the eastern region and in the continent.

Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens*)—A significant decrease in the number of migrants. This is because of a shift in migration routes. Numbers have increased greatly in North America (Mowbray et al. 2000).

Duck (*Anatidae sp.*)—It is rarely possible to distinguish the species of ducks migrating past Cedar Grove. Indeed, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish distant flocks of diving ducks from puddle ducks. A significant decrease in migration was seen. We think that it is because fewer scaup (*Aytha affinis* and *A. marila*) have been observed. Populations of scaup have declined considerably (Austin et al. 1998).

Loon (*Gavia sp.*)—Although the station is only about 300m from Lake Michigan, loons are rarely seen at the station. There are trees between our blind and the lake, obstructing our view of all but high-flying birds. In spite of this, a significant increase in numbers is indicated. There was no change in Common Loon (*G. immer*) breeding in Wisconsin (1966–1999, Robbins et al. 1996), but the species showed an increase in the eastern region of the United States and also on the continent (DeGraff and Rappole 1995).

American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*)—A possible increase in this species is suggested by our data; three birds were seen in 2002 and none in 1961–1964).

Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)—An amazing increase in migrants occurred. No cormorants were recorded in 1961–1964, and as many as 650 in one day in 2003. Cormorants showed highly significant increases in both the eastern region and the continent.

Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)—A significant increase occurred with one bird in each of three of the four years 2000–2003 and none in 1961–1964. The species showed significant increases in Wisconsin.

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)—A significant increase in migration.

Table 1. Visible migration of non-raptors at Cedar Grove

Species	1961–1964*	2000–2003*	P1**	P2***
Tundra Swan	90	495	0.130	0.000
Canada Goose	384	7702	0.021	0.000
Snow Goose	187	0	0.014	0.000
Duck	992	12	0.020	0.000
Loon	0	1	0.046	—
American White Pelican	0	1	0.131	—
Double-crested Cormorant	0	1949	0.014	0.000
Great Egret	0	1	0.040	—
Great Blue Heron	9	21	0.043	0.000
Green Heron	2	1	0.317	0.054
Sandhill Crane	0	182	0.014	0.000
Plover	7	0	0.014	0.000
Killdeer	14	0	0.014	0.000
Shorebirds	36	10	0.081	0.000
Gulls	0	2908	0.018	0.000
Common Nighthawk	2099	609	0.083	0.000
Chimney Swift	1405	576	0.248	0.000
Red-headed Woodpecker	14	9	0.248	0.032
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	16	1	0.137	0.000
Northern Flicker	490	360	0.248	0.000
Eastern Kingbird	7	0	0.091	0.000
Blue Jay	1711	1550	1.000	0.000
American Crow	224	198	0.773	0.013
Common Raven	3	0	0.046	0.001
Horned Lark	9	0	0.131	0.000
Purple Martin	633	0	0.014	0.000
Swallow	9205	1268	0.027	0.000
Eastern Bluebird	29	6	0.076	0.000
American Robin	1784	2617	0.248	0.000
European Starling	2829	772	0.043	0.000
Bohemian Waxwing	9	9	0.741	1.000
Cedar Waxwing	5220	8540	0.083	0.000
Warbler	3375	466	0.043	0.001
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5	0	0.047	0.000
Bobolink	1462	0	0.014	0.000
Meadowlark	4	0.25	0.034	0.000
Blackbirds	12355	3780	0.248	0.000
Purple Finch	424	5	0.091	0.000
Red Crossbill	13	0	0.131	0.000
Common Redpoll	150	5	0.018	0.000
Pine Siskin	1367	383	0.146	0.000
American Goldfinch	1397	70	0.028	0.000
Evening Grosbeak	154	0	0.131	0.000
Small finch	4150	1887	0.083	0.000
Finch	4724	1892	0.043	0.000

** Mean number for the four years*
*** Probability based on annual counts, Mann-Whitney Utest*
**** Probability based on four-year totals, Chi-square Goodness-of-fit-test*

Also increased significantly in Wisconsin, the eastern region and the continent.

Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*)—No significant changes in migration or in breeding birds.

Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*)—A significant increase in migrants and breeding birds in Wisconsin, the eastern region and the continent.

Plover (*Pluvialis sp.*)—We were not always able to distinguish between Black-bellied Plover and American Golden-Plover, but most individuals were of the former species. These birds were seen migrating only in very small numbers at Cedar Grove, but a significant decline is indicated. Black-bellied Plover showed no significant population trends in the eastern U.S. (Paulson 1995).

Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*)—A few migrants were observed at Cedar Grove, but a significant decline is indicated, opposed to a significant increase in breeding birds in Wisconsin.

Shorebirds (*Scolopacidae sp.*)—Relatively few shorebirds were observed, but a marginal decline is suggested.

Gulls (*Larus* sp.)—Most were Ring-billed (*L. delawarensis*) or Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*). A great increase in migrants was observed. Breeding Ring-billed Gulls also increased in Wisconsin, the eastern region and the continent.

Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*)—A marginal decrease in migrants occurred, a significant decrease in the eastern region was observed.

Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*)—No change in the number of migrants or in Wisconsin, but a significant decline in the eastern region.

Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*)—No change in the number of migrants, but significant decreases noted in breeding birds in Wisconsin, the eastern region, and the continent.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*)—Our data suggest a decline in migrants, but no trend is shown in breeding birds.

Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*)—No change in the number of migrants observed at Cedar Grove, but a decrease in breeding birds in Wisconsin, the eastern region, and the continent.

Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*)—A marginal decrease in the number of migrants is suggested, and no change in breeding birds in Wisconsin, the eastern region, or the continent.

Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*)—No change was noted in the number of migrants or in Wisconsin, but a significant decrease was seen in the eastern region and the continent.

American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)—Our data indicate no change in the number of migrants, but significant increases occurred in breeding birds in Wisconsin, the eastern region, and the continent.

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*)—Few ravens were seen, but a significant decrease in migration occurred. Paradoxically, there were significant increases in breeding birds in Wisconsin, the eastern region, and the continent.

Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*)—Our data suggest a decline in migrants is possible, but there was no significant change in numbers of breeding birds.

Purple Martin (*Progne subis*)—A significant decline occurred in migration and in Wisconsin breeding birds.

Swallow (*Hirundinidae sp.*)—When watching for hawks, it is rarely possible to examine individual swallows with binoculars, and we usually lump the myriads of birds passing over on a good day into a category. There was a significant decrease in swallows observed in migration at Cedar Grove. Breeding birds showed an increase in two species and no change in three.

Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*)—A marginal decrease in migration was noted in contrast to significant increases in breeding birds in the eastern region and the continent.

American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*)—No change was noted in migration in spite of increases in breeding birds in Wisconsin, the eastern region, and the continent.

European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)—A significant decrease occurred in migration and in breeding birds in Wisconsin, the eastern region, and the continent.

Bohemian Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*)—Very few individuals were seen in migration at Cedar Grove. The species is quite erratic and was seen only in three of the eight years. No change in numbers is indicated.

Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*)—A marginal increase in migrants at Cedar Grove and a significant increase in the eastern region and the continent was shown.

Warblers (*Parulidae sp.*)—A significant decrease in migrants was noted at Cedar Grove. Four species increased significantly in Wisconsin and two species decreased. Six species increased in the eastern region and two decreased.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*)—Few individuals were identified at Cedar Grove, but a decline is suggested. No population change in breeding birds in Wisconsin, the eastern region, or the continent.

Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*)—This species was quite common in migration at Cedar Grove in late August and early September in 1961–1964 and not one individual was noted in 2000–2003! Breeding populations have also declined significantly in Wisconsin and on the continent.

Meadowlark (*Sturnella sp.*)—Our data indicate a significant decline in meadowlarks in migration at Cedar Grove. Both Eastern (*S. magna*) and Western (*S. neglecta*) Meadowlarks have declined in Wisconsin, the eastern region, and the continent.

Blackbirds (*Icteridae sp.*)—Blackbirds often occur in mixed flocks and the identification of individual species is often difficult at a distance. We have thus lumped Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus iter*), Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), Rusty Blackbird (*E. carolinus*), and Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*). There was no change in the abundance of this group in migration at Cedar Grove. The Brewer's Blackbird showed an increase in the eastern region. The Common Grackle showed a decrease in the eastern region and the continent, as did the cowbird, which also decreased in Wisconsin.

Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*)—Purple Finch declined marginally in migration at Cedar Grove. An increase in breeding birds in Wisconsin, a decrease in the eastern region.

Red Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*)—Red Crossbill was observed in migration only in 1963 and 1964. A decline

is suggested. No change noted in breeding birds.

Common Redpoll (*Carduelis flammea*)—A significant decline occurred in migrants at Cedar Grove.

Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*)—A decline in migrants is suggested. No change noted in breeding birds.

American Goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*)—A significant decline in migration at Cedar Grove. No change in breeding birds in Wisconsin, but significant declines were noted in the eastern region and on the continent.

Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*)—This species was observed in migration at Cedar Grove only in 1961 and 1963. A decline is suggested. No change noted in breeding populations.

Small finch (*Carduelis sp.*)—Goldfinches, siskins and redpolls and perhaps crossbills often travel in mixed flocks and even when not in mixed flocks, the vocalizations are not sufficiently distinct for identification. Often, we merely record them as "small finches." These counts, and adding in the above species, show a marginal decline in migration at Cedar Grove.

Sometimes it was not clear whether the finches observed were medium sized (Purple Finch) or small finches, and we recorded them simply as "finches." This category, with small finches and Purple Finch added in, showed a significant decline in migration at Cedar Grove. It should be noted that all of the finches and the Evening Grosbeak are quite erratic in their migrations and visible migration counts are questionable estimates of populations.

Summary

Statistically significant increases occurred in 7 species or groups and declines in 13. Marginal decreases were found in 6 species or groups and an increase in one. Declines were suggested in an additional 6 species or groups and increases in two. No change was noted in 9 species or groups. Overall, there were more (25) declines than increases (10).

Large birds (duck and larger) increased in 7 species and decreased in three. Smaller birds decreased in 10 species and increased in none. Promiscuous shooting of large birds has decreased in the last 40 years, and this accounts for some of the increase. The increase in habitat destruction in the last 40 years may explain much of the decrease in small bird populations. Six of the species of small birds showing declines are neotropical migrants, and there has been considerable habitat destruction in the tropics. Reduction in grasslands and earlier mowing of hayfields may have reduced populations of meadowlarks and Bobolinks. However, habitat destruction fails to explain the decrease in redpolls, goldfinches, and finches in general. A reduction in the pollution of Bar Creek, just to the south of the station, reducing its attractiveness to shorebirds, may have caused an apparent decline in migration of this group and of Killdeer.

Our findings on migrants agree with the results of Wisconsin Breeding Bird Surveys in 12 species and disagree in 8 species. Our results disagree with the surveys for the Eastern region in 10 species and agree in nine. With the continent, our results agree in 15 species and disagree in 10.

Migration counts are an economical way to monitor populations over wide areas when one is dealing with large, relatively easy to identify species which are not so abundant as to overwhelm the observers. Smaller, more numerous, and more difficult to identify species are more difficult to monitor by migration counts.

Literature Cited

Austin, J. E., C. M. Custer, and A. D. Afton. 1998. Lesser Scaup (*Aytha affinis*). *In* The Birds of North America, No. 338 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

DeGraaf, R. M. and J. H. Rappole. 1995. Neotropical Migratory Birds: Natural History, Distribution and Population Change. Comstock Publishing Associates. Ithaca, New York. 676 pp.

Limpert, R. J. and S. L. Earnst. 1994. Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*). *In* The Birds of North America, No. 89 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and The American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, D.C.

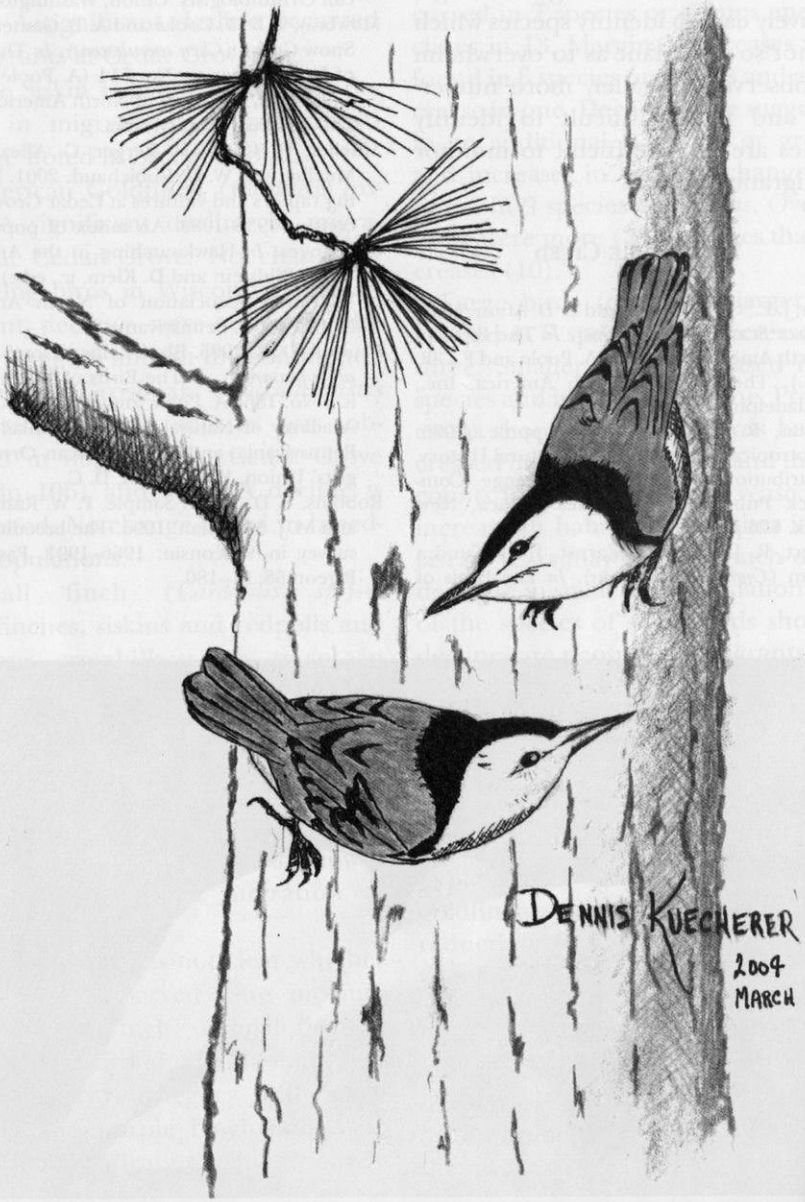
Mowbray, T. B., F. Cooke and A. B. Ganter. 2000. Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens*). *In* The Birds of North America, No. 514 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Mueller, H. C., D. D. Berger, G. Allez, N. S. Mueller and W. G. Robichaud. 2001. Migrating raptors and vultures at Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, 1936–1999: An index of population changes. *In* Hawkwatching in the Americas (K. L. Bildstein and D. Klem, jr., eds.). Hawk Migration Association of North America, North Wales, Pennsylvania.

Paulson, D. R. 1995. Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*). *In* The Birds of North America, No. 186 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and The American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, D. C.

Robbins, S. D., D. W. Sample, P. W. Rasmussen and M. J. Mossman. 1996. The breeding bird survey in Wisconsin: 1966–1991. Passenger Pigeon 58: 81–180.

Swan on the Mississippi River by Gary Krogman.



White-breasted Nuthatch pair as drawn by Dennis Kuecherer.

50 Years Ago in *The Passenger Pigeon*

The first nesting record for a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron for Wisconsin was described in an article by J. Allan Simpson. The nest was discovered near the junction of Highway 32 and the Racine-Kenosha County line on 27 June 1955 by Simpson, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Peirce, and Ed and George Prins. By 17 July the five young were all large and strong enough to perch on nearby tree branches. A Cooper's Hawk raised four young in another tree less than 100 feet from the heron nest. Interestingly, Minnesota experienced its first nesting record during the same month when a pair of yellow-crowneds was discovered nesting in the Mississippi River bottoms near La Crescent.

Congratulations was extended to the Green Bay Bird Club celebrating its 20th anniversary with guest speakers being Fred and Fran Hamerstrom.

Bill Foster concluded his review of Roger Tory Peterson's and James Fisher's new book, *Wild America*, which has become a classic, by stating, "In short, get *Wild America* as soon as you can." And, just as today for many of our most noteworthy new books on birds, it was offered for sale by the WSO.

(Excerpts from Vol. 17 (4), 1955)

Prepared by Noel J. Cutright, WSO Historian, 3352 Knollwood Road, West Bend, WI 53095-9414. h. 262. 675. 2443. w. 262. 268. 3617. Noel.Cutright@we-energies.com.

This Bald Eagle in flight was taken by John Van Den Brandt.

"From Field and Feeder"

Reports of unusual behaviors or fascinating occurrences involved Mallard, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Gray Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and House Finch.

Tree Duck?

17 April 2004, Eau Claire County—On 17 April 2004 the Ornithology class from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire was on a field trip in Eau Claire to Braun's Bay in Carson Park. One of the students asked what duck was in a nearby tree. I was quite surprised to see a female Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) fairly well seated on an outer limb of the tree about 5–6 meters up. The class was about 20 meters away and after perhaps five minutes, the duck flew. It made a wide circle about the tree and landed in the tree again, but had difficulty perching on the small branch. It continued to flap-climb upward toward the main-stem where there was a tree cavity. It peered into the cavity, remained there for a while, eventually departing from the tree. A student, Forest Hobbs, had a digital camera and was able to get close enough to take photographs (Fig. 1). We did not view the duck in the tree on subsequent field trips, nor did we climb the tree to see if she nested in the cavity.—*Terry Balding, Eau Claire, WI.*

Better a Late Photo than None

1 May 2004, Fond du Lac County—This Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*) was written up in the Winter 2004 issue of *The Passenger Pigeon* (Vol. 66, No. 4), p. 401 in The Spring Season: 2004 and p. 427 in "By the Wayside"—Spring 2004. The bird was seen by our pond on Pine Lane, Town of Auburn, Fond du Lac County on 1 May 2004. Our property is located at the edge of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. This bird was first seen in the morning on our deck railing and again in the evening on the rocks edging the pond (Fig. 2). When it flew off in the morning it headed into the pine trees on our property. Our pond does not contain any fish so we were surprised to see that it returned in the evening. It wasn't sighted again after the evening

Fig. 1. This Mallard, at a cavity in the tree, was photographed by Forest Hobbs.

visit.—*Sandy Pfotenhauer, Campbellsport, WI.*

Harrier Hand-off

June 2004, Dodge County—While birding with a small group of friends during their stop in Wisconsin following their trip to Michigan to see Kirtland's Warblers, we were fortunate to observe an interesting feeding activity involving a pair of Northern Harriers (*Circus cyaneus*) at Horicon NWR.

In the vicinity of the Bud Cook Hiking Area, we observed a male Harrier flying with what appeared to be a small mammal (mouse or vole) in its talons. As the bird flew twenty feet or so above a broad expanse of field, a female Harrier suddenly joined the male. Flying parallel, she positioned herself directly below the male keeping a separation of about three feet between them. Suddenly she inverted and flying upside down, elevated herself up toward the male—at which time the male

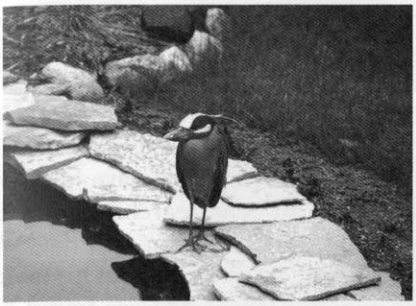


Fig. 2. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Sandy Pfotenhauer's pond.

slightly dipped toward the female. Just as smooth as could be, the male handed off the mouse to the female. She righted herself and continued on, disappearing into the grass. The male veered off, and rising up to a higher flight pattern, appeared to resume hunting.

The whole exchange took less than a few seconds and was done with such ease and skill that we hardly could believe our eyes. We surmised that this must be a very efficient way to hunt and gather food (presumably to feed young) while keeping the nest location disguised.—*Tom Sykes, Appleton, WI.*

Hawk Preying on Bats

July–August 2005, Outagamie County—During an ongoing research study by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources monitoring a nursery colony of big brown bats located within the Wolf River Bottoms Wildlife Area, Joshua Kamrowski, a University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point undergraduate, observed an uncommonly seen, yet very exciting, avian behavior. A hawk, believed to be a Cooper's, was seen preying on big brown bats as they emerged from the safe-haven of a barn. The avian predator had been seen briefly on seven of the last ten survey evenings between the times of 8:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. beginning on 12 July 2005. Despite the frequent visits, the hawk was only seen attempting to prey on the bats as they exited their daily roost on one occasion, which was unsuccessful for the avian predator. However, on 3 August 2005, the last evening Kamrowski would conduct his bat counts, the alleged Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) would catch a big brown bat. Kamrowski stated that the experience of observing such an event was remarkable to him. Research of the Cooper's Hawk has found small mammals to be a large portion of its diet; however, the consumption of bats is less common due to poor light conditions and high maneuverability of the prey.—*Kay Brockman-Mederas, Shawano, WI.*

Night Visitor

18 April 2005, Winnebago County—In our house in the woods north of Oshkosh, we have two sliding glass doors; one opens from the dining room onto the deck and the other from the bedroom onto the deck. A few years ago we replaced the sliding screens for these two doors with sliding screens that stay in place year round. We did not throw away the old screens, but rather use them in winter over the portion of the door which is not screened (the portion that does not open) so birds are protected from flying into this glass. These old screens just lean against the glass doors at an angle.

This morning (about 4 a.m.) I was awakened by the screen near my bed

being rattled. I first thought raccoons since they do this some nights, but when I looked I saw no big furry animals at the base of the screen. Instead I saw a squirrel-sized something at about eye level on the screen. I've wished for flying squirrels in our yard for years, so hoped that was what was on the screen. But as I looked carefully, I could tell this something was on the INSIDE of the screen—between the leaning screen and the glass door. As it moved about on the screen, I realized it had wings and feathers—an Eastern Screech-Owl (*Megascops asio*)! I couldn't tell if it were gray or red phase.

I watched it for maybe 5 minutes as it moved about the screen, then I begin to worry that it could not get out from between the screen and glass—it got in, but . . .? So I went to the dining room door and out onto the deck, but before I could get to the bedroom doors, it was gone. Unharmed, I assume and hope.

I usually hear and sometimes see screech-owls in my yard (usually in summer), but this was a first with one on a screen during the night. It was my first Eastern Screech-Owl for 2005 in Wisconsin.—*Bettie Harriman, Oshkosh, WI.*

Ambassador to Wisconsin

27 March 2005, Columbia County—Wilson (named by local children) the Goose Pond Great Gray Owl (*Strix nebulosa*) was killed by a vehicle along U.S. Highway 51 sometime on Saturday night, 26 March 2005. He was last seen alive by Steve Thiessen who reported his observation on Wisbirdn. We were aware that Wilson was first spotted as he sat on a faded sign along this same stretch of Hwy 51 a month or so earlier.

We called Kris Kesselhon, our "owl volunteer" and left a message on her answering machine that gave his location. She had been searching for him and had not found him that day. We expressed our concern about his safety and thought that if he were found he should be flushed from the road to get him away from the busy highway.

It was late Saturday evening when Kris returned home and heard our message then left again to look for Wilson (11:00 p.m.). It was a warm evening and the full moon provided Kris with the light that she needed to find him and flush him from the highway. However, upon arriving she saw Wilson along the road and knew that he was dead. She mentioned to us that something told her to go out and look for him—she felt that it was important for her to go. As things turned out, Kris was glad that she was able to find him and bring him to us at Goose Pond. Madison Audubon Society has federal and state permits that allow us to pick up dead animals for the purpose of making study skins and mounts for public education. Wilson may be made into a mount so that we can continue to educate people about the beauty of these special owls. We were very fortunate to have him here in Columbia/Dane Counties.

We put together a Great Gray Owl life history and birding etiquette fact sheet and Kris handed them out to all who came to see Wilson. She also provided owl watchers with a copy of the Great Wisconsin Birding and Nature Trails, *Checklist of Wisconsin Birds.* Kris spent many hours talking with people about Wilson. Kris also helped band

Fig. 3. "Wilson," the Goose Pond Great Gray Owl, photographed by Mike McDowell.

Wilson and was thrilled by the experience. Kris wrote up her observations during her weeks working with Wilson and his public. We thank banders Richard Roberts and Dennis Hassly for banding Wilson.

Wilson had his own photographer, Mike McDowell. Many of us took pictures of Wilson, but his best side was captured by Mike, who came to know Wilson in a personal way. Here is our favorite Wilson shot (Fig. 3)! On numerous trips to see Wilson, we would come upon Mike, parked a safe distance away from the owl, with his camera ready for the next prized shot. Mike shared our concern for Wilson's safety and privacy and we talked with Mike about how to educate the public about the special needs of birds and wildlife. Our conversations soon led to the idea of the fact sheet and *Checklist of Wisconsin Birds* as a way to let people know about observing birds and wildlife without disturbance.

This past week has been a difficult time for us. On a trip to Siren for Sue's Great WI Birding and Nature Trail work, she found a dead Great Gray Owl on the road. Just after she stopped to take it off the road, a car driving in the other direction hit another great gray. Yesterday, a Great Horned Owl was hit and killed near Goose Pond.

When people and wildlife mix, it is usually people who win.

But we were all winners when Wilson came to be with us this winter. In an unusual year when thousands of northern owls came south, Wilson came to stay in our community. People came from far and wide to see him, and the local children named him. How nice, this memory of "our Wilson."—*Mark and Sue Foote-Martin, Goose Pond Sanctuary, Arlington, WI.*

Birds and Tools

14 August 2005, Bayfield County—This year as in several years past, we have been lucky enough to have a pair of Red-headed Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) take up residence in our back yard. Throughout most of July and early August, the adults have been carrying corn from our deer feeder to the large willow near the back corner of the yard. On many occasions I have seen them "store" kernels of corn in the crevices and holes in a large dead poplar and our yard light utility pole. My suspicion of successful nesting was finally rewarded in mid-July with the sighting of two juveniles. This is the first time in the seven years we have lived here that more than one youngster has been sighted.

This evening while out birding in the backyard, I noticed one of the adult red-heads perched on top of the yard light pole. While I watched through my spotting scope, it chiseled a slab of wood about 2 inches long and 0.5 inch wide (about the width and thickness of a popsicle stick) from the side of the pole. Carrying this piece of wood in its beak, it moved about a foot down the pole and pushed the chip into a 0.75 inch diameter hole. The chip and the bird's beak completely disappeared into the hole. After a few moments of probing, the woodpecker triumphantly emerged with a single kernel of corn, which it carried to the top of pole and proceeded to eat. Smart bird!—*Tim Oksiuta, Ashland (Mǒquah), WI*

Tooth (Beak) and Claw

9 May 2004, Columbia County—While walking we witnessed an amazing territorial fight between two Eastern Phoebes (*Sayornis phoebe*). The first thing we saw was two birds "colliding" in mid air about five feet off the ground. They just came together from different directions and fell to the ground about 10 feet from us. At first we didn't know what species they were. After a few seconds, they again flew up (we could now see what they were), collided again and fell to the grass. At this point, being somewhat prepared, we timed them. They were lying in the grass on their sides, belly to belly. Since the grass was about three inches tall, we could not see their heads well, so we really can't say what they were doing with their beaks other than just holding onto each other. However their feet were constantly grasping at each others bellies, clawing each other. They were in this position for 56 seconds—yes 56 seconds. That may not sound like much time, but just sit still for 56 seconds and see how long it really is. They then parted, flew up, one going in one direction, and the other crossing the road. They were really going at it tooth (beak) and claw! They were no doubt very serious, to

say the least. Very interesting.—*Paul and Glenna Schwalbe, Pardeeville, WI.*

Sticky Chickadee

February 2005, Point Beach State Forest, Manitowoc County—Here is an interesting and sticky predicament that a Black-capped Chickadee (*Poecile atricapillus*) encountered at Kohler-Andrae State Park. The note was just published in our State Park e-newsletter and is forwarded with Jim's permission.

Kohler-Andrae Park Superintendent Jim Buchholz thought he had "seen it all" during his many years working in state parks, but something new always seems to pop up. During a particularly cold sub-zero day, a young woman camping in the park brought a shoebox into the park office. Inside was a sorry-looking chickadee with both its feet and wings stuck together in a hard, glue-like mass.

Apparently, the camper and her friends were roasting marshmallows over their campfire when a chickadee decided to perch on their roasting stick and got stuck in the melted marshmallow. The bird got covered in the sticky gooey mess, which hardened almost instantly due to the cold temperature.

The only way to free the chickadee was to give it a warm bath to melt the marshmallow "glue," peel apart each wing feather and foot from each other, and let the bird dry out in the park shop. Later that day, the chickadee was returned to the campground area and it happily flew away—a little wiser and a lot cleaner no doubt. Jim also says he now knows how chickadees can so easily crack open hard sunflower seeds since the tiny bird repeatedly bit his fingers with a painful tweezers-like bite during the entire time he was giving it a bath.—*Gene Tiser, Two Rivers, WI.*

White-breasted Nuthatch Behaviors

February 2005, Walworth County—On 24 February 2005, about 7:30 a.m., I discovered at least five White-breasted Nuthatches (*Sitta carolinensis*) in trees along a road near my home. They were actively feeding and sometimes calling (Ank-Call). I saw one nuthatch fan its tail, a behavior which occurs in conflicts with other birds (Stokes. *A Guide to Bird Behavior*, Vol. ll). I have noted a similar small flock of nuthatches in late winter at the Wehr Nature Center in a previous year. Except for these occasional flocks, I usually see only two nuthatches feeding near one another. The birds are nonmigratory and pairs stay together throughout the year. But why the occasional small groups? One possibility is that they roost together and then feed in the same group the next morning. In his book, *Birds Asleep*, Alexander Skutch reports that White-breasted Nuthatches usually sleep alone, but in severe weather may sleep together. He observed 29 of them arriving separately to sleep in a crack in an old pine tree.

May 2005, Walworth County—On 14 May 2005 between 4:30–5 p.m., my husband and I observed a pair of nuthatches preparing a cavity for nesting. The cavity was 40–50 feet high in a tree in our yard. Both male and female were going in and out of the cavity, pulling out what appeared to be withered yellow grasses from a previ-

ous nester. They tucked clumps of the grasses into the tree's bark both above and below the cavity. Together they removed quite a bit of material; its total bulk was perhaps equal in size to a half-gallon milk carton. The next day at 6:30 a.m., I saw the male sitting on a dead stub above the cavity singing his "Werwerwer" song dozens of times, while the female could be seen inside the cavity.

Unfortunately, despite all their work, the nuthatches were not seen at the nest site after 16 May. Nor did any other bird take up residence. We do not believe we disturbed the pair, since we viewed them from a safe distance. It is possible some kind of predator attacked the pair.

I have reported the nest preparations of these nuthatches because, although the behavior is common, we were impressed with the amount of material the nuthatches stuffed into the bark and felt fortunate to have such good view of their work. Some experts believe that the scent of these items may deter squirrels and other mammal predators from the nest area.—*Mariette Nowak, East Troy, WI*

Russian Roulette Blue-gray Gnatcatcher Style

8 June 2005, Pardeeville, Columbia County—There is a Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) nest in our area, and while walking in the mornings, we always check to see if there are any new developments that should be noted. The nest is located in a deciduous woods about 55 feet high in a white oak tree that sits about 35–45 feet in from a road. Thus it is easily observed from the road. This is the third year we know of that Cooper's Hawks have used this location. The parents fledged four young last year, more than one the previous year, and there is a minimum of three nestlings that we can see this year. For the current year, the hawks were first seen tending the site on 5 April, first observed incubating 18 April, and first detected feeding their young in early May.

The other day, 8 June 2005 at about 9:45 a.m., as we approached the area and looked at the nest, we could see one of the adults sitting on its edge as they do when feeding their young. Using 8 (42 binoculars, we noticed right away what appeared to be a lot of fluttering around the adult. With a more careful look, small birds could be seen flying back and forth, leaving a perch in the leaves nearby, flying at the hawk, and returning to another part of the tree. It was soon obvious that the small birds were Blue-gray Gnatcatchers (*Polioptila caerulea*). They had been in the general area since late April, but we had never seen them this close to the nest before! We watched this interesting activity for a few moments and then walked on.

Some distance beyond the location of the nest is where we turn around and walk back on the other side of the road. This morning on our return we again stopped and looked at what was going on. The gnatcatchers were still at it. With more careful observing and from a different vantage point, we could see that they were actually hitting the hawk on the top of the head and on the nape, at least it certainly looked that way. However, the hawk seemed completely oblivious to the gnatcatchers. Watching four to five minutes more, we could detect absolutely no response on part of the

hawk. It just went about its business. Several times two gnatcatchers were seen simultaneously, but their activity was so constant that we suspect that at least three individuals were involved in the attack. The total time elapsed was from 9:45–10:05 a.m. So the Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were harassing the hawk for a period of at least 20 minutes, probably much longer than we would permit a deer fly to buzz around our own heads.—*Paul W. Schwalbe, Pardeeville, WI.*

Early Nesting

15 February 2005, Jefferson County—Each year at Christmastime I have a wreath on my front door. The door is not used as we enter the house either through an attached garage or through a patio door leading into our kitchen. We live on a rather busy corner and the front door is only about 15 or 20 feet from the front sidewalk. The mailman deposits mail in a slot directly below the wreath so there is activity around all the time.

On 15 February 2005, I decided the wreath was beginning to look brown so took it down. As I lifted it off the hanger a bird flew out of it and in my surprise I jerked and tipped the wreath; three eggs fell out. They landed on a concrete sidewalk. They were small blue eggs and each one contained a well formed embryo. I did not get a good look at the bird, but it seemed to be a dull color. The nest was very well formed. My son and I examined the shells and determined the embryos did not survive.

I went to look at the eggs a couple of hours later and discovered they were gone as were the embryos. The eggs had been the size of a fingernail and plain blue with no spots.

I felt badly about it and wondered what the bird was and how the young would have been fed. I called Karen Etter Hale and she thought it might have been a House Finch, but that it was very early for nesting.

Birds have nested in my hanging plants on my patio in the summer, but I have never had one nest in my wreath in the winter.—*Ruth E. Topel, Lake Mills, WI.*

Gary Krogman could not resist taking the picture of this Bald Eagle in its Richard Nixon pose.

Wisconsin Nesting Record for Great Tit

Marilyn Bontly

901 E. Fairy Chasm Road
Bayside, WI 53217-1818
mbontly@wi.rr.com

On 3 June 2004, I saw a pair of Great Tits (*Parus major*) carrying food into a nest hole at the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center (SANC), Milwaukee Co, Wisconsin. I had first observed a Great Tit at SANC on 18 October 2003, but didn't see it again until the following March. However, I learned that a staff member at SANC who lives on the property occasionally had seen two birds visiting his feeders over the winter. The nest was in a tall ash tree in a hole where a branch may have broken off. I would usually hear the distinctive song before seeing the bird. From 3–7 June, I observed one bird fly to a tree near the hole where it would perch, holding food, before flying quickly to the hole and going in (Fig. 1). At times, both birds would come out even though I had only seen one go in. Apparently the female had been inside all along. I never observed what I thought was a young tit.

Great Tits are a very common bird over most of Europe and the United Kingdom, with an estimated 1,700,000 pairs in the UK alone. They inhabit open deciduous woodlands, conifer woodlands, parks, and gardens where their diet is insects, seeds, and nuts. The SANC pair and others that occur occasionally in southeastern Wisconsin and northern Illinois are undoubtedly released or escaped cage birds. See *Meadowlark, A Journal of Illinois Birds*, Volume 13, Number 2, 2004, for an article on an Illinois nest, "Great Tits Nest in McHenry Co" by Darlene Fiske. Four young were raised in 2003 and a pair again showed up in the same yard in spring 2004. It remains to be seen if the species will become established in the wild in North America.

The pair at SANC or their descendants have survived over two winters. I again saw a pair on March 14, 2005, in the same area where they nested in 2004. I am fairly certain they successfully nested again in 2005 although I did not find the nest. I did see three birds at one time and one appeared to have a shorter tail than the other two. I saw or heard the birds as late as 8 October 2005.

Joel Trick photographed this Summer Tanager at his home in Manitowoc County on 16 May 2005.

Ryan Brady photographed this Summer Tanager at a feeder in Ashland County this spring.

The Spring Season: 2005

Karl H. David

6880 Beechnut Drive
Racine, WI 53402
david@msoe.edu

If there was a catch phrase to the season, it might have been the title Lennie Lichter gave to an e-mail he submitted to the Wisconsin Bird Network, "Warblerless in Monroe County," referring to the fact that he had recorded zero warbler species there by the end of April. Others echoed his experience, and you can be sure your seasonal chronicler paid careful attention while compiling the season's data to see just how accurate this perception was. The answer is that it was dead on: a paltry 10 species of warblers had been reported statewide by 30 April. In comparison, the number for each of the four previous years has hovered between 20 and 30! It was perhaps with this in mind that Daryl Tessen summed up the spring migration as "late, slow and rather unspectacular."

Of course, by simple virtue of coming last, May tends to bias our impression of the total migration experience. There was certainly much more to it. Begin with the owls: no fewer than 11 species were recorded for the season, in other words every owl on the checklist except Barn Owl! Northern owls that had reached the more populated southern part of the state stayed put almost until the end of March and so were undoubtedly seen by hundreds of observers. Great Gray Owls of course were the biggest prize, and the two of these that reached Dane County achieved celebrity status, as detailed in the account below for that species.

Having said that though, one comes right back to May when perusing the reports for "spectacular" days afield, the kinds of days whose memories keep us doing this year after year. Tessen himself, *pace* his "unspectacular" remark above, had such a day on 6 May in Dodge County, when he was overwhelmed by an estimated 3,000 Pectoral Sandpipers and 2,000 Lesser Yellowlegs, with 200 Greater Yellowlegs thrown in for good measure. The day before, Jim Frank recorded an unusual "wren slam" in Milwaukee County, when he saw [literally: no "heard only" birds] exactly one individual of each of the five wren species in the space of about ten minutes. Bob Costanza reported an unusual warbler fallout in Dane County on 15 May, unusual because it occurred in the afternoon, around 5:30 P.M. in fact. "So much for the morning being the best time to watch birds," he said, estimating a flock of 150–200 birds representing 19 species. "It was the largest and

most persistent flock of warblers I've encountered in all my days of birding," he added, with the viewing "still very good" at 7:30 P.M.

But what sounded like the most exhilarating day of all this season probably belongs to Ryan Brady, birding in a dirt field in Ashland County on 13 May. For starters, he was witnessing what he described as "by far the best" American Golden-Plover fallout he'd ever seen, with three flocks of approximately 25, 25, and 45 birds apiece. He was scoping the latter when a flock of about 45 Horned Larks dropped in. Before he knew it, a fully adult male Smith's Longspur walked into his field of view, and he was able to photograph it, the first such documentation for the state. Shortly after over 200 American Pipits joined the party, Brady decided to call it a day. But, irresistibly drawn to the same field later that evening, he found a Harris's Sparrow and, "to top it all off," a second-year male "Prairie" Merlin "stooped in on the golden plovers and then perched on a dirt clump just long enough for me to click

some blurry pictures. I couldn't help but wonder if I were in Wisconsin or North Dakota." No offense to birders in the latter state, but accounts like this are going to have us all out all over our own state again next spring to see what turns up next!

Weather and Birds

March was generally cold and wintery, with 9 new inches of snow in both Jefferson and Dane Counties and 13 inches in Portage County. Gulls "in numbers of Biblical proportions" (John Idzikowski) amassed in the Lake Michigan harbors, especially in Racine and Milwaukee Counties. Someone presumably out to see the "Goose Pond" Dane/Columbia County Great Gray Owl overturned his or her vehicle on the icy roads during the third week of the month. Waterfowl were extremely slow in arriving, with the first big waves of geese and swans not arriving in southern counties until a warm spell the last four or five days of the month. Up in Douglas County, this was the complete composite waterfowl list for two observers for the month: Common Goldeneye, beginning of period; Canada Goose, 6 March; Mallard, 31 March.

April was quite warm and dry for the first three weeks or so; all the record early arrivals for the season [see "Arrivals and Departures" below] occurred during the middle of this month. There were some very windy days as well. However, it turned quite chilly toward the end of the month, with persistent north winds, and the migration appeared suspended in "warblerless" abeyance, as described at the outset: notice how few first arrival dates for neotropical migrants in the species accounts below fall on the last few days of April or the first few days of May.

With the advent of southerly winds on 5 May, the Wisconsin Bird Network was at last abuzz with excited reports that the logjam had finally broken, and the plethora of 5/6/7 May arrival dates to be found below bears witness to that fact. Overall, it was still relatively cool and wet the first half of the month; the second half was drier, but truly hot weather never developed anywhere in the state. Murray Berner stated that migration was essentially complete in Portage County by 22 May. However, the list of rarities for the season would have been somewhat shorter if that had been the cut off date: Swainson's Hawk, Chuck-will's-widow and Lark Bunting all appeared afterwards to add some excitement to the season's end.

Rarities

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology Records Committee voted favorably on reports for the following species or forms (numbers in parentheses refer to the number of distinct locations involved, not the total number of reports accepted for the species): White-faced Ibis, Swainson's Hawk (2), Black-necked Stilt, Ruff, Eurasian Collared-Dove, White-winged Dove, Northern Hawk Owl (2), Burrowing Owl, Great Gray Owl (2), Boreal Owl, Chuck-will's-widow, Black-backed Woodpecker (2), "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Western Tanager (3), Spotted Towhee, Lark Bunting,

This Lark Bunting was photographed enjoying a lunch of dandelion seeds in Bayfield County on 28 May 2005 by Ryan Brady.

This photograph taken on 13 May 2005 by Ryan Brady in Ashland County is the first time a Smith's Longspur has been recorded in Wisconsin with a photo and is the state's thirteenth record of this species.

Smith's Longspur, Blue Grosbeak, Painted Bunting, Hoary Redpoll and Eurasian Tree Sparrow. See the species accounts and "By the Wayside" for more details.

Arrivals and Departures

The warm spell in the middle of April resulted in new record-early arrival dates for three species, with a tie for a fourth. Judy Haseleu saw a White-rumped Sandpiper in Barron County on 13 April, eclipsing the record set on 14 April 1974 in St. Croix County. Janine Polk tied the old record in Chippewa County the next day. Interestingly, the three earliest records now come from the same part of the state, and well away from the Great Lakes at that. On 15 April, Thomas Wood discovered a Piping Plover in Ozaukee County, lowering that arrival record [21 April 1970 and 1973] by a full six days. And finally, Kay Kavanagh's early Nashville Warbler in Vilas County on 18 April tied the record for that species, set in 1972.

No late departure records were set for winter species, but Ryan Brady's Ashland County Smith's Longspur on 13 May was notable not just for being the eighth spring record, but because it was so much later than all the others. Previously, sightings had spanned the period from 16 March [2002] to 28 April [1921]. The Blue Grosbeak discovered in Rock County on 20 May was documented (Bill Mueller) as late as 28 May, thus eclipsing the latest spring report to date [23 May 1950], but this is not particularly significant because the species has been recorded in the summer at least five times, as late in fact as 10 July [2002].

Having recently gained access to more of Bob Domagalski's extensive collection of data, I am now able to open up a new category in this section of my report: the all-time latest arrival date for common spring migrants. Did the "warblerless in April" phenomenon result in any such records being broken? Indeed it did, with three neotropical migrant species arriving later than ever before recorded. Interestingly, however, only one of these is a warbler species! I leave you free to speculate on the identity of the three species; the answers are to be found in the accounts.

Reintroductions and Exotics

Whooping Cranes were reported only once, 4 being seen in Lafayette County on 29 April (Romano).

The parade of exotic Eurasian species noted in the last few years goes on. The *Parus* population persists and appears to be spreading out, with Great Tits reported again in Milwaukee County and (new) in Door County (C. Hoffmann, 1 April to 22 April). A Blue Tit was seen in Dunn County on 15 May (Stiteler). And European Goldfinch reports proliferated, coming from Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Winnebago Counties.

Three new species were added to the exotic smorgasbord. Daryl Christensen found a Hooded Crow in Juneau County on 9 April. Not to be outdone, Noel Cutright reported a Eurasian Jay at an Ozaukee County feeder on 24 April. But the most improbable sighting undoubtedly belongs to Bill Cowart, who had a Yellowhammer (!) in his Milwaukee

Great Gray Owl in Douglas County in late March 2005 by Shaun Putz.

Boreal Owl in Douglas County yard in late March 2005 by Robbye Johnson.

County back yard for eight hours on 29 April.

Statistics

Eighty-nine observers submitted reports. An additional 37 observers are cited from postings on the Wisconsin Bird Network, for a total of 126 contributors and cited observers [observer "teams" being counted once]. Ninety-eight reports consisted of what I call "comprehensive" coverage of a county; that is, each totals 25 or more species in that county. Of Wisconsin's 72 counties, 45 were covered by one or more such reports, with Dane County as usual having by far the most (10). Milwaukee County (7 reports) and Manitowoc County (5 reports) followed. An additional 20 counties received "incidental" coverage, i.e. reports of fewer than 25 species only. Thus no reports whatsoever were received from 7 counties: Adams, Jackson, Pierce, Pepin, Price, Rusk, and Sawyer Counties.

The total number of species seen was 318, the highest total since Spring 2000. Not much was missed, and the figure might even have been 2 higher if plausible Wisconsin Bird Network reports of Eurasian Wigeon and Scissor-tailed Flycatcher had been submitted to the Records Committee. Not reported to my knowledge in any forum were Barrow's Goldeneye, Western Sandpiper, and Western Kingbird, my candidates for the three "most surprising" misses for the season.

The Accounts

These twenty widespread, common, and mostly sedentary species are not included in the species accounts: Canada Goose, Mute Swan, Mallard, Ring-necked Pheasant, American Kestrel, Peregrine Falcon, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, American Crow, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, European Starling, House Finch, American Goldfinch, and House Sparrow.

Abbreviations: BOP = beginning of period; EOP = end of period; TTP = throughout the period; WSO = Wisconsin Society for Ornithology.

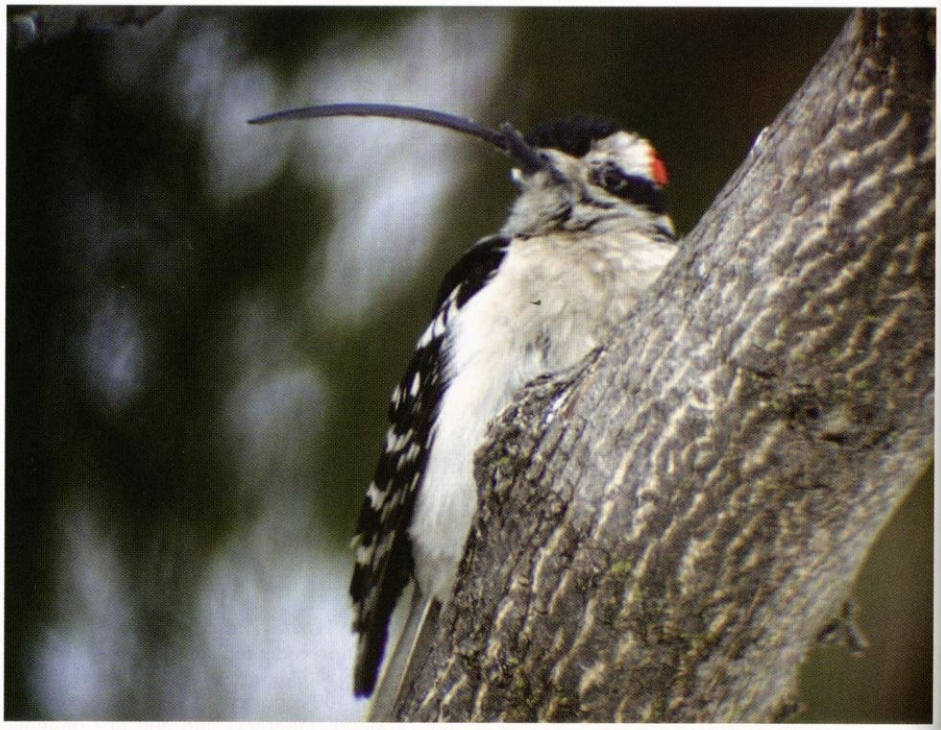
Reports (1 March–31 May 2005)

Greater White-fronted Goose—After two years of unprecedented abundance, numbers returned to 2002 levels, with only two flocks of more than 100 reported: 112 in Green County on 12 March (Yoerger) and 400 in Columbia County on 29 March (Tessen). BOP reports were also scarcer, coming only from Dane County (Thiessen). Departed mid-April, with final reports from Dane and Columbia Counties. Eight county reports were received in all, with a Chippewa County report on 30 March (Polk) the only one not from the south central part of the state.

Snow Goose—First noted in Milwaukee County on 4 March and last in Dane County on 8 April (both Prestby). Only one significant concentration was reported, with 45 found on 31 March in Ashland/Bayfield Counties (Brady). Other reports came from Walworth, Ozaukee, Sauk, Columbia, and Winnebago Counties.

Ross's Goose—Reports spanned the period from 2 March (Thiessen) to 28 March (Ashman), both in Dane County. Up to 3 individuals were present in that county at any one time. In addition, Romano found 2 in Lafayette County on 14 March and Harriman 1 in Fond du Lac County on 26 March.

Cackling Goose—Determining the comings and goings of this latest addition to Wisconsin's avifauna, not to mention its reliable identification, very much remains a work in progress. The amount of documentation desired by the



A Hairy Woodpecker with a deformed bill visiting the feeders of Todd Ward.

Black-throated Gray Warbler photographed by David Larson in Jefferson County on 4 May 2005.

WSO Records Committee also remains to be determined: only R. Johnson in Douglas County submitted such, in the form of a photograph. For the record then, there were reports from 13 counties, spanning the period from 2 March (Sauk County, A. Holschbach) to 20 May (Ashland/Bayfield Counties, Brady). The majority of the downstate reports came from March, with lingerers well into April only in Dane and Dodge Counties. For the most part, only individuals or single digit groups were reported, a flock of 25 in Columbia County on 29 March (Tessen) providing the exception.

Trumpeter Swan—First reported from Burnett County on 5 March (Haseleu). That county also harbored the greatest number of individuals, with Tessen recording 16 there on 21 March. Late reports away from its northwestern breeding grounds came from Marinette County on 8 May (Campbell) and Oconto County on 25 May (Smiths).

Tundra Swan—Arrival dates late in March were the rule (29 March in particular reading like a broken record), the few exceptions including a report of TTP from Door County (Lukes) and a 13 March report from Vernon County (Houdek). Significant concentrations included counts of 650, 400, and 600 on 2 April in Sheboygan (Brassers), Winnebago (Knispel), and Portage (Berner) Counties, with Risch adding 400 in Clark County and Carlsen 850 in Barron County on 8 April for good measure. Late reports on 20 May came from Manitowoc (Sontag) and Marinette (Campbell) Counties.

Wood Duck—The earliest reports came on 6 March from Walworth and Racine Counties (Fitzgerald) and on 8 March from Rock (Tessen, Yoerger) and Florence (Kavanagh) Counties. A. Holschbach counted 32 in Sauk County on 23 March, Frank 17 in Ozaukee County on 15 May.

Gadwall—Ashman and Ziebell recorded it at BOP in Dane and Winnebago Counties respectively. Reports on 6 March followed next from Milwaukee (Bontly) and Lafayette (Romano) Counties. There were 50 in Dane County on 13 March (Stutz).

American Wigeon—Berner had it at BOP in Portage County. By the end of the first week of March it had also been found in Rock, Dane, and Lafayette Counties. Prestby recorded 150 in Columbia County on 1 April, while Ziebell tallied 70 in Winnebago County on 16 April.

American Black Duck—Reported from 26 counties TTP, the largest number given being Ziebell's 12 in Winnebago County on 24 March. Still in Dodge and Manitowoc Counties at EOP.

Blue-winged Teal—First noted in Iowa County on 16 March (A. Holschbach). Stutz had 200 in Fond du Lac County on 17 April.

Northern Shoveler—BOP in Dane County (Ashman). Other early reports included ones from Rock, Lafayette, Sauk, and Ozaukee Counties from 5 March to 7 March. Prestby gave the largest total, 300 in Columbia County on 1 April.

Northern Pintail—The earliest report was 2 March (Sauk County, A. Holschbach), with Lafayette, Door, and Ozaukee Counties following within the week. The next report also represented the maximum found, 50 in Dane County on 8 March (Tessen). Reported from 28 counties, a reasonably good total by recent standards.

Green-winged Teal—First reported from Rock County on 5 March (Yoerger). Romano had it in Lafayette County the next day, where he also reported 75 on 4 April. That total was eclipsed by counts of 330 and 300 in Dodge (Frank) and Fond du Lac (Stutz) Counties on 16 April and 17 April respectively.

Canvasback—Appeared in Ozaukee (Frank) and Dane (Evanson) Counties on 3 March. First noted in Winnebago County on 6 March, with 1200 individuals there by 6 April (Ziebell). Still in Walworth and Dane Counties at EOP.

Redhead—BOP in Sheboygan, Manitowoc, and Door Counties (Brassers, Sontag, and Lukes respectively). Ziebell counted 90 in Winnebago County on 6 April.

Ring-necked Duck—Earliest arrivals in Rock (5 March, Yoerger) and Lafayette (6 March, Romano) Counties. A. Holschbach reported 487 in Sauk County on 31 March. Still in Juneau and Wood Counties on 24 May (Fitzgerald). More widely reported than the previous two species.

Greater Scaup—Large concentrations included 4,000 in Milwaukee County on 12 March (Mueller), 2,000 in Oconto County on 3 April (Smiths), and 1,300 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 28 April (Brady).

Lesser Scaup—Representative counts included 105 in Sauk County on 22 March (A. Holschbach), 100 in Crawford County on 9 April (Stutz), and over 700 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 16 April (Brady).

Black-backed Woodpecker at Heckrodt Wetlands Reserve in Winnebago County by John Van Den Brandt in May 2005.

Harlequin Duck—Overwintering birds were tracked in Milwaukee County until 14 May (Frank) and notably in Manitowoc County until 29 May (Sontag). There was also a Sheboygan County report on 23 March (Tessen).

Surf Scoter—Reports came from Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Manitowoc, and Ashland/Bayfield Counties. Ozaukee County reports extended from 7 March (Gustafson) to 14 May (Uttech), with a maximum of 13 on 26 March (Frank). The Ashland/Bayfield County report (Brady) was the last (20 May).

White-winged Scoter—Reported from the same counties as the previous species, except for Sheboygan County. No indication of anything but single sightings, including Manitowoc County on 23 March and 1 May (Tessen), Ozaukee County on 14 May (Uttech), and Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 20 May (Brady).

Black Scoter—The only "sea duck" reported from a county not adjoining a Great Lake, with a 29 April report from Eau Claire County (Polk). This was also the only report not in March or in May, with such reports coming (in chronological order) from Ozaukee and Sheboygan Counties in March and from Milwaukee, Manitowoc, Ashland/Bayfield, and Douglas Counties in May. The dates spanned were from 7 March to 21 May.

Long-tailed Duck—Found only along Lake Michigan, between Milwaukee and Door Counties (omitting Kewaunee County). Paulios encountered a staggering 5,000 or more in Ozaukee County on 13 March. Last reported there on 16 May (Uttech).

Bufflehead—Highest count recorded was 270 in Portage County (16 April, Berner). Departure dates included 16 May in Dane County (Yoerger) and 24 May in Winnebago County (Ziebell).

Common Goldeneye—The only BOP waterfowl species in Douglas County (R. Johnson). Mueller recorded up to 1,000 in Milwaukee County on 12 March, with the Smiths adding 500 in Oconto County on 7 April. Stayed in Dane County until 25 April (Ashman) and in Ozaukee County until 1 May (Frank). EOP in Florence County (Kavanagh).

Hooded Merganser—In at least Ozaukee, Manitowoc, Sauk, Portage, and Oconto Counties at BOP, with 3 March Dane County and 6 March Lafayette County reports as well. Berner's 300 on 4 April in Portage County topped all received counts.

Common Merganser—BOP in at least 8 counties, the most unusual perhaps being Barron County (Carlsen). About 200 birds apiece were found in Dane (Tessen) and Winnebago (Ziebell) Counties on 8 March and 24 March respectively, with the Smiths adding 225 in Oconto County on 3 April. Mostly gone by the middle of April, but in Manitowoc County as late as 14 May (Sontag) and TTP in Winnebago (Ziebell) and Door (Lukes) Counties.

Red-breasted Merganser—Arrival dates around 1 April in many of the inland counties, never in large numbers, though no Great Lakes report gave a higher figure than Ziebell's 70 in Winnebago County on 1 April. Remained in that county until 16 May and in Sheboygan County until 19 May (Brassers). As usual, found in Door County at EOP (Lukes).

Ruddy Duck—BOP in Dane County (Prestby) and first week of March in Rock (Yoerger) and Winnebago (Ziebell) Counties. Some idea of the variation in "guesstimating" the size of large flocks of birds can be seen in three Dodge County reports from 17 April: Frank, Stutz, and Prestby gave figures of 3,900, 2,000, and 1,500 respectively. Northern counties reached, all in May, were Burnett, Douglas, and most notably Vilas County, where J. Baughman recorded his first ever there on 28 May.

Gray Partridge—Only two reports, both on 13 March, with Frank reporting 6 from Ozaukee County and J. Holschbach 5 from Manitowoc County.

Ruffed Grouse—Reported from 19 counties, including Portage County and only 5 more southerly ones (Grant, Lafayette, Iowa, Sauk, and Manitowoc Counties).

Spruce Grouse—For the fourth straight spring, reports came from Vilas County only, all of single birds (of both sexes) except for a report of 2 females on 16 April (Smiths).

Sharp-tailed Grouse—Taylor, Burnett, Douglas, and Bayfield County reports were received, with the LaValleys annotating their Douglas County 16 May entry with "17, dancing."

Greater Prairie-Chicken—Noted as present (without numbers) in Marathon County on 9 April (Risch) and in Portage County on 24 May (Fitzgerald, Prestby).

This Painted Bunting was photographed by Lynn Ott as it visited the feeders at the Calumet County Park offices on the east shore of Lake Winnebago between 5–7 May 2005.

Wild Turkey—Romano reported 105 in Richland County on 20 March. Present on virtually all comprehensive county reports, Ashland/Bayfield Counties (Brady) presenting almost the only exception.

Northern Bobwhite—Reported only from Kenosha, Rock, Green, Dane, Sauk, and Columbia Counties, with only 1 of the 10 comprehensive Dane County reporters (Ashman) mentioning it.

Red-throated Loon—A 13 March report from Sheboygan County (Thiessen) was relatively early. Domagalski reported 8 in Manitowoc County on 3 April, R. Johnson 7 in Douglas County on 15 May. The latest report was of a bird in Ozaukee County on 21 May (Mueller). Also found in Racine and Milwaukee Counties.

Common Loon—No really early reports, with the vast majority not before the last three days of March. A 24 March Dane County report was the earliest noted, with 40 individuals there on 3 April also the maximum given (both Stutz). Lingered in Columbia County until 24 May (Fitzgerald) and in Rock County until 26 May (Klubertanz).

Pied-billed Grebe—Prestby reported it at BOP in Dane County, with two more early reports following on 6 March in Milwaukee (Bontly) and Ozaukee (Frank) Counties. Evanson counted 22 in Dane County on 29 April.

Horned Grebe—Found in 20 counties. March reports came from Ozaukee (20 March, Uttech) and Brown (31 March, Tessen) Counties. Brady counted 271 in Ashland/Bayfield

Counties on 25 April. Still in Douglas (R. Johnson) and Marinette (Kavanagh) Counties the first week of May, with the absolute latest report coming from Ozaukee County on 14 May (Frank).

Red-necked Grebe—First noted in Portage County by Berner on 3 April. Stutz had 12 in Fond du Lac County on 17 April. Found altogether in 16 counties.

Eared Grebe—Six county reports, all between 1 and 10 May except for the first (Manitowoc County, 10 April, Smiths). Six in Bayfield County on 10 May represented the maximum (Brady). Also found in Racine, Rock, Dodge, and Trempealeau Counties.

Western Grebe—Three reports: Portage County on 25 April (Berner); Trempealeau County on 16 May (L. Johnson); Douglas County on 22 May (R. Johnson).

American White Pelican—Appeared first in Brown County on 31 March (20 individuals, Tessen). A Dane County sighting on 4 April (Thiessen) broke a streak of two consecutive springs where it had gone undetected in our most heavily birded (or at least reported!) county. Ashman also had 4 there on 23 May for good measure. The best counts were of 150 and 300 in Grant (9 April, Stutz) and Lafayette (16 April, Yoerger) Counties respectively. All told, appeared in 19 counties.

Double-crested Cormorant—Tessen had a BOP report from Brown County. Otherwise, returnees were first noted in Winnebago County on 24 March (Bruce). R. Hoffmann counted 1,000 or so in Kenosha County on 7 May, while Ziebell had about 2,000 in Winnebago County on 14 May.

American Bittern—Arrived in Taylor County on 10 April (Risch), with 7 more county arrivals by 20 April. In the end, reported from 19 counties. Tessen had 12 in Green Lake County on 30 April.

Least Bittern—Arrived simultaneously in Waukesha (Gustafson) and Winnebago (Ziebell, 3 individuals) Counties on 14 May. Ziebell's was the only one of the 7 county reports that eventually were received to note more than 1 individual. There were no reports north of Oconto and Door or west of Dane Counties.

Great Blue Heron—There were 4 reports from southern counties the first week of March: Dane, Iowa, Rock, and Racine Counties. Representative mid-month arrival dates included 21 March in Manitowoc and Winnebago Counties. Reached Ashland/Bayfield Counties two days later, but not found in Florence, Vilas, or Douglas Counties until early April. The high count given was 44 on 14 May in Winnebago County (Ziebell). The Smiths described them as "low" in Oconto County.

Great Egret—Made its first appearance on 29 March in Dodge County (Tessen). With two exceptions (La Crosse and Ashland/Bayfield Counties), a line from Lafayette to Marinette Counties essentially formed the northern boundary for its appearances. Ziebell counted 560 individuals in Winnebago County on 29 May. Appeared in 21 counties altogether.

Snowy Egret—An excellent season for this species, with no fewer than 8 county reports ranging chronologically from 4 May (Milwaukee County, Boldt) to 22 May (Ashland/Bayfield Counties, Brady). Also represented were Rock, Dane, Sauk, Manitowoc, Brown, and Waupaca Counties.

Little Blue Heron—Reported three times, beginning with a Fitzgerald Walworth County sighting on 5 May. Sedloff had one in Kenosha County on 7 May; Kieser added another in Burnett County on 26 May.

Cattle Egret—Detected in Waukesha, Fond du Lac, Manitowoc, Winnebago, Sauk, and Crawford Counties. Gustafson's 19 April Waukesha County sighting was the earliest. Ziebell's 12 in Winnebago County on 9 May topped all counts.

Green Heron—Earliest arrivals came on 12 April (Milwaukee County, Mueller) and on 15 April (Iowa County, Pugh). The Smiths reported numbers as down in Oconto County.

Black-crowned Night-Heron—Dane, Winnebago, and Door Counties formed the northwestern boundary of the 10 reporting counties. The first report came from Ziebell in Winnebago County on 4 April; the same observer counted 800 there on 29 May.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron—The single report came from La Crosse County (14 May, Paulson).

White-faced Ibis—The streak of consecutive spring seasons with a *Plegadis* ibis report was extended to seven, with Paulson's 19 May individual in Trempealeau County [see "By the Wayside"].

Turkey Vulture—Noted on 1 March in Dane County (Prestby) and on 4 March in Sauk County (A. Holschbach). Kirschbaum had over 150 returning migrants overhead in Crawford County on 18 March. Counts of 60 each were later added in Grant (9 April, Stutz) and Lafayette (5 May, Romano) Counties. Reached Portage County on 30 March (Berner) and Douglas County on 1 April (LaValleys).

Osprey—Appeared on 31 March in Dane County (Thiessen), with sightings in Waukesha, Winnebago, and Manitowoc Counties on each of the next three days. Brady reported 12 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 6 May. Nested in Milwaukee County for the first time on record [Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel*, 3 May].

Bald Eagle—Found pretty much everywhere in the state, with counts of around 50 in Ashland/Bayfield (27 March, Brady) and Grant (9 April, Stutz) Counties.

Northern Harrier—BOP in 9 counties, with 3 March reports in 2 more. Clark (Risch) and Door (Lukes) were the northernmost counties in this group. Reached Douglas County on 2 April (R. Johnson, LaValleys). Stutz had 17 in Dodge County on 4 May.

Sharp-shinned Hawk—Designated as BOP only in Door County (Lukes), though a few reports from early March (Dodge, Rock, and Ozaukee Counties) probably referred to overwintering birds. Least frequently reported from the southwestern part of the state. The species had two consecutive good migration days in Ashland/Bayfield Counties: 228 individuals on 5 May and 193 on 6 May (Brady).

Cooper's Hawk—McDowell related an anecdote reflective of this adaptive species' thorough integration into the backyard birdfeeding phenomenon. A Mourning Dove struck his Dane County window on 30 April, and his presence at said window spooked a Cooper's Hawk which had apparently had its eye on the moribund prize. An hour later, the hawk hadn't returned, so McDowell picked the now lifeless dove up and tossed it high into the air. "Within seconds, the Cooper's swooped down over the dove and then perched above it in our tree. I went back inside and watched as the hawk flew down next to the dove, hopped over to it and then pierced its talons into its body, flying off with it to consume a cold but presumably still tasty meal!"

Northern Goshawk—Present in 8 counties, Dane County (25 March, Stutz) and Manitowoc County (13 April, J. Holschbach) the only ones in the southern half of the state. R. Johnson reported 7 in Douglas County on 26 March.

Red-shouldered Hawk—Reported from 19 counties, the western half of the state well represented among them. Pushed as far north as Buffalo, Taylor, and Florence Counties. First seen on 3 March in Iowa County (Romano), with A. Holschbach registering the reported high of 4 individuals in Sauk County three days later.

Broad-winged Hawk—Found in 28 counties distributed evenly about the state, with reports beginning in a four-day period (16 to 19 April) in 7 counties. These included Ashland/Bayfield and Douglas Counties. Brady had 360 birds in the former on 6 May.

Swainson's Hawk—Both reports came late in the season, with Fitzgerald noting one in Walworth County on 25 May and Brady another in Bayfield County on 28 May.

Red-tailed Hawk—New York City's celebrated "Pale Male" in Central Park apparently isn't the only urban pioneer, as Brust reported an intrepid individual possibly nesting on a bank building at the Mayfair Mall in Wauwatosa (Milwaukee County) on 6 May. "I saw the bird land on a recessed ledge one floor down from the top of the building. I think the bird had been carrying prey, as it looked like it was tearing something up and possibly feeding chicks. I thought it was amazing that these birds could carry on so nonchalantly above what is probably one of the busiest intersections in the state. I wonder how many thousands have passed by, oblivious to the drama above their heads."

Rough-legged Hawk—Obviously widespread this winter, with 27 spring county reports registered. A. Holschbach had 8 in Sauk County on 4 March, Lichter 5 (migrating) in Monroe County on 6 March. Outside the northern tier of counties, where it was still being reported as late as 20 May (Ashland/Bayfield Counties, Brady), last noted on 28 April in Taylor County (Risch).

Golden Eagle—Spring reports of this species continue to explode: 3 in 2001, 4 in 2002, 5 in 2003, 7 in 2004, and now 9! Brady filed the latest report from Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 3 May. March 5 was the earliest date noted (Monroe County, Lichter). Also found in Walworth, Lafayette, Dane, Trempealeau, Burnett, Douglas, and Manitowoc Counties.

Merlin—Reported TTP in Douglas (LaValleys) and Ashland/Bayfield (Brady) Counties. Otherwise, reports were rather evenly spaced among the three months of the season. Multiple counts included 6 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 5 May (Brady) and 5 in Milwaukee County on 9 May (Cowart). Reported altogether in 15 counties.

Yellow Rail—Comparing the location of reports to other recent springs, Marquette and Green Lake Counties were represented as usual, Walworth and Burnett Counties had it for the second straight year, and Winnebago County dropped out. Found in Ashland/Bayfield Counties (23 May, Brady) for the first time in a while. Howe heard 2 individuals in Walworth County on 29 April (also the earliest report), but he added that after comparing notes with other observers, there may have been as many as 6 individuals at this particular site.

King Rail—"Heard only" reports only, coming from Racine, Waukesha, Columbia, Winnebago, and Outagamie Counties. The dates ran from 19 April (Outagamie County, Tessen) to 24 May (Columbia County, Fitzgerald and Prestby).

Virginia Rail—First detected in Winnebago County on 10 April (Bruce) and in Waukesha County the next day (Gustafson). Ziebell counted 27 in Winnebago County on 14 May. Reported from 18 counties, west of Dane, Portage, and Vilas Counties only in the far northern counties of Ashland/Bayfield and Douglas.

Sora—A 9 April Racine County report (Gustafson) predated any other by a good week. Ziebell had 75 in Winnebago County on 14 May [compare with previous species]. Widespread, with 32 county reports. Another species that the Smiths in Oconto County perceived as "low" in abundance.

Common Moorhen—A fairly poor showing, even by recent standards, with only 4 reporting counties. Tessen reported it on 7 May in Dodge County. On 14 May, Gustafson reported it from Waukesha County, while Ziebell scraped up 5 on his Winnebago County census that day. Finally, M. Peterson also found 5 in Fond du Lac County on 19 May.

American Coot—Reported at BOP only in Dane (Ashman) and Winnebago (Ziebell) Counties. Latest arrival date noted was 16 April (Douglas County, R. Johnson). Significant concentrations included 1,800 or more in Sauk County on 1 April (A. Holschbach) and 750 in Grant County on 9 April (Stutz).

Sandhill Crane—BOP in at least 8 counties. Greatest numbers seemed to occur a bit past the middle of March, for example 350 birds in Dane County on 20 March (Stutz) and 245 in Waukesha County on 22 March (Gustafson).

Black-bellied Plover—One April report: Gustafson found it in Racine County on 26 April. Maximum recorded was 10 in Dodge County on 24 May (Prestby). Found in 13 mostly eastern or northern counties, the exceptions being birds found late in the season in Sauk (28 May, Stutz) and Dane (29 May, Thiessen) Counties.

American Golden-Plover—First were 3 individuals reported by Tessen on 23 April in Fond du Lac County. Fitzgerald filed a report from Racine County the next day. Five more counties hosted the species between 6 and 24 May. By far the most were the 70 estimated in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 13 May (Brady).

Semipalmated Plover—Unusually, there were no April reports, with Ashman's 4 May Dane County sighting the first received. Lafayette, Rock, and Racine Counties followed the next day, with an eventual tally of 21 counties being reached. Good numbers included 50 and 55 in Dane (Ashman) and Manitowoc (J. Holschbach) Counties on 18 and 21 May respectively; reports from those counties lasted to EOP.

Piping Plover—No fewer than 5 county reports this season, for one of the best totals in recent memory. Moreover, these included the earliest arrival date ever recorded, when Wood encountered one in Ozaukee County on 15 April, breaking the old record of 21 April set in 1970 and tied in 1973. The other reports spanned the period from 14 to 20 May and came from Douglas (14 May, R. Johnson), Marinette (18 May, Kavanagh and 20 May, Smiths), and—quite literally—Dodge/Fond du Lac Counties, as an astonished Rohde watched one land precisely in the middle of busy Highway 49 [which constitutes the county dividing line at that point] on 16 May. It did so, in the observer's words, "as if to defy the traffic and say: 'Slow down, cars and trucks!'" Wood had found what was surely the same bird the day before, also flirting with death along the shoulder of the same road. Wood's reaction was: "Bird, this is not the place you want to be!" [see "By the Wayside"].

Killdeer—A BOP presence in Dane County (Ashman, Prestby) slightly masked the fact that the species was generally quite tardy this year. The next Dane County report, for example, didn't come until 20 March. Romano saw it in Lafayette County on 6 March and Yoerger in Green County on 12 March, but that was it for the entire first half of the month. However, it then spread quickly across the state, with even Florence, Douglas, and Ashland/Bayfield Counties registering arrival dates before the end of the month.

Black-necked Stilt—For the second straight year, there was a mid-April sighting, with this year's 16 April arrival in Fond du Lac County (Bahls) just one day later than last year's ostensibly record-setting one ["ostensibly" because there is an undated April sighting from 1847 (!) which, until 2004, was the only one before 8 May]. The bird was seen again the next day by several observers, but then the similarity with last year ended, as there were no further reports for the remainder of the season.

American Avocet—A modest spring migration compared to some recent years, with reports only from Dodge and Manitowoc Counties. Tessen and Wood reported 4 of them from the former on 6 May, while Sontag found 2 in the latter on 11 May.

Greater Yellowlegs—Arrived in Ozaukee and Sheboygan Counties on 2 April (Uttech, Brassers). Tessen estimated 200 in Dodge County on 6 May. No EOP reports, with 21 May sightings in Manitowoc and Douglas Counties (Domagalski, R. Johnson) the latest given.

Lesser Yellowlegs—The Brassers also had this species [see above] on 2 April in Sheboygan County for the earliest report. Tessen's 200 Greaters in Dodge County on 6 May [see above again] were "supplemented" by perhaps 2,000 (!) of this species on the same day. A late report came from Florence County (Kavanagh) on 28 May.

Solitary Sandpiper—Arrived on 16 April, when Ashman recorded it in Dane County. He also had 15 there on 9 May for the high count. Other April arrivals included Marinette County on 22 April (Campbell) and Walworth and Racine Counties on 24 April (Fitzgerald). Yoerger reported the last in Dane County on 27 May.

Willet—An 18 April Milwaukee County report (Lubahn) is the fourth earliest ever. All other reports came between 1 and 20 May, with 11 counties eventually represented, Lafayette, Dane, Sauk, and Eau Claire Counties probably being the least expected among them. Boldt's 62 individuals in Milwaukee County on 4 May easily topped all other totals.

Spotted Sandpiper—First arrival on 17 April (Dane County, Prestby). Double digit counts were reached in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 14 May (16, Brady) and in Jefferson County on 30 May (11, Evanson).

Upland Sandpiper—Showed up in Iowa County on 17 April (Romano), Sauk County on 18 April (A. Holschbach), and Ozaukee County on 19 April (Uttech). Brady reported 5 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 13 May. Found in addition in Walworth, Kenosha, Door, Marinette, Douglas, and Burnett Counties.

Whimbrel—Sontag monitored them in Manitowoc County from 16 May (the earliest report) until 30 May, peaking at 19 individuals on 21 May. The day before, the Smiths had 7 in Marinette County, while Mueller was viewing 5 in Milwaukee. The only other report came on 27 May (Dane County, Thiessen).

Hudsonian Godwit—Reports from 6 counties around the state. Chippewa County led off with 2 birds on 16 May, with Dunn County added on 25 May (Polk). Sontag and others followed 1 in Manitowoc County from 17 to 21 May. Two birds were then present in Dane County from 21 to 29 May (Hansen, Wood, Yoerger). Brady added 2 more in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 25 May, and finally Wood had 5 in Burnett County on 30 May.

Marbled Godwit—First appeared at nearly opposite ends of the state on 13 May, when R. Johnson discovered one in Douglas County at the same time Frank and Lubahn were reporting 2 in Milwaukee County. Ziebell had 3 in Winnebago County and Gustafson 1 in Waukesha County the next day. After visits to Manitowoc and Oconto Counties, the migration was rounded off with 2 birds in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 28 May (Brady).

Ruddy Turnstone—A first arrival date of 8 May in Winnebago County (Ziebell). The same observer counted 420 there on 23 May. In Oconto County at EOP (Smiths). Also made appearances in 10 other counties.

Red Knot—Barely made the seasonal roster, with only a report of 2 birds in Marinette County on 20 May submitted by the Smiths.

Sanderling—First reported in Racine County on 5 May (Pugh). All of the 9 county reports came from counties with Great Lakes frontage except for Winnebago County, where Ziebell saw them from 14 to 28 May. No indication of any substantial numbers on any of the reports.

Semipalmated Sandpiper—Only 1 of the 21 reporting counties gave an April date (28 April, Walworth County, Fitzgerald). Numbers peaked on 27 May with reports that day of 75 and 40 respectively in Dane (Ashman) and Ashland/Bayfield (Brady) Counties.

Least Sandpiper—There was a 10 April report for the second straight year (Racine County, Fitzgerald); there are only three earlier reports. The species was still present in that county as late as 29 May. In Dane County, arrived on 17 April (Prestby), hit a peak of 100 on 9 May (Ashman), and remained to EOP. There were 21 reporting counties scattered across the state, but with something of a hole in the center, i.e. it was missing from Portage, Clark, Marathon, and Taylor Counties, each of which was covered by a comprehensive report.

White-rumped Sandpiper—There were two very early reports from the northwestern part of the state. Polk reported a Chippewa County individual on 14 April, which tied the previous record [1974]; but the day before Haseleu had spotted another one in Barron County, thus establishing a new record for early arrival. It wasn't until 6 May that any more were found, when Tessen recorded 2 in Dodge County. Eventually turned up in 11 more counties, with EOP birds still in Dane, Iowa, Manitowoc, and Ashland/Bayfield Counties. Maximum number given was 6 (27 May, Dane County, Stutz).

Baird's Sandpiper—Though not a record [see above], Polk nonetheless also had another decently early arrival date of 17 April for this species, again in Chippewa County. The bird was then reported from 7 southern counties between 2 May (Columbia County, Tessen) and 31 May (Iowa and Sauk Counties, A. Holschbach).

Pectoral Sandpiper—One March report, with a 31 March individual in Washburn County (Haseleu) initiating the lengthy migration period, as birds were still being reported near EOP (e.g. 30 May, Dodge County, Frank). Tessen reported a staggering 3,000 in Dodge County on 6 May [see the yellowlegs accounts].

Dunlin—Quite early first arrival date of 8 April in Manitowoc County (Sontag), where it was still being seen at EOP. Fitzgerald also had earlyish arrivals in Walworth and Racine Counties on 10 April. Reported in 20 counties, with a maximum of 400 seen in Manitowoc County on 20 May (Tessen).

Stilt Sandpiper—Never numerous in spring, but even less prevalent than normally the case, with but 2 reports, both of single birds: 16 May, Dane County, Ashman; 27 May, Ashland/Bayfield Counties, Brady.

Ruff—Reported for the third straight spring, with Tessen locating a female in Dodge County on 6 May.

Short-billed Dowitcher—Fitzgerald filed both the first and last of the 16 county reports, with arrival in Racine County on 30 April and departure from Fond du Lac County on 24 May. Ashman found 60 in Dane County on 13 May.

Long-billed Dowitcher—Reported (in chronological order) between 2 and 24 May from Dane, Dodge, Sauk, Barron, and Columbia Counties. High count was 23 on 9 May (Dane County, Ashman).

Wilson's Snipe—Noted at BOP in Dane (Thiessen) and Portage (Berner) Counties. Also early in Lafayette County (6 March, Romano). Reached Douglas County on 7 April (R. Johnson). Frank had 19 in Ozaukee County on 14 April.

American Woodcock—The earliest report concerned a successfully rehabilitated window strike in Milwaukee County on 7 March (Diehl). Reached Douglas County on 29 March (LaValleys). Frank's 14 April Ozaukee County count [see above] totaled 24 for this species.

Wilson's Phalarope—First seen by Tessen in Dodge County on 30 April. He counted 40 individuals there on 6 May. Turned up in 16 counties spread out throughout the state.

Red-necked Phalarope—Lubahn's report of a 7 May Milwaukee County bird becomes the fourth earliest arrival on record. Risch had a sighting in Clark County four days later, and a final report from multiple observers was registered in Dane County on 27 May.

Parasitic Jaeger—Recorded for the fourth consecutive spring in Douglas County, with R. Johnson reporting 2 individuals on 15 May. The timings of these sightings have been remarkably

consistent: on 14, 18, 19, 15 May for the years 2002–2005 respectively.

Laughing Gull—Hughes photographed an individual in Racine County on 21 May for the only report. One or possibly 2 individuals have been noted along the Lake Michigan shoreline between Racine and Manitowoc Counties for each of the last four spring seasons.

Franklin's Gull—There were 3 reports: 20 April (and again 25 May) in Oconto County (Smiths); 8 May in Dane County (A. Holschbach); 18 May in Eau Claire County (Polk).

Little Gull—Hughes had a remarkable 5 individuals in Racine County on 26 March for the second earliest arrival on record. This was followed by sightings in Chippewa County on 17 April (Polk), Portage County on 15 May (Berner), and Kewaunee County on 20 May (Bontly). Note that two sightings away from Lake Michigan in one season are unusual.

Bonaparte's Gull—A Walworth County sighting on 25 March (Fitzgerald) slightly preceded the main spate beginning on 30 March. Prestby and Stutz produced competing estimates of 400 and 700 individuals in Dodge County on 17 April, with Brady adding 600 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 6 May. The latest departure date on a Dane County report was 12 May (Hilsenhoff), while Berner had it until 15 May in Portage County. Still noted at EOP in Ashland/Bayfield Counties (Brady). With 32 reporting counties, it beat out Herring Gull [31] as the second most widespread gull.

Ring-billed Gull—A notable concentration of 16,000 was estimated in Winnebago County on 14 May (Ziebell). Not bad for a county farther from a major body of water was 240 in Portage County on 5 April (Berner). Noted on reports from 42 counties.

Herring Gull—Two proximate Winnebago County estimates were of 600 birds on 24 March (Ziebell) and 800 on 27 March (Knispel). Berner had 70 of this species on his 5 April Portage County count [see above].

Thayer's Gull—The only inland report was Evanson's of a 27 March individual in Dane County. Found in all Lake Michigan counties from Kenosha to Manitowoc, but there were no Lake Superior county reports (and in fact there have been none since Spring 2001). The latest report noted was on 26 May (Manitowoc County, Frank).

Iceland Gull—Reports from all Lake Michigan counties between Kenosha and Manitowoc. This included no less than 5 individuals in Milwaukee County on 15 March (Boldt). Frank again [see previous account] had the latest report on 26 May in Manitowoc County.

Lesser Black-backed Gull—Reported from the same 6 contiguous Lake Michigan counties as the previous two species, with additional reports from Walworth, Dane, and Portage Counties. The celebrated Dane County soccer field individual was reported on 24 March (Rattenborg). Frank yet again [see previous two accounts] filed the latest report on 26 May in Manitowoc County.

Glaucous Gull—A 29 May Douglas County report (LaValleys) constituted one of the few reports of the less common winter gulls along Lake Superior this season. Otherwise, found in the same 6 Lake Michigan counties as for several species above, as well as in Kewaunee, Oconto, and Winnebago Counties. Tessen reported 20 in Manitowoc County on 17 March.

Great Black-backed Gull—Found along Lake Michigan from Milwaukee to Door Counties, including 10 in Manitowoc County on 17 March (Tessen) and 8 in Kewaunee County on 18 March (Walton). Also found in Winnebago County.

Caspian Tern—Arrived on 11 April and 12 April in Manitowoc (Sontag) and Racine (Pugh) Counties respectively. By 28 April there were 200 birds in Sheboygan County (Tessen). Dane County dates ran from 4 to 16 May. Found in 22 counties.

Common Tern—First detected in Door County (17 April, Lukes). Away from the Lake Superior counties, virtually absent from the western part of the state. Even in heavily birded Dane County, found by only 3 of the 10 most active observers. High count was 82 (13 May, Ashland/Bayfield Counties, Brady). Found in 17 counties.

Forster's Tern—Fitzgerald reported the first on 5 April in Walworth County; not reported again until 14 April (Racine County, Gustafson). Found by 7 out of 10 Dane County observers [compare previous species]. The high count was 86 (14 May, Winnebago County, Ziebell). Found in 25 mostly eastern counties.

Black Tern—The first of only 17 county sightings was registered on 30 April (Green Lake County) by Tessen. The only tern reported

from several western counties (Sauk, La Crosse, and Trempealeau). Ziebell mustered 51 in Winnebago County on 14 May.

Eurasian Collared-Dove—Milwaukee and Columbia County reports referred to previously documented individuals or colonies; new to this observer's knowledge this season were Crawford and Grant County reports. Kirschbaum reported 5 individuals in Crawford County on 21 March, Stutz 3 on 9 April. Romano reported 1 in Grant County on 25 March and again on 30 April. It should be added that at least for now, this is still a WSO Records Committee species; some of the reports did include brief details, but only Wood submitted an official report [for the 3 Columbia County birds].

White-winged Dove—Last year's Milwaukee County bird, which produced the fourth state record, may still have been around, as the species was reported from two feeder locations there. Abert reported it in the company of Eurasian Collared-Doves on 19 April; though other observers also reported seeing it, no official report was submitted. Cowart however did so report the individual he found at his feeder on 26 April [see "By the Wayside"].

Black-billed Cuckoo—First seen in Jefferson County on 5 May (Gustafson). Reported from 12 counties.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo—R. Hoffmann's 7 May Kenosha County report was the earliest. Found in 12 counties as far north as Portage, Outagamie, and Door Counties.

Eastern Screech-Owl—The northern boundary of the 12-county range was formed by Washburn, Taylor, and Winnebago Counties. Harriman related an anecdote of being awakened by an individual trapped between the screen and glass doors between the bedroom and deck of her Winnebago County home on 18 April. She watched it for 5 minutes; upon taking a circuitous route through the house to get to the screen from the outside, she found that the bird had managed to extricate itself from its "trap" unassisted.

Snowy Owl—March reports came from Winnebago (Ziebell) and Outagamie (Kirch) Counties. Bates reported on an Iron County individual "hanging out" on an Osprey platform on 23 May, commenting that the bird had been present for about two weeks. "The Osprey will be quite surprised when and if it arrives," he added.

Northern Hawk Owl—In this extraordinary "year of the owl," one might reasonably have thought that the brief list of April sightings of this species might have been extended, but not so: the latest report came on 27 March, when Wood saw the bird that had overwintered in Ozaukee County [see "By the Wayside"] for the last time. Even up north, birds staked out in Ashland/Bayfield and Douglas Counties vanished on 23 March (Brady) and 26 March (La Valleys) respectively. Earlier, R. Johnson had reported 4 individuals in Douglas County on 4 March.

Burrowing Owl—Bystrom observed one for two hours in St. Croix County on 4 April for the fourteenth state record [see "By the Wayside"].

Great Gray Owl—In the aftermath of the greatest winter invasion in memory for this species, owls continued to be reported in northwestern counties right to EOP, with a high of 26 in Douglas County on 7 March (LaValleys). And in the south central part of the state, at least 3 winter holdover birds continued to delight birders and non-birders alike. The Sauk County individual was seemingly last reported on 30 March (A. Holschbach), but it or another bird resurfaced in May, with sightings on 4 May (K. Shillinglaw) and then again from 21 to 24 May (Lange). A Dane County bird that had shown up well before BOP and played hide-and-seek with many observers was hit by a vehicle early in March and sent into rehab; with tender loving care lavished on it, it recovered, and on 25 March was released on an Audubon Society refuge in northern Minnesota, where it was spotted apparently in good health several times in the ensuing weeks (DuBey). And finally, the Great Gray Owl probably seen and enjoyed by more people than any other [see "From Field and Feeder"], and who became such a beloved presence along the Columbia/Dane County line that he was fondly given a name ["Wilson"] by local schoolchildren, was struck and killed by a vehicle on the night of 26–27 March. The Foote-Martins wrote Wilson's obituary, which read, in part: "When people and wildlife mix, it is usually people who win. But we were all winners when Wilson came to be with us this winter."

Long-eared Owl—Reports throughout the period came in from widely spaced regions of the state: Iowa, Rock, Dane, Ozaukee, Douglas, and Vilas Counties; the last named harbored 3 individuals on 17 April (J. Baughman).

Short-eared Owl—Frank reported 4 in Ozaukee County on 3 March, while Harriman

had 5 in Winnebago County on 3 April. There were also scattered reports from Sauk, Dane, Portage, and Vilas Counties.

Boreal Owl—Observers used a mouse to lure a Douglas County individual in the LaValley's backyard into view on 20 March [see "By the Wayside"]; a second owl was heard calling off and on at the same time.

Northern Saw-whet Owl—Reported from 10 counties around the state, mostly in March and April, with a Portage County individual or individuals present until 21 May (Berner). Roth's dog flushed one in Oneida County during a walk on 11 March, while Sears found one dead along a road in Waukesha County on 14 March. Multiple sightings included 4 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 10 April (Brady) and 7 in Vilas County on 17 April (J. Baughman).

Common Nighthawk—A relatively late first arrival date of 7 May (Dane County, Stutz), with about 6 more of an eventual 24 counties added by mid-month.

Chuck-will's-widow—For the second year in a row turned up in Vernon County just before EOP (30 May, Jackson), though this year there was only 1 individual to that point.

Whip-poor-will—April arrivals included birds in Columbia and Dane Counties on 17 April (Dischler) and 20 April (Martin) respectively. Vernon, Sauk, and Rock Counties in the southern part of the state also had reports. The other 11 reports came from Marquette, Green Lake, and more northerly counties.

Chimney Swift—First seen coursing overhead in La Crosse County on 17 April (Lesher). Reached Barron County on 5 May (Carlsen) and Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 7 May (Brady). Ziebell counted 342 in Winnebago County on 14 May.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird—No April arrivals noted, with the Lukes reporting the earliest on 5 May in Door County. Six more counties reported it during the next three days. Both Douglas County observers noted a 20 May arrival there.

Belted Kingfisher—Just one definitive BOP report (Dane County, Ashman), although Iowa and Ozaukee County reports the first week of March probably did not refer to returning migrants, as there was then a gap until multiple reports on 16 March. Reached Portage County on 27 March (Berner), Douglas County on 2 April (LaValleys), and Florence County on 5 April (Kavanagh).

Red-headed Woodpecker—Berner tracked two overwintering individuals in Portage County into BOP. The next reports, from Washburn County on 7 April (Haseleu) and Iowa County on 17 April (Romano), were still far enough ahead of the rest to arouse suspicion they might be late-winter wanderers rather than returning migrants. The maximum number noted on any report was 3, found in Sauk County on 11 May (A. Holschbach) and in Rock County on 21 May (Stutz). Only 2 of the 10 most active Dane County observers reported seeing it. It was however seen altogether in 26 counties, a decent total by recent standards.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker—An initial 29 March report (Manitowoc County, J. Holschbach) was followed by reports from 5 more counties the next day. Prestby had over 20 in Dane County on 5 April. A 23 May bird in Winnebago County was a personal late record for Bruce.

Hairy Woodpecker—Ward discovered an individual with a badly deformed bill in Outagamie County [see photo]. "Looks like a little too much chlorine in the gene pool," he opined.

Black-backed Woodpecker—Reports from 4 northern tier counties alone (Forest, Vilas, Bayfield, and Douglas) would have made for outstanding seasonal coverage, but in addition the species surfaced not once but twice considerably farther south. First Duwe captured a Marathon County female on film on 1 April. Then a male [see photo] began turning up reliably at the Heckrodt Wetlands Preserve in Winnebago County (Kearns, 19 April [see "By the Wayside"]; Hoepfner, 21 April; Shillinglaws, 14 May). And for good measure, a report surfaced just at EOP that a female may have joined him (Koenig, 30 May). Stay tuned for the summer report!

Northern Flicker—Reported at BOP in Washington, Manitowoc, Oconto, and Door Counties, with Ozaukee and Sauk Counties added during the first week of March. Reached Florence County on 31 March (Kavanagh) and Vilas and Burnett Counties on 5 April (J. Baughman and McInroy respectively). Brady had 19 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 16 April, R. Hoffmann 12 in Kenosha County on 7 May.

Olive-sided Flycatcher—Turned up first on 4 May in Marinette County (Campbell), re-

ports continuing at regular intervals until EOP for an eventual total of 16 reporting counties from all parts of the state.

Eastern Wood-Pewee—First noted in Kenosha County on 7 May (R. Hoffmann) and in Ozaukee County on 8 May (Frank). Evanson counted 13 in Jefferson County on 30 May. Reached Florence County on 29 May (Strelka); still missing from the two Douglas County reports at EOP.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher—Haseleu's Washburn County date (9 May) was the earliest, the next report coming on 14 May (Rock County, Klubertanz). Featured on 11 relatively eastern and/or northern county reports.

Acadian Flycatcher—Reported from Grant, Iowa, Rock, Dane, Sauk, and Portage Counties, with earliest arrival on 15 May (Grant County, Tessen). Stutz had 8 in Dane County on 28 May for the maximum.

Alder Flycatcher—Arrived on 10 May in Florence County (Kavanagh). She also had the next sighting, on 17 May in adjacent Forest County. Multiple county reports began the next day, with a final total of 26 counties evenly distributed about the state. The Smiths finished the season with a count of 11 in Oconto County on 31 May.

Willow Flycatcher—Sighted first on 10 May in Sauk (A. Holschbach) and Ozaukee (Uttech) Counties. The northern boundary for the 19 reporting counties was formed by Iowa, Juneau, Portage, Oconto, and Door Counties.

Least Flycatcher—A 5 May Milwaukee County first arrival (Mueller) was notably tardy and just beat out birds landing in Dane, Dodge, Ozaukee, and Portage Counties the very next day. Present throughout the state, with Brady reporting 59 individuals in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 20 May.

Eastern Phoebe—Quite late first arrival date of 28 March, but then it was like the breaking of a dam: no fewer than 15 first county dates between then and the end of the month! For the record, the 28 March counties were Milwaukee (O'Connor), Waukesha (Gustafson), and Dane (Evanson). April 1 arrival dates were noted in Burnett, Barron, Ashland/Bayfield, Vilas, Washburn, and finally Douglas (9 April) Counties.

Great Crested Flycatcher—Simultaneous first arrivals on 5 May [8 May is the latest on record] were recorded in Dane (Evanson, Hilsenhoff) and Door (Lukes) Counties. Reached Douglas County near EOP (29 May, R. Johnson).

Eastern Kingbird—Arrived in Ozaukee County on 4 May (Uttech). Reached the northern tier of counties well before EOP (e.g. on 21 May for both Douglas and Vilas Counties). The Smiths counted 10 in Oconto County on 22 May.

Loggerhead Shrike—Only two reports were received, from Berner in Portage County on 9 April and from Fitzgerald in Walworth County on 5 May.

Northern Shrike—Twenty-six reporting counties represented clear lingering evidence of a major invasion year. However, individuals departed fairly early, with a latest date of 9 April from Ashland/Bayfield Counties (Brady). The only southern county with an April departure date was Kenosha (1 April, Dixon). Brady had 7 twice in Ashland/Bayfield Counties, first on 5 March and then again on 24 March, for the high count.

White-eyed Vireo—Located in the southern counties of Dane (6 May, Hilsenhoff), Lafayette (9 May, Romano and 18 May, Tessen), and Milwaukee (20 May, Frank).

Bell's Vireo—Found in the southwestern counties of Green, Iowa, Grant, La Crosse, and Dunn, between 16 May (Green County, Yoerger and Grant County, Tessen) and 20 May (Dunn County, Polk). Lesher noted its 17 May La Crosse County arrival in an area slated for development as an industrial park. There was one sighting from well beyond the breeding range, as Bruce ran across one in Winnebago County on 29 and 30 May.

Yellow-throated Vireo—Simultaneous first arrival in 3 counties on 7 May: Dane (Stutz), Dodge (Smiths), and Portage (Berner) Counties. This is near record [8 May, 1958] late. Brady had 8 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 20 May, a personal best. Found in a healthy 31 counties.

Blue-headed Vireo—The lateness of the passerine migration was reflected in the occurrence of only one April arrival, a 20 April bird in Manitowoc County (Domagalski). In fact, between then and 6 May, there was only one other (2 May, Waukesha County, Gustafson). The species was easy to miss: only 4 of the 10 comprehensive Dane County reporters noted it. It was last seen there on 28 May (Ashman). Brady had

6 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 20 May. Located in 25 counties.

Warbling Vireo—Another neotropical migrant with only one April arrival, 30 April in Dane County (Stutz). At least 4 counties were reached next on 5 May. Evanson counted 15 in Jefferson County on 30 May.

Philadelphia Vireo—A highly skewed distribution this season, with 9 eastern tier counties between Racine and Florence Counties represented and then only Dane, Iowa, and Portage Counties in addition. The Dane County sighting (13 May, Martin) was the earliest.

Red-eyed Vireo—Yet a third vireo species with a single April arrival, 29 April in Racine County (Gustafson). The second sighting however was at the other end of the state, 6 May in Douglas County (LaValleys). Also relatively early was another northern county date of 9 May in Burnett County (McInroy). Fitzgerald counted at least 16 individuals in Walworth County on 23 May.

Gray Jay—Reported in Forest, Douglas, and Vilas Counties, in the last of which Wood, noting 4 on 26 May, thought them "particularly scarce."

Blue Jay—Included in the descriptive accounts this spring because a couple of observers noted them migrating: 85 on 9 May in Racine County (Gustafson) and 80 on 21 May in Manitowoc County (Evanson).

Common Raven—The number of reporting counties seems to go up by one or two each year; this year the figure hit 20, with the southernmost occurrences in Marquette and Brown Counties. Tessen noted 50 in Douglas County on 20 March and 20 in Langlade County on 24 March.

Purple Martin—First appeared in Ozaukee County (Uttech) on 3 April. Appeared in Winnebago County the next day (Knispel); Ziebell counted 40 there on 25 May. A better than average showing in northern counties this year, most unusually perhaps in Vilas County (28 May, J. Baughman).

Tree Swallow—Something like 9 county arrivals in March, the first being Racine County on 21 March (Gustafson) and the northernmost Portage County on 29 March (Berner). Moved quickly, with Ashland/Bayfield Counties reached on 3 April (Brady) and Douglas County on 4 April (LaValleys). Berner counted 400 in Portage County on 23 March, and Ziebell added 220 in Winnebago County on 14 May.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow—Ashman recorded the second earliest arrival ever, in Dane County on 2 April. Grant, Sauk, and Manitowoc Counties had been added by 9 April. Found widely throughout the state, in 34 counties.

Bank Swallow—Arrived on 14 April in Waukesha County (Gustafson). As widespread as the previous species, but missed a little more frequently (26 reporting counties).

Cliff Swallow—Made 30 county appearances throughout the state, first in Taylor County on 14 April (Risch). Stutz had 50 in Dane County on 14 May.

Barn Swallow—For the third year in a row, found first in Dane County, with an individual showing up there on 2 April (Thiessen). Hilsenhoff counted 175 there on 11 May. Reached Douglas County on 26 April (LaValleys).

Boreal Chickadee—Noted as present by Kavanagh in Forest County on 8 March and by J. Baughman in Vilas County on 25 March.

Tufted Titmouse—Distributed in 14 counties southwest of a Waukesha, Marquette, and Barron County axis and in one significant outlier, Winnebago County (31 March, Tessen).

Red-breasted Nuthatch—The species was literally all over the state this season, being reported (in many cases TTP) from 39 counties, a figure approaching that for the more mundane species, such as ...

White-breasted Nuthatch—Reported from 40 counties throughout the state.

Brown Creeper—BOP/TTP status in Dane, Jefferson, Waukesha, Winnebago, Portage, and Douglas Counties. Departure dates from heavily birded counties included 9 May in Dane County (Ashman) and 10 May in Winnebago County (Ziebell).

Carolina Wren—Eight county reports were received, the highest total in at least the last 5 years. More than 1 bird was involved in at least the Milwaukee, Dane, Sauk, and Eau Claire County reports, with 3 noted in Eau Claire County from 22 April to 30 May (Polk). Lange reported a pair with fledglings in Sauk County on 10 May.

House Wren—Appeared first on 17 April in Richland, Dane, Columbia, and Ozaukee Counties. Stutz tallied 25 in Dane County on 7 May. Didn't reach Douglas County until 13 May (R. Johnson).

Winter Wren—Noted as BOP in Dane (Ashman, Thiessen) and Columbia (Dischler) Counties. Migrants began arriving on 30 March (Milwaukee and Manitowoc Counties). Appeared in 24 counties.

Sedge Wren—First noted in Dane County by Martin on 25 April. Tessen had 5 in Green Lake County on 30 April for the next sighting. Ziebell counted 164 in Winnebago County on 14 May.

Marsh Wren—Comparing the distribution to the previous species, seemed absent mostly in a swath of counties from Grant County in the southwest to Florence County in the northeast. Appeared first in Walworth, Waukesha, and Outagamie Counties on 28 April. Ziebell's 14 May Winnebago County census [see previous account] netted 842 individuals.

Golden-crowned Kinglet—A careful count (out of curiosity) resulted in 15 first county arrivals between 26 and 31 March. The only earlier reports concerned a BOP designation by Ziebell in Winnebago County and a 24 March Forest County arrival witnessed by Tessen. Fitzgerald had a high count of 26 in Walworth County on 1 April, and by 3 April the map was essentially filled out with reports from Douglas and Ashland/Bayfield Counties.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet—Began arriving just a bit behind the previous species, though the passage through the state was much more protracted. The first counties reached were Manitowoc County on 30 March (Domagalski) and Winnebago County on 31 March (Tessen). First noted in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 9 April (Brady), earlier than in many more southern counties. Departure dates included 14 May in Sheboygan County (Brassers) and 17 May in Portage County (Berner). Noted as present at EOP in Florence County (Kavanagh).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher—Arrived on 10 April in Dane (Ashman) and Waukesha (Gustafson) Counties. Stutz had 25 in Dane County on 14 May. Pushed as far north as Washburn (Haseleu) and Marinette (Campbell) Counties.

Eastern Bluebird—Surprisingly, only one BOP designation (Sauk County, A. Holschbach). Early March reports however included 3 March in Iowa County (Romano) and 6 March in Dane County (Ashman). Eventually reached Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 1 April (Brady) and Douglas County on 4 April (LaValleys).

Townsend's Solitaire—Barely made the cut with a final update on the overwintering Sauk County population from Yoerger on 5 March (2 birds).

Veery—The first of 28 county sightings was in Milwaukee County on 5 May (Mueller). Stutz counted 12 in Dane County on 14 May. Distribution was statewide.

Gray-cheeked Thrush—Answer No. 1 to the introductory quiz: 3 simultaneous 9 May first sightings [Dane (Ashman), Racine (Gustafson), and Winnebago (Ziebell) Counties] eclipsed 8 May [1997] as the latest arrival date. Found in 20 counties, mostly in the southeastern quarter of the state.

Swainson's Thrush—Answer No. 2 to the introductory quiz: concurrent arrivals in Milwaukee (O'Connor) and Winnebago (Bruce) Counties on 6 May retired 5 May [1966] as the latest arrival date. Iowa County (Pugh) followed the next day. Traversed 27 counties.

Hermit Thrush—For the first time in at least 5 years, no one reported an overwintering bird making it to BOP. The first was not reported until 27 March, when Stutz found one in Dane County. There was one more March report, a 30 March sighting in Milwaukee County (Bontly). Last seen in Dane County on 5 May (Martin), in Winnebago County on 14 May (Ziebell), and in Waupaca County on 15 May (Smiths). Brady counted 17 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 20 May.

Wood Thrush—The Shillinglaws had an early individual in Manitowoc County on 27 April; the next earliest report came on 5 May from Florence County (Kavanagh). Stutz found 10 in Dane County on 21 May. Found in 29 counties.

American Robin—Noted on 1 March in but 6 counties, thus returning to something like 2001 levels after 3 years of double digit county counts. However, was already in Douglas and Ashland/Bayfield Counties by 4 March and 6 March respectively (LaValleys, Brady). Klubertanz had 75 in Rock County on 20 March, Campbell 97 in Marinette County on 29 March.

Varied Thrush—Two feeder birds continued from the winter season until 30 March in Bayfield County (Brady) and 10 April in Fond du Lac County (Nyhus) [see "By the Wayside"].

Gray Catbird—Generally quite late, with only a bird noted in Outagamie County on 22 April (Mosquito Hill Nature Center) until reports from Iowa, Rock, Kenosha, and Portage Counties on 7 May. By 9 May, Hilsenhoff already had 23 in Dane County.

Northern Mockingbird—Reports came in from 12 counties: Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Oconto, Richland, Dane, Dodge, Eau Claire, St. Croix, and Barron Counties, some undoubtedly referring to more than one bird. For earliest reports per county, the monthly breakdown was 2 in March, 1 in April and 9 in May.

Brown Thrasher—Arrived on 6 April in Milwaukee, Walworth, Jefferson, and La Crosse Counties. Brady counted 12 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 16 May. Found in 35 counties.

American Pipit—Migratory path confined pretty much to roughly the southeastern quarter of the state, exceptions being individuals detected in Forest County (9 May, Kavanagh) and in Ashland/Bayfield Counties, where however Brady encountered a flock of over 200 on 13 May. Earliest individuals showed up in Walworth and Racine Counties on 14 April (Fitzgerald, Pugh); departure dates included 15 May in Manitowoc County (Sontag) and 19 May in Dodge County, with Tessen seeing 20 there that day. Stutz had a flock of about 100 birds in Dane County on 7 May.

Bohemian Waxwing—Several large flocks were reported in 5 northern tier counties, the most impressive being a count of over 900 undertaken in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 25 March by Brady. More unusual was a flock of 160 in Portage County on 28 March (Berner), and more unusual still was the presence of a flock in Washington County, with the Matyas finding 14 there on 6 March. There were still at least 3 there as late as 27 March (Domagalski). A departure date of 23 April from Door County (Lukes) was quite late [only 5 later seasonal records].

Cedar Waxwing—Though it was ubiquitous as usual, note that arrival dates in at least far northeastern counties appear to be quite late: 28 May in Vilas County and 31 May in Florence County for observers (J. Baughman and Kavanagh) whose reports span the entire period. For corroboration Strelka, whose Florence County records begin 13 May, recorded her first Cedar Waxwing on 30 May.

Blue-winged Warbler—First found in Iowa (Romano), Dane (Prestby, Stutz), and Richland (Duerksen) Counties on 6 May. Stutz found 8 in Sauk County on 22 May. Ventured as far north as Barron, Wood, Portage, Waupaca, and Oconto Counties.

Golden-winged Warbler—Arrived first in Dane County on 6 May (Ashman). Brady counted 12 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 23 May. Found in an encouraging 29 counties.

Blue-winged × Golden-winged Warbler—Carlsen reported a "Lawrence's" type in Barron County on 16 May, the Lukes a "Brewster's" type in Door County on 18 May.

Tennessee Warbler—Arrived on 6 May in Dane, Walworth, Jefferson, Marinette, and Florence Counties. There is only one later first arrival date on record [7 May 1995]. In Dane County, Stutz counted 50 on 14 May, with Ashman recording the latest individual on 23 May. Fitzgerald also had 50 of this species, in Walworth County on 13 May.

Orange-crowned Warbler—The latest first arrival date on record for this species is 5 May [1971]. This year, there were only 2 arrivals substantially earlier than that, both coming on 21 April (Dane County, Thiessen and Douglas County, R. Johnson). After that, it was not recorded again until 4 May (Washburn County, Haseleu). Departed Dane County on 15 May (Ashman) and Portage County on 20 May (Berner).

Nashville Warbler—In just about the only extreme exception to the general lateness of neotropical migrants this year, Kavanagh found an individual in Vilas County on 18 April to tie the all time early arrival record set in 1972. A single individual was next seen by Bontly in Milwaukee County on 27 April; then it was absent again until 5 May, when it appeared in Richland, Winnebago, and Manitowoc Counties. Kavanagh had 60 in Florence County on 16 May.

Northern Parula—First seen in Door County by the Lukes on 5 May. Found in Dane County the next day (Prestby), with Stutz counting 15 there on 14 May and Evanson noting the last on 22 May. Not mentioned from the southwestern part of the state.

Yellow Warbler—Early dates of 20 April in Waukesha County (Gustafson) and 25 April in

Dane County (Ashman), with 5 more county arrivals the last two days of the month. Stutz had 45 in Dane County on 7 May.

Chestnut-sided Warbler—Found in Dane County on 5 May (Ashman) and in 3 more counties the next day. Brady counted 39 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 20 May.

Magnolia Warbler—A 6 May earliest arrival date in Iowa (Pugh) and Door (Lukes) Counties. Berner had 10 in Portage County on 19 May.

Cape May Warbler—The two earliest arrival dates were a good week ahead of all the rest, with sightings in Rock County (Klubertanz) on 5 May and in Dodge County (Tessen) on 6 May. Stutz had 10 in Dane County on 14 May.

Black-throated Blue Warbler—Seen in Milwaukee County on 1 May (Bontly) and in Dane County on 6 May (Hansen). Reached 19 counties in all, spilling over into the western part of the state only in the far north (Vilas and Ashland/Bayfield Counties). All four Winnebago County reporters gave 14 May as their arrival date, unusual except in the unlikely event they were all birding together that day!

Yellow-rumped Warbler—Found at BOP only in Sauk County, an individual associated with a feeder until mid-April (A. Holschbach). The other March report came on 17 March from Milwaukee County (Zehner). Multiple reports began coming in during the first week of April, with Vilas County perhaps the last well covered county reached (18 April, Kavanagh and 19 April, J. Baughman). Seen in Manitowoc County until 21 May (Domagalski) and in Winnebago County until 27 May (Ziebell). Stutz saw about 200 individuals in Dane County on 7 May.

"Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler—One was documented for the second spring in a row (Racine County, 15 May, Keyel).

Black-throated Gray Warbler—Wisconsin's third, and first spring, record was documented photographically by Larson on 4 May in Jefferson County [see photo]. Asked to describe "any vocalizations that were noted" on the documentation form, the observer responded: "None from the bird, 'wow' from myself!"

Black-throated Green Warbler—Two early reports, though not particularly early for this species, came on 25 April and 26 April in Dane (Ashman) and Milwaukee (Bontly) Counties respectively. As with some other warblers, there was then a significant gap until the next report (4 May). Six northern counties (Barron, Burnett, Douglas, Ashland/Bayfield, Vilas, and Florence) all gave first arrival dates of 6 May. Kavanagh saw 30 in Florence County on 16 May.

Blackburnian Warbler—First arrivals on 6 May in Dodge (Tessen), Manitowoc (Domagalski), and Marinette (Kavanagh) Counties. Three of the 10 major Dane County observers had it the next day.

Yellow-throated Warbler—Kile documented an individual photographically in Door County on 16 April, thus establishing the third earliest arrival date. The first returnee to Grant County also made it before the end of the month (30 April, Yoerger). Turned up also in Dane County (13 May, Ashman) and in Sheboygan County (14 May, S. Baughman).

Pine Warbler—This species definitely ran counter to the late warbler arrival trend. Granted that it shows up early anyway, but 10 first county arrivals between 16 and 20 April surely indicated that whatever was holding warblers up late in April, Pine Warblers got in ahead of it! Many of the earliest dates were in northern counties, for example the first (Barron County, 16 April, Carlsen) and sixth (Vilas County, 18 April, J. Baughman and Kavanagh). Kavanagh saw it in Florence County the next day, where she counted 42 on 25 April. Found in 22 counties.

Prairie Warbler—Seen twice on 10 May, in Rock County (Avery) and in Milwaukee County (Lubahn), and then once more on 30 May in Sheboygan County (Franke).

Palm Warbler—Multiple first reports began coming in on 21 April, preceded by birds in Walworth County on 10 April (Jacyna) and in Iowa County on 17 April (Romano). The maximum in Dane County was 100 on 7 May (Stutz); it was last reported there on 18 May (Martin). In Vilas County at EOP (J. Baughman, Kavanagh).

Bay-breasted Warbler—Appeared first on 7 May in Dane County (Hansen, Stutz). The latter had 6 individuals there on 14 May. Appeared in 24 counties.

Blackpoll Warbler—Two of the first 4 sightings were in far northern counties: Florence County on 8 May (Kavanagh) and Douglas County on 10 May (R. Johnson). The others were Dane County on 7 May (Stutz) and Washington County on 9 May (Domagalski). Seen in 30 counties.

Cerulean Warbler—Noted first on 30 April in Grant County (Yoerger). Tessen had a high of 12 there on 15 May. Also seen in Rock, Dane, Jefferson, Portage, and Clark Counties.

Black-and-white Warbler—Domagalski's spring arrival data show that, to the best of our knowledge, this species has had May first arrival dates only 4 times before, those dates being either 1 or 2 May. The earliest reported this year was on 1 May, when Frank recorded it in Ozaukee County. The birds were obviously backed up, because next came arrivals in 6 counties on 5 May.

American Redstart—Not detected until 5 May when they were spotted in Lafayette County (Romano, Yoerger). Iowa (Romano), and Dane (Prestby) Counties followed on 6 May. Brady registered 39 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 20 May.

Prothonotary Warbler—Arrived in Kenosha County on 7 May (R. Hoffmann) and in Rock County on 8 May (Yoerger). Seen in 7 additional southern counties as well as in La Crosse and Outagamie Counties. Evanson saw the most with 13 individuals in Jefferson County on 30 May.

Worm-eating Warbler—Prestby's excited discovery of one on 14 May in Dane County may have had him talking in tongues [see "By the Wayside"]. Additional sightings occurred in Grant County on 15 May (Tessen) and in Sauk County on 19 May (A. Holschbach).

Ovenbird—The third and final answer to the introductory quiz, and by the greatest margin, as the record late first arrival date was pushed back from 3 May [last achieved in 1978] to 6 May, when it finally turned up in Dane County and, interestingly, three northwestern ones: Barron, Burnett, and Douglas Counties. Brady had by far the largest total, with 124 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 20 May.

Northern Waterthrush—Perhaps surprisingly for what is perceived to be one of the earlier arriving species, it has had first arrival dates as late as 8 May, so this year's 2 May first arrival (Dane County, Hansen) doesn't look as bad as it might at first glance. Ashman had the high in that county, with 29 individuals on 13 May.

Louisiana Waterthrush—One warbler species that did live up to its reputation for earliness, with birds first noticed in Grant County on 9 April (Stutz) and in Sauk County on 16 April (A. Holschbach). Seen also in Iowa, Dane, Rock, Racine, Sheboygan, and Shawano Counties, where M. Peterson had it on 17 May. He has now found it there for 3 of the last 5 spring seasons.

Kentucky Warbler—Observed three times this season, with reports from several observers in Dane County on 13 May (where it stayed until at least 28 May), from Tessen in Grant County on 15 May, and from Yoerger in Sauk County on 21 May.

Connecticut Warbler—Debuted in Douglas County on 13 May (R. Johnson). Wood was able to find only 4 there on 29 May, attributing the difficulty to logging activity. Turned up additionally in Dane, Racine, Milwaukee, Dodge, Winnebago, Manitowoc, Portage, Wood, and Ashland/Bayfield Counties.

Mourning Warbler—A 6 May date in Door County (Lukes) is fairly early for this species, with next reports coming only on 12 May, in Winnebago (Bruce) and Outagamie (Mosquito Hill Nature Center) Counties. Appeared in 23 counties.

Common Yellowthroat—A late first arrival date of 5 May (Lafayette County, Yoerger). The species has been recorded as arriving later only twice [6 May 1997 and 7 May 1971].

Hooded Warbler—Turned up first in Portage County on 9 May (Berner). Klubertanz first saw it in Rock County on 11 May, with numbers building to 5 by 26 May. Seen additionally in five southern counties and in Shawano County (17 May, M. Peterson).

Wilson's Warbler—Arrived in Kenosha County on 7 May (R. Hoffmann), in Milwaukee County on 8 May (Zehner), and in Forest County on 9 May (Kavanagh). Seen in 27 counties.

Canada Warbler—Seen first by R. Hoffmann in Kenosha County on 7 May, followed on 10 May by sightings in Sauk (Tessen) and Milwaukee (Zehner) Counties. Stutz had 12 in Sauk County on 22 May. Seen in 23 counties.

Yellow-breasted Chat—First seen on 10 May in Dane (Thiessen) and in Ozaukee (Uttech) Counties. The last of the 8 counties visited was Winnebago County on 28 May (Bruce). The Brassers' sighting in Sheboygan County on 17 May was a bit unusual: they were in their car, and the chat was foraging with a Veery on the ground near the shoulder. Also reported from

Lafayette, Rock, Walworth, and Milwaukee Counties.

Summer Tanager—Experienced an explosion that eclipsed even that of Spring 2002, when it appeared in 10 counties. This year it was found in 13, showing up as far north as Ashland, Portage, and Door Counties. The first report surfaced from Outagamie County on 6 May (Sykes), the last from Sheboygan County on 26 May (Rohde), which was also the departure date for one present at an Ashland County feeder [see photo] since 9 May (Verch). The other counties in which it was seen were Dane, Walworth, Racine, Manitowoc [see photo], Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Calumet, and Brown Counties.

Scarlet Tanager—One made it to Rock County on 28 April (Yoerger); then it disappeared until 6 May, when it turned up in Richland, Dane, and Door Counties. Ten were reported in Dane County on 13 May (Ashman, Stutz). Made a stronger showing in the western part of the state than many another passerine.

Western Tanager—There were an eye-catching total of 3 sightings this season. First a female showed up at the Uttech feeder in Ozaukee County on 12 May, delighting many observers until its 20 May departure [see "By the Wayside"]. Kearns saw a male bird well even though not at a feeder in Winnebago County on 14 May. Finally, a male stopped in for a brief backyard drink at the Gennrich home in Waukesha County on 17 May.

Spotted Towhee—Individuals in 3 locations carried over from the winter season. The Waukesha County park bird, presumably in its second consecutive year of residency, departed on 11 April (Gustafson). Romano gave a 14 April departure date for the one at a feeder in Iowa County, and the Winnebago County individual was last noted on 5 May (Kuecherer).

Eastern Towhee—Kirpitis discovered an individual at her Crawford county feeder on 12 March. Otherwise, arrived on 5 April in Lafayette County (Romano). Stutz had 18 in Dane County on 14 May, while Brady saw 27 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 20 May.

American Tree Sparrow—Stutz could still find 30 in Dane County on 5 March, where it was last seen on 10 April (Martin). Departed Winnebago and Door Counties on 20 April and finally Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 3 May (Brady).

Chipping Sparrow—Arrived in Door County on 30 March (Lukes) and in Winnebago County on 31 March (Tessen). Three counts of between 30 and 40 individuals were given between 8 and 10 May in Oconto, Ashland/Bayfield, and Douglas Counties.

Clay-colored Sparrow—A 19 April report from the Mosquito Hill Nature Center in Outagamie County was way ahead of the next one (4 May, Columbia County, Dischler). Seven more counties were added over the course of the next three days. Blanketed the state, but with significant numbers only from more northern locations.

Field Sparrow—First noted in Manitowoc County on 30 March (Sontag). Stutz counted 20 in Dane County on 17 April.

Vesper Sparrow—Seen in Walworth County on 21 March (Fitzgerald) for the only record that month. The same observer counted 6 there on 10 April. On 17 April, Brady had 28 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties. Reported from 29 counties for the second straight spring.

Lark Sparrow—Found in the 7 southwestern counties of Rock, Dane, Sauk, Grant, Richland, Crawford, and Trempealeau, starting with an A. Holschbach report in Sauk County on 20 April; the same reporter noted 4 birds there on 18 May. Prestby and Stutz both reported 3 individuals in Dane County on 21 May.

Lark Bunting—Brady photographed a male bird [see photo] in Bayfield County on 28 May [see "By the Wayside"].

Savannah Sparrow—No March sightings, turning up first in Ozaukee County (Uttech) on 3 April. Ziebell found them 3 days later in Winnebago County and counted 84 there on 14 May. The Smiths thought numbers were down in Oconto County.

Grasshopper Sparrow—A 20 April arrival in Sauk County (A. Holschbach) was way ahead of all other sightings, which resumed again on 9 May with birds in Lafayette (Romano) and Dane (Ashman) Counties. Found in 13 counties, north to Barron, Portage, Winnebago, and Door Counties.

Henslow's Sparrow—As in the case of the previous species, one individual (17 April, La Crosse County, Ruhser) arrived well in advance of the others, with sightings recommencing on 30 April in Grant (Yoerger) and Green Lake (Tessen) Counties. M. Peterson counted 12 indi-

viduals in Grant County on 20 May. Reached Trempealeau, Portage, and Outagamie Counties.

Le Conte's Sparrow—Detected passing through Marquette, Wood, and Clark Counties on its way north, where 3 individuals in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 7 May were the first to be spotted (Brady). Also found in Burnett, Douglas, and Vilas Counties.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow—As has been the norm recently, found exactly once, on 30 May in Milwaukee County (Lubahn).

Fox Sparrow—Exhibited its usual whirlwind presence, suddenly appearing in at least 12 counties during the last 3 days of March and usually staying a week or two at best. Even in Douglas County its stay was only between 2 and 16 April (LaValleys). One BOP bird was known (Dane County, Ashman and Thiessen). Slightly early returnees turned up on 20 March in Walworth (Jacyna) and Winnebago (Ziebell) Counties, with appearances in 3 more counties before 29 March. A presence in Waukesha County until 28 April (Gustafson) was unusual. Prestby counted over 75 individuals in Dane County on 1 April.

Song Sparrow—Present at BOP in Sauk, Dane, Walworth, Waukesha, and Racine Counties, with an additional 2 March report in Manitowoc County (Sontag). Ziebell first recorded it in Winnebago County on 6 March, amassing a staggering total of 612 there on 14 May! Florence County was reached on 31 March (Kavanagh), with Washburn, Douglas, Ashland/Bayfield, and Vilas Counties following within the next 3 days.

Lincoln's Sparrow—Appeared on 22 April in Dane County (Thiessen). Next were 6 county firsts on 6 May. Yoerger found it still in Lafayette County as late as 30 May. Appeared in 20 counties.

Swamp Sparrow—Found at BOP in Sauk (A. Holschbach) and Dane (Ashman) Counties. Also early was a Jefferson County individual noted by Hale on 10 March. All first sightings after that were on 2 April or later. Ziebell had 486 (!) in Winnebago County on 14 May.

White-throated Sparrow—BOP in Dane (Ashman) and Ozaukee (Uttech) Counties. Stutz had around 600 in Dane County on 7 May, where it was last recorded on 17 May (Martin).

Harris's Sparrow—Appeared in 9 counties between 9 May (Dane County, Thiessen and Ashland/Bayfield Counties, Brady) and 23 May (Oconto County, Smiths). Numbers of individuals were not noted. County "hits" were less biased towards western counties than is usually the case, with reports this year from Walworth and Winnebago Counties besides those already mentioned.

White-crowned Sparrow—Birds recorded on 20 March in Walworth County (Jacyna) and on 4 April in Ozaukee County (Frank) seemed too early to be returning migrants. Most abundant in the first half of May, with Stutz registering 50 in Dane County on 7 May. In Oconto County until 25 May (Smiths) and still in Ashland/Bayfield Counties at EOP (Brady).

Dark-eyed Junco—Frank had 42 in Ozaukee County on 10 March and Brady had 52 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 16 April. Individuals were still being seen during the first week of May in Richland, Sauk, Dane, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, and Manitowoc Counties, and until 14 May in Winnebago County (Ziebell).

Lapland Longspur—Not found west of Lafayette, Sauk, Portage, and Ashland/Bayfield Counties. The largest flock reported consisted of over 1,000 individuals and was found by Hale in Jefferson County on 24 April. Tessen located 3 more flocks in the hundreds in Dodge and Outagamie Counties in late March and in Brown County on 28 April. The last report came from Walworth County on 23 May (Fitzgerald).

Smith's Longspur—Brady was able to photograph a male [see photo] he found in Ashland County on 13 May for the state's thirteenth (and first photographed) record [see "By the Wayside"]. This was also the latest of what are now 8 spring records, and by a considerable margin: previously the latest date had been 28 April [1921].

Snow Bunting—Seen in 17 counties this spring, as usual most scarce in the southwestern part of the state. The largest flock that could be mustered was one of 50 individuals in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 8 March (Brady). Persisted into early April in Sheboygan, Vilas, and Douglas Counties, with a 14 April Taylor County report (Risch) the last.

Northern Cardinal—That the species is present, but by no means ubiquitous, in the northern tier of counties could be inferred from the fact that for each of Florence, Vilas, and Douglas Counties, only 1 of the 2 active observers recorded it.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak—First report was in Ozaukee County (Uttech) on 2 May. After a 4 May report in Columbia County (Dischler), there were at least 5 more county first sightings on 5 May. Brady had 29 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 20 May.

Blue Grosbeak—Paulios discovered an individual in Rock County on 20 May. It was documented on 21 May by J. Peterson [see "By the Wayside"] and Prestby, and again on 28 May by Mueller. This would be the latest spring date on record, eclipsing a 23 May [1950] record, though this must be read in the context of about 5 summer records as well. Undocumented reports continued until EOP, so more information may be forthcoming in the summer report.

Indigo Bunting—First found in Door County on the relatively early date of 23 April by the Lukes, then not again until 6 May when it reappeared in Walworth (Fitzgerald) and Ozaukee (Uttech) Counties. Reached Douglas County on 17 May (LaValleys).

Painted Bunting—A streak of 3 consecutive spring appearances during 1983–85 was matched this year with an individual photographed by Ott [see photo] present in Calumet County from 5 to 7 May.

Dickcissel—Far earlier and far more widespread this year than for many a spring season, with an individual turning up at a Racine County feeder on 7 May (Keyel) forming but the first of no fewer than 7 county appearances, all southern. In order, more birds showed up in Lafayette (11 May, Romano), Rock, Dane, Sauk, Green, and Walworth Counties by EOP, with Stutz finding 15 individuals in Rock County on 21 May.

Bobolink—Not recorded in April, with Domagalski reporting the first on 1 May in Manitowoc County. Brady had 28 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 31 May. Found throughout the state.

Red-winged Blackbird—Recorded at BOP in at least Dane, Walworth, Waukesha, Racine, and Winnebago Counties. Latest arrival reported from a well covered county came on 27 March in Washburn County (Haseleu). Stutz had 600 in Grant County on 9 April.

Eastern Meadowlark—Frank's Ozaukee County individual on 3 March was the first report. Reached Douglas County on 31 March (LaValleys) and Washburn (Haseleu) and Ashland/Bayfield (Brady) Counties on 1 April. Ziebell counted 28 in Winnebago County on 30 April.

Western Meadowlark—Seen in 11 counties, with March arrivals recorded only in Walworth (13 March, Jacyna) and Grant (25 March, Yoerger) Counties. Fitzgerald reported 18 in Portage County on 24 May. Also present in Rock, Green, Dane, Iowa, Fond du Lac, Trempealeau, Barron, and Ashland/Bayfield Counties.

Yellow-headed Blackbird—First showed up for Ziebell in Winnebago County on 16 April; he counted 172 there on 14 May. Tessen had 15 in Outagamie County on 19 April. The only southwestern county report came from Lesher in La Crosse County on 24 May.

Rusty Blackbird—Early reports were filed from Walworth (4 March, Fitzgerald), Rock (6 March, Yoerger), and Dodge (8 March, Tessen) Counties. Prestby counted 70 in Dane County on 1 April. Reached Vilas County on 15 April (J. Baughman) and found in Winnebago County as late as 14 May (Bruce).

Brewer's Blackbird—Fitzgerald noted them first in Walworth County on 4 March. He had 35 there by 31 March and last saw any on 13 May. Kavanagh had them in Florence County from 8 March to EOP. Only 2 of the 10 most active Dane County reporters recorded it, on 1 April (Prestby) and again on 27 April (Martin). Widespread however, with reports from 26 counties.

Common Grackle—BOP in Dane, Walworth, and Racine Counties. Reached Douglas (R. Johnson) and Ashland/Bayfield (Brady) Counties on 27 March and Washburn County on 1 April (Haseleu). Stutz counted 100 individuals in Grant County on 9 April.

Brown-headed Cowbird—Designated as BOP in Dodge County (Tessen), with additional reports the first few days of March in Waukesha, Walworth, and Winnebago Counties. The first Dane County report came on 19 March (Stutz). Reached Ashland/Bayfield, Washburn, and Douglas Counties after 1 April. Stutz had 70 in Grant County on 9 April.

Orchard Oriole—As has become traditional, the first reports came from the Panetti feeders in Ozaukee County, this year on the relatively late date of 5 May. Tessen reported 4 in that county on 13 May. Domagalski reported them as nesting in Manitowoc County. Found as

far north as Buffalo, Winnebago, Oconto, and Door Counties.

Baltimore Oriole—An individual in La Crosse County was first on 2 May (Ruhser). Then it suddenly appeared in all of 7 counties on 5 May, all southern except for Winnebago County. Brady had the maximum recorded, 21 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 20 May.

Pine Grosbeak—Seen until 14 March in Ashland/Bayfield Counties (Brady), until 20 March in Douglas County (LaValleys), and until 27 March in Florence County (Kavanagh).

Purple Finch—Widespread in the state, with 28 county reports, often well into May. No truly large flocks were reported, however. J. Holschbach recorded 6 individuals in Manitowoc County on 20 April.

Red Crossbill—Recorded in 5 far northern counties, Portage County (9 April, Berner) and most unusually Walworth County, where Ford captured several on film incidental to documenting a European Goldfinch at her feeder on 22 March! Brady had as many as 7 in Ashland/Bayfield Counties until 20 May.

White-winged Crossbill—Like the previous species, one reported location was at a considerable distance from the others, with Cowart reporting an individual in Milwaukee County on 10 April. The other reports came from Douglas, Oneida, and Florence Counties, all in March.

Common Redpoll—Found in 15 counties from BOP until 9 April, when it departed Florence County (Kavanagh). Earlier she had reported 40 there (15 March), while flocks of 50 apiece were being reported in Burnett County on 21 March (Tessen) and in Ashland/Bayfield Counties on 30 March (Brady). Ventured as far south as Barron, Portage, and Manitowoc Counties, and in one case Columbia County, where the Schwalbes reported it on 3 April.

Hoary Redpoll—Kavanagh documented one that stayed until 12 March at her Florence County feeder [see "By the Wayside"].

Pine Siskin—Seen all season throughout the state, with high honors going to the 35 that Stutz counted in Dane County on 24 April.

Evening Grosbeak—Found, generally TTP, in every northern tier county from which nonincidental reports were filed (i.e. all but Iron County). Kavanagh had 30 in Marinette County on 15 March. In addition, present in 1 more southern county, with M. Peterson reporting 5 in Shawano County on 17 May.

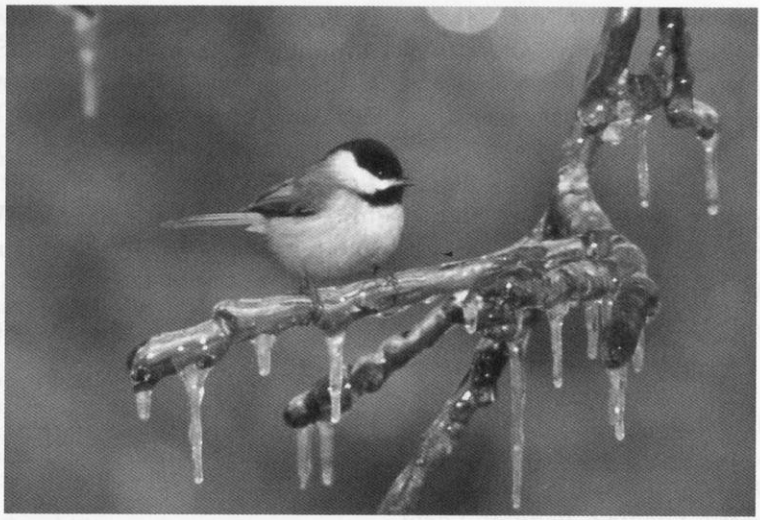
Eurasian Tree Sparrow—Wisconsin's fifth record was established when the Smiths discovered two males at their Oconto County feeder on 9 May.

Contributors and Cited Observers

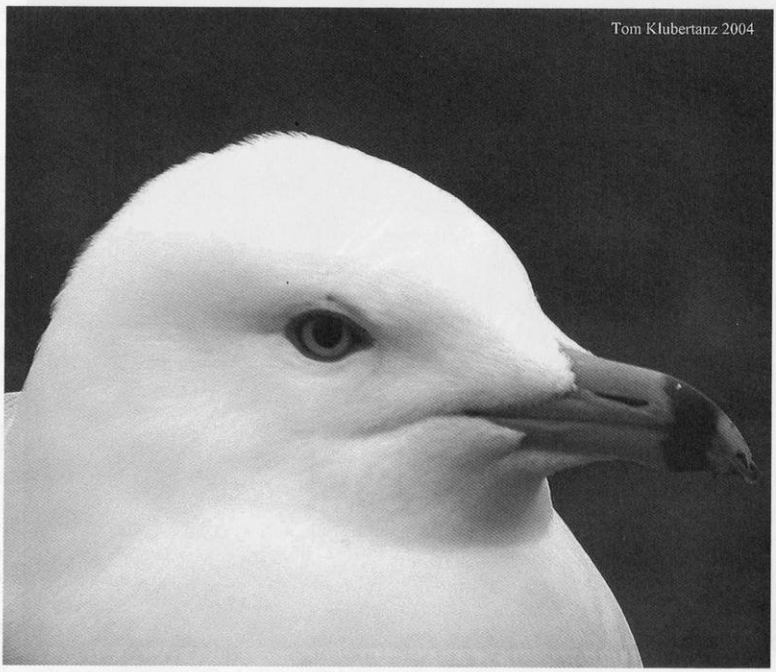
Betsy Abert, Philip Ashman, Vern Aune, Tim Avery, Jeff Bahls, John Bates, Jim Baughman, Scott Baughman, Murray Berner, Brian Boldt, Marilyn Bontly, Ryan Brady, Dave & Margaret Brasser, Paul Bruce, Erik Bruhnke, Pat Brust, Diane Bystrom, Joan Campbell, Nathan Carlsen, Daryl Christensen, Bob Costanza, Bill Cowart, Ralph Curtis, Noel Cutright, Seth Cutright, Karl David, Scott Diehl, Raymond Dischler, John Dixon, Bob Domagalski, Rebecca DuBey, Barbara Duerksen, Dan Duwe, Marty Evanson, Sean Fitzgerald, Mark & Sue Foote-Martin, Hilary Ford, Jim Frank, Scott Franke, Ellen Gennrich, Dennis Gustafson, Karen Etter Hale, Ellen Hansen, Bettie Harriman, Judy Haseleu, Bill Hilsenhoff, John Hoepfner, Cindy Hoffmann, Ron Hoffmann, Aaron Holschbach, Jim Holschbach, Steve Houdek, Eric Howe, Robert Hughes, John Idzikowski, Dan Jackson, Joe Jacyna, Larry Johnson, Robbye Johnson, Kay Kavanagh, Kevin Kearns, Ted Keyel, Douglas Kieser, Michael Kile, Mike Kirch, Julie Kirpitis, Dennis Kirschbaum, Tom Klubertanz, Roy Knispel, Tracey Koenig, Juna Krajewski, Dave Kuecherer, Ken Lange, David Larson, Laura & Steve LaValley, Fred Lesher, Lennie Lichter, Steve Lubahn, Roy & Charlotte Lukes, Robin Maercklein, Bart Martin, Bob & LuAnn Matyas, Mike McDowell, Bob McInroy, Mosquito Hill Nature Cen-

ter, Bill Mueller, Karin Nyhus, Michelene O'Connor, Lynn Ott, Dan Panetti, Andy Paulios, Matt Paulson, Jesse Peterson, Mark Peterson, Janine Polk, Tom Prestby, Helen Pugh, Mike Putnam, Niels Rattenborg, Paul Risch, Wayne Rohde, John Romano, Amber Roth, Jean Ruhser, Paul & Glenna Schwalbe, Michael Sears, Bruce Sedloff, Fawn & John Shillinglaw, Kirk Shillinglaw, Jerry & Karen Smith, Charles Sontag, Sharon Stiteler, Jean Strelka, Aaron Stutz, Carol Sykes, Daryl Tessen, Steve Thiessen, Tom Uttech, Dick Verch, Jeff Virant, Nick Walton, Todd Ward, Thomas Wood, Quentin Yoerger, Norma Zehner, Tom Ziebell.

Female Purple Finch by Gray Krogman.



Black-capped Chickadee coping with an ice storm by Dennis Kuecherer.



Portrait of a Ring-billed Gull by Tom Klubertanz.

"By the Wayside"—Spring 2005

Documentation for rare species includes White-faced Ibis, Piping Plover, White-winged Dove, Northern Hawk Owl, Burrowing Owl, Great Gray Owl, Boreal Owl, Black-backed Woodpecker, Varied Thrush, Worm-eating Warbler, Western Tanager, Lark Bunting, Smith's Longspur, Blue Grosbeak, and Hoary Redpoll.

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*)

19 May 2005, Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge, Trempealeau County—At first glance the bird was undoubtedly a *Plegadis* ibis: night-heron sized with long legs, all-brown body, long neck and long curved bill. As I zoomed in I could see the tell-tale features of this species. Although the light was poor, poor enough not to be able to distinguish between the different shades of color on the wings and body, the pink face outlined in white was plain to see. There were no vocalizations. Much of the time the bird was lost to sight among the grasses as it foraged for food, and then I would see the head and long bill pop up above the vegetation. At one time something spooked it and it took to the air along with a horde of Black Terns. It circled low around the reed bed a few times before landing in another location not far from where it had begun. Glossy Ibis was eliminated because that species lacks the pink facial skin. Limpkin was eliminated because it also lacks the pink facial skin, has plumage speckled with white, and a shorter yellow bill.—*Matt Paulson, Onalaska, WI.*

PIPING PLOVER (*Charadrius melodus*)

15 May 2005, Horicon Marsh, Fond du Lac County—I was driving on the shoulder of State Highway 49, stopping occasionally to scan the marsh from my vehicle. After one such stop I was astonished to see a Piping Plover on the shoulder about 30 feet in front of my car. It blended in quite well with the crushed rock and I thought to myself, "Bird, this is not the place you want to be!" Once it actually walked on the pavement, but soon it moved to the other side of the shoulder near the grass. It was a very pale plover with a pale tan-gray on the upperparts and face, with white underparts and a small white line over the eye. It had a complete black breast band which reached up to the nape and was bor-

dered in white. There were no dark markings on the face, but a black bar crossed the forehead above the eyes. The bill was orange with a black tip—nearly half the length was black. The legs were orange and unlike the Ozaukee County bird I had seen on 15 April, there were no leg bands present. I contemplated chasing the bird in hopes it would fly into the marsh away from the busy highway, but then thought better of this when I envisioned it flying in front of a passing car. I left it alone and hoped it survived.—*Thomas Wood, Menomonee Falls, WI.*

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*)

26 April 2005, Milwaukee, Milwaukee County—As I walked out the back door to go to work, four doves flushed from under the feeder, flying away and up. In that instant, my attention was drawn to one bird which, in a perfect dorsal view, showed a broad tail with white corners and striking white mid-wing bands. Although the bird didn't stay around until I got back from work, my wife got some reasonably good photos through two panes of very old glass showing the white on the lower edge of the folded wing (as well as some of the dark flight feathers below that) and the distinctive facial pattern—a whitish cheek with a black line below it.—*Bill Cowart, Milwaukee, WI.*

Northern Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula*)

26 March 2005, Harrington Beach State Park, Ozaukee County—This was my twelfth and final observation of the individual present at this location during the last three months. It was hunting as usual from the small ash trees along the main road of the park. It didn't fly this time, but at other times I had noted its flight with (for an owl) fast, strong wing beats, rather giving the impression of a Cooper's Hawk. It made some soft chirping noises at a crow that was half-heartedly harassing it as it flew over its head. But what really intrigued me during this last sighting was watching the owl in the scope in the presence of a gentle breeze. The tree branches and the owl's body danced back and forth in the wind. The head however was locked in the *exact* same space, never wavering towards the edge of the scope field. Somehow the bird was able to compensate precisely for any movement of the tree to keep its head in the same three-dimensional spot the whole time. Perhaps this is an adaptation for hunting, allowing the bird to stay fixed on the precise location of any potential prey it detects by eye or ear.—*Jim Frank, Mequon, WI.*

Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*)

4 April 2005, Somerset, St. Croix County—The bird was initially spotted on the ground in an area adjacent to our driveway. It was quite approachable and over a two-hour period flew to large boulders and low branches of a downed tree in an old field nearby. It would fly only a short distance as I approached, always staying close to the ground. Occasionally it would bob up and down. It was a fairly small owl with particularly long legs that made it appear to be stretching upward. The

overall tan and white checkered pattern of its plumage seemed quite uniform across its back and continued across the chest. From a distance I noticed a darkish collar that became more prominently visible at closer range. Another outstanding feature was what looked like a continuous light colored eyebrow as well as a lighter band just below its beak.—*Diane Bystrom, Somerset, WI.*

Great Gray Owl (*Strix nebulosa*)

6 March 2005, Meek Road, Dane/Columbia Counties—Gas for the trip from home to the Goose Pond area: $15.00. Soda and Cheesy-Poofs: $5.00. Watching the Meek Road Great Gray Owl glide across a cut corn field at an altitude of 18 inches, flare up and land on the hood of a birder's car (with the birders in it), becoming for at least three or four minutes the world's coolest hood ornament—then watching the owl swoop over to a "Stop Ahead" road sign ten feet from our car and sit there for probably ten minutes while ten other cars full of birders watched from down the road: priceless!—*Scott Diehl, Richfield, WI.*

Boreal Owl (*Aegolius funereus*)

25 March 2005, Maple, Douglas County—Laura LaValley called to say there was a Boreal Owl [see photo] in her yard. Shaun Putz, Paul Lehman, Josh Horky and I left immediately. Josh brought a mouse. We couldn't find the bird after searching for about half an hour so we left for a while to check another yard where a Boreal Owl had recently been seen. That proved futile, so we returned to the LaValleys and spread out in her yard again, checking all the conifers. Josh heard something fall and looked up to see the owl on a low branch. He had heard a pellet drop! Josh dropped his mouse in the snow and the bird grabbed it and flew to another branch where it proceeded to eat it while we watched, Shaun filming the spectacle on digital video. And a rather gruesome spectacle it was, as the owl took out the mouse's eyes and ate the brains.—*Robbye Johnson, Superior, WI.*

Black-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides arcticus*)

19 April 2005, Heckrodt Wetlands Preserve, Winnebago County—I saw a woodpecker that was bulkier than a Hairy or a Red-bellied. It had an all-black back and a black tail, with a yellow cap on the frontal lobe of the head. I observed it for about ten minutes, then went home to get my digiscoping setup, returning within half an hour. He was still shredding the same tree when I returned. I took 30–40 pictures from different angles from twenty feet away. The bird, silent the whole time, was really digging into a dead tree about ten feet off the ground. It would flick the bark with his bill, then really start hammering until a hole was created. He did this until he had dug four or five holes before flying off to the north. I then watched him visit several trees in the wetland—all with the same fresh types of markings I had just witnessed being made.—*Kevin Kearns, Neenah, WI.*

VARIED THRUSH (*Ixoreus naevius*)

15 March to 10 April 2005, Oakfield, Fond du Lac County—Our feeder is about twenty-five feet from our living room window. The thrush was first seen on snow-covered ground on a quite cold early morning. In fact, it was only ever observed early in the morning, eating sunflower seeds off the ground. It was the size of a robin and hopped like one, with the same colored chest but with a wide gray-black bar across it. The tail was shorter, the bill sharper than a robin's. There was also a rusty red stripe on the head. The bird preferred to be alone and was quite shy. If he saw a movement in the house he was gone! I did not know what bird I was observing so I went to a guide and looked under thrushes until I found a drawing of the suspected species; then I went to the Internet and looked up Varied Thrush and found quite a few pictures of the bird I had observed, learning that it was in fact a male.—*Karin Nyhuș, Oakfield, WI.*

WORM-EATING WARBLER (*Helmitheros vermivorus*)

14 May 2005, Madison, Dane County—While birding with Aaron Stutz, his wife Nancy, and Peter Bridge, we found a big flock of passerines in the UW Arboretum. While checking each bird, I spotted one with my naked eye at eye level about twenty yards away that seemed more bulky and plump than the other warblers, so I thought it might be a vireo. To my delight, when I put my binoculars up, I could immediately tell it was a Worm-eating Warbler because of the buffy-olive color and the very distinct black stripes on the head. *I immediately described* [italics added for emphasis] to everyone I was with where the bird was and we all had excellent looks at it feeding in the sunlight for the next five to ten minutes. Longer study revealed the large bill and the stripes running straight through the eye.—*Tom Prestby, Wauwatosa, WI.*

In the course of our Dane County Big Day we stumbled upon a number of excellent birds. The Worm-eating Warbler was the best, in my opinion. We were hiking through the Lost City Forest portion of the Arboretum and found a nice mixed flock of warblers. While we were looking through it we started hearing a Hooded Warbler, our target bird for the hike. Suddenly Tom Prestby became so excited by something he was looking at that he could not even utter the bird's name. Initially all that came out of his mouth were a handful of very excited and incoherent noises. We all started looking where Tom was looking and eventually he was able to tell us there was a Worm-eating Warbler actively feeding in some buckthorn about twenty yards away. We all had excellent looks at the long-billed, buffy-olive warbler with black stripes on its head. The bird repeatedly flew out into the open and perched for our viewing pleasure. This was by far the best looks I have ever had at this species and as an added bonus the bird was only about three blocks from my house. Unfortunately the bird never called in our presence, but I know it would have sounded just like all the Chipping Sparrows that frequent the neighborhood.—*Aaron Stutz, Madison, WI.*

Western Tanager
(*Piranga ludoviciana*)

13 and 18 May 2005, Saukville, Ozaukee County—This bird was coming to Tom Uttech's feeders with Baltimore and Orchard Orioles and a Black-throated Blue Warbler, attracted by the set-up of oranges, grape jelly, and mealworms. It was about the size of the Orchard Oriole but heftier and not as slender. This female was overall a grayish-green with a brighter greenish back and two fairly prominent wing bars. The bill was light-colored and thick, in contrast to the sharp pointed bills of the orioles. Her underparts were pale yellowish. The face had no obvious markings—no eye line, no eyebrow line—just a "blank" face. Her wings were darker than the body but not as dark as a Scarlet Tanager would show, and the wing bars were prominent enough to indicate that this bird was not a female Scarlet Tanager.—*Marilyn Bontly, Bayside, WI.*

Lark Bunting
(*Calamospiza melanocorys*)

28 May 2005, Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, Bayfield County—Steve Hoecker called me to report an adult male Lark Bunting at the Visitor Center. My wife and I immediately went and located the bird feeding on dandelion seeds on the lawn. The bird was the size and shape of a large sparrow and nearly all black with an elongated white wing patch—unmistakably an adult male Lark Bunting [see photo]. The head, back and rump were all black and unmarked, as were the undersides from the throat to the undertail coverts. The latter had a few specks of whitish mottling, while the tail was mostly black with a rather indistinct white tip. The bill was dark and gray and the legs were brown. Aside from the overall black color, most obvious on both the perched and flying bird was a large white wing patch on the upperwing coverts. Some secondaries and tertials were also edged with white. The bird spent nearly all of its time hopping around the mowed lawn and voraciously eating dandelion seeds. Occasionally it got chased by male Red-winged Blackbirds.—*Ryan Brady, Ashland, WI.*

Smith's Longspur
(*Calcarius pictus*)

13 May 2005, Sanborn, Ashland County—As I was scoping a flock of American Golden-Plovers, a sparrow-sized bird with brown uppersides, buffy-orange undersides, and a striking black-and-white head entered my field of view. Immediately I exclaimed "Smith's Longspur!" Similar in size and shape to other longspurs, this bird had rich buffy-orange and generally unmarked undersides from the undertail coverts all the way through the throat. The head was black with a bold white supercilium, white auricular patch, and a white trim separating the black of the head from the buff of the throat. The nape was buffy-orange and unmarked, while the back and wings were brown. The upperwing coverts had pale edgings almost constituting wing bars, but the white shoulder patch mentioned in some field guides was not evident. I did not observe the bird in flight and thus could not note any diagnostic tail pattern, as the bird only walked, hopped, or ran as it for-

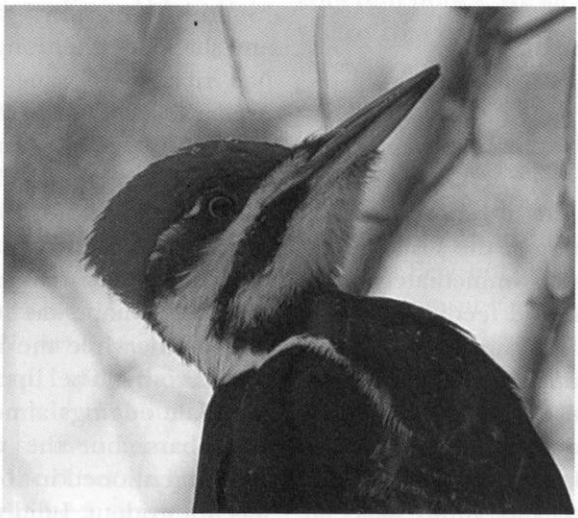
aged on the ground. I was able to get some poor but clearly identifiable digiscoped images [see photo].—*Ryan Brady, Ashland, WI.*

Blue Grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*)

21 May 2005, Avon, Rock County—This bird was initially located by Andy Paulios, and Aaron Stutz and Tom Prestby had already located it prior to my arrival in the area and were present at the same time I observed the bird. It was dark blue all over except for some black on the face near the bill and brownish wing bars. The bill was very large and dark. The bird was more the size and shape of a Rose-breasted Grosbeak than an Indigo Bunting. It produced a strong, warbling song that lasted approximately five seconds and was repeated every five to fifteen seconds from a prominent perch at the top of various trees. The flight was somewhat "fluttery," resulting in the impression that the bird was not a very strong flier.—*Jesse Peterson, Waunakee, WI.*

Hoary Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni*)

12 March 2005, Aurora, Florence County—Two individuals were present all winter in a flock of fifty Common Redpolls at our feeder. They had very little barring on the undertail. The overall appearance was much whiter than the Common Redpolls. The beaks also appeared smaller. When they flew, their rumps were almost completely white with no streaking. A pale pink blush suffused their breasts.—*Kay Kavanagh, Niagara, WI.*



This up-close-and-personal photo of a Pileated Woodpecker was taken by Laura Erickson.

WSO Records Committee Report: Spring 2005

Jim Frank

WSO Records Committee Chair
10524 N. O'Connell Lane
Mequon, WI 53097-3314
262. 242. 2443
jcfbirddr@yahoo.com

The WSO Records Committee reviewed 57 records of 33 species for the spring season, accepting 44 of them. Highlights of the season included Wisconsin's third record of a Black-throated Gray Warbler, third White-winged Dove, thirteenth Smith's Longspur, and thirteenth Painted Bunting.

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

White-faced Ibis—

#2005-021 Trempealeau Co., 19 May 2005, Paulson.

A night heron-sized wader, with a long neck, long legs, and a decurved bill was reported. The plumage appeared entirely brown in the late afternoon light; iridescence wasn't discernible. A noticeable white border surrounded the eyes and the pink facial skin.

(The pink facial skin and complete, white facial skin border distinguish this species from the Glossy Ibis with its bluish facial skin and thin, broken, white facial skin border.)

Cackling Goose—

#2005-022 Douglas Co., 15 May 2005, R. Johnson (photo only).

The photo shows a decidedly smaller goose in the midst of Canada Geese. The plumage appeared identical to the Canadas; however, the neck was markedly shorter and the bill very stubby.

Swainson's Hawk—

#2005-024 Walworth Co., 25 May 2005, Fitzgerald.

#2005-025 Bayfield Co., 28 May 2005, Brady.

The Bayfield Co. bird was a long-winged buteo, soaring with a slight dihedral to the wings. A dark brown head and upper breast, but a lighter brown lower breast were reported. The underwing coverts were cream colored contrasting with the dark gray flight feathers. The tail was light gray-brown without evident banding.

The Walworth Co. individual was dark brown on the head with a white throat, reddish-brown on the upper chest and body. The reddish-brown underwing coverts contrasted with the gray flight feathers again. The tail was whitish with a dark subterminal band.

Black-necked Stilt—

#2005-026 Fond du Lac Co., 17 April 2005, T. Wood, Prestby, S. Cutright.

Noted was the overall tall and slender appearance of the bird. In addition, the long, pink-red legs, the black crown, nape, back, and wings in contrast to the white throat, foreneck, breast, and belly were noted. Also reported was the thin, relatively long, black bill.

This is Wisconsin's second April report of this species.

Ruff—

#2005-027 Dodge Co., 6 May 2005, Tessen.

This shorebird was similar in size to the Lesser Yellowlegs in this pond, but a bit more plump. This bird was gray-brown in overall color with black blotching on the back and breast. The lower breast was white, however. Orange legs were reported. The bill was slightly shorter than the length of yellowleg's bill.

This is the third consecutive spring sighting in eastern Wisconsin.

Eurasian Collared-Dove—

#2003-066 Columbia Co., 6 March 2005, T. Wood.

This dove was slightly larger and bulkier than the associated Mourning Doves. The tail was wider and squared at the end. Its overall color was light beige-gray with a black crescent on the nape and primaries darker in color than the general plumage. The undertail was black proximally with dark gray undertail coverts.

White-winged Dove—

#2005-028 Milwaukee Co., 26 April 2005, Cowart (photo).

This dove was similar in size and overall gray-brown color to a Mourning Dove. A readily apparent white edge to the folded wing was noted as was a striking white midwing band in flight. The primaries were very dark gray and a black sideways teardrop was seen below a pale cheek. White corners were noted on a broad tail.

This is Wisconsin's fifth record of a White-winged Dove, all in the past eight years.

Burrowing Owl—

#2005-057 St. Croix Co., 4 April 2005, Bystrom.

This relatively long-legged, sawwhet-sized owl was observed for a two hour period in an old field area, perched on boulders and fallen trees. The overall brown color was broken by white checkering on both the back and breast. There were white eyebrows and a white throat band as well as a dark collar below the light throat band.

This is Wisconsin's fourteenth record, but only the second in the past 13 years.

Northern Hawk Owl—

#2004-093 Douglas Co., 4 March 2005 (4 birds); 21, 25 March 2005, R. Johnson.

#2004-094 Ozaukee Co., 26 March 2005, Frank; 27 March 2005, T. Wood.

These lingering individuals from

the winter invasion exhibited the expected crow-size, brown bodies, relatively long-tails, black edges to the facial discs, brown barring across the breast, yellow eyes, and they lacked ear tufts.

These late March records are eclipsed only by an early April record from Dunn Co. back in 1885 and a summering/nesting record from Douglas Co. in 1963.

Great Gray Owl—

#2005-030 Rock Co., 25 February 2005, Fitzgerald.

#2004-097 Douglas Co., 5 May 2005, Hale (photo); 21 May 2005, R. Johnson (photo only).

These owls were very large, grayish, lacked ear tufts, had yellow eyes, and exhibited a white bib below the facial discs.

These were of course remnants of the massive winter movement of this species into the state.

Boreal Owl—

#2005-032 Douglas Co., 4, 15, 20, 25, 2005, R. Johnson (photo); 20 March 2005, Prestby.

#2005-054 Oconto Co., 11 March 2005, Berner (photo).

This small owl was relatively "large-headed." The facial discs had a dark border, the eyes were yellow, the bill pale in color, and brown streaking was apparent on the breast.

The saw-whet owl would have had a dark bill and lacked the dark facial border.

The 4th and 20th of March reports were of birds calling only. The series of short hoots rose on the scale for the first notes, finishing with several more notes on the same pitch.

Chuck-Will's-Widow—

#2005-034 Vernon Co., 30 May 2005, Jackson.

This "heard only" report was of a song a bit different in cadence to a Whip-poor-will. This song had a very soft "chuck" beginning note, followed by two "weeoo" notes; the second decidedly more emphatic than the first. The last two notes in a Whip-poor-will's song are single syllables, and its first note is more emphatic than the soft "chuck" of the Chuck-will's-widow.

Black-backed Woodpecker—

#2005-035 Winnebago Co., 19 April 2005, Kearns; 21 April 2005, Hoepfner; 14 May 2005, Shillinglaw.

#2005-056 Marathon Co., March–1 April 2005, Duwe (photo only).

This woodpecker was as large as or a bit larger than a Hairy Woodpecker with solid black wings, back, and head. The breast was white with black streaks on the sides. The black of the head was broken by a white malar stripe and a yellow crown.

"Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler—

#2005-038 Racine Co., 15 May 2005, Keyel.

Initially, this warbler suggested a typical Yellow-rumped Warbler, but further observation showed the throat to be yellow, not white. The upper breast, below the yellow throat was more densely black than a "Myrtle" Yellow-rumped would be. The white wingbars of a "Myrtle" were coalesced into more of a white wing patch on this Audubon's Warbler. In addition, the white superciliary line of a "Myrtle" was absent.

Yellow-throated Warbler—
#2005-039 Door Co., 15 May 2005, Kile (photo).

This warbler had a gray back, white breast, yellow throat, black forehead, black mask, white superciliary line, black streaks on the flanks, and two white wingbars. The bill was a bit longer than typical for a warbler of similar size.

Black-throated Gray Warbler—
#2005-040 Jefferson Co., 4 May 2005, Larsen (photo).

The photo showed a warbler with a gray back and wings, white wingbars, a black cap, black auricular patch, and a black throat. The upper sides of the white breast had light black streaking. A broad white supercilium and malar stripe were apparent. The diagnostic yellow lore spot was also evident.

This was Wisconsin's first spring record among the now three state records in the past 37 years.

Western Tanager—
#2005-041 Ozaukee Co., 13, 18 May 2005, Bontly; 13 May 2005, Tessen; 16 May 2005, Prestby.
#2005-042 Winnebago Co., 14 May 2005, D. & K. Kearns.
#2005-043 Waukesha Co., 17 May 2005, Gennrich.

The Ozaukee Co. bird was a female, with a yellowish overall color, but black wings, whitish wingbars, and a gray back. The bill was thick, but rounded, thought to be Scarlet Tanager-sized rather than the larger Summer Tanager-sized.

The Winnebago Co. bird was a yellowish tanager with black wings, black back, and whitish wingbars. The head was orange rather than red.

In Waukesha Co., the bird exhibited the expected red head of a mature male bird.

Spotted Towhee—
#2005-015 Iowa Co., 14 April 2005, Romano.
#2005-014 Winnebago Co., 22 April 2005, Dave Kuecherer (photo).

These birds appeared to be Eastern Towhees with white wingbars and white spots on the back.

Both of these reports were late departure dates for overwintering birds previously reported in the winter season.

Lark Bunting—
#2005-044 Bayfield Co., 28 May 2005, Brady (photo).

This large sparrow-sized bird was entirely black with a large white wing patch and dark, finch-like bill.

Reports of this species have now occurred in four of the past five years.

Smith's Longspur—
#2005-046 Ashland Co., 13 May 2005, Brady, (photo).

This sparrow-sized bird was brownish above, but an unmarked buffy-orange below—from throat to undertail coverts. The head was black with a white supercilium, white auricular patch, and a white stripe between the black of the head and the buffy throat. The nape was also unmarked and buffy-orange. In contrast to what field guides indicated, the small, white shoulder patch was not discernible.

This is Wisconsin's thirteenth record.

Blue Grosbeak—

#2005-047 (?) Co., 20 May 2005, Bonde.

#2005-048 Rock Co., 21 May 2005, Prestby, J. Peterson; 28 May 2005, Mueller.

This blue bird was closer to a Rose-breasted Grosbeak than an Indigo Bunting in size. The all dark blue coloration was broken only by a blacker appearance around the base of the beak and two brown wingbars. The song was described as "warbling," similar to a Purple Finch or Orchard Oriole.

Painted Bunting—

#2005-052 Calumet Co., 5, 7 May 2005, Ott (photo).

This small, sparrow-sized bird had a purple-blue head, red underparts, a yellow-green upper back, rosy rump, red eyering, brown wings, and brown tail. The bill was finch-shaped. This is Wisconsin's thirteenth record, the last five of these thirteen records occurring in the last four consecutive spring seasons. There has been a report of a Painted Bunting from Calumet Co. in each of the past two springs.

Hoary Redpoll—

#2005-016 Florence Co., 12 March 2005, Kavanaugh.

This report was the latest date for a previously reported wintering bird at this site. The overall paler appearance, stubbier bill, white, unmarked rump, and white, unmarked undertail coverts were noted.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow—

#2005-055 Oconto Co., 23 May 2005, Smith (photo).

This feeder visitant appeared to be very similar to a House Sparrow, but there was an entirely rufous/brown crown instead of a gray crown and the light gray cheek was overlaid with a black auricular patch. In addition, a white collar was present laterally and the black upperbreast was limited to a black throat with a light gray upper breast.

Given the recent parade of European released cage birds in southern Wisconsin, some consideration needs to be made of this bird's origin. There have been at least three previous sightings of this species in the state long before the recent releases.

Not Accepted

Pacific Loon—

#2005-020 Dane Co, 14 April 2005.

This bird was seen as close as 50 ft, but was repeatedly diving during the brief observation. The bill was felt to be long and pointed. The head and neck weren't seen well, but the front of the neck appeared dark to the observer. Also observed were white stripes across the back. The overall size was indicated to be similar to the nearby coots.

Several points suggest this bird might not be a Pacific Loon. The overall size seems too small. In addition, the inability to describe the head and neck more clearly leave doubt about the identity of this bird.

Black Vulture—

#2005-022 Racine Co., 19 April 2005.

This observation occurred while driving, thus no magnification was used. The bird was seen as it flew against the sun, thus it was more backlit than directly lit. The wings ap-

peared to be held more flat than the dihedral expected from a Turkey Vulture. This seemed to be the initial trait that caused the observer to question the first assumption of this being a Turkey Vulture. In addition, there were silver patches noted toward the ends of the wings.

The viewing conditions from a moving car, with the lack of binoculars, and a significant backlighting from the sun obviously hinder the recognition of some details. Missing from the report were indications that the bird's overall shape was considered to be different. The disproportionately short tail was not noted. The reliance on the flat position that the wings were held in, but lack of shape commentary allows the question of a hawk, particularly with the backlighting problem that might diminish much of any other color characteristics. Backlighting might also allow the base of the outer primaries to appear lighter than the rest of the wing. Indication was not made of any flapping during the estimated one minute of observation time. Black Vultures would have a very floppy wing motion.

Mississippi Kite—
#2005-023 Portage Co., 22 May 2005.

This Broad-winged Hawk-sized bird had pointed wings, a relatively long, squared-off tail that widened beyond the body, but little plumage character beyond an overall uniform, dark color. It glided the entire time it was observed. Although there wasn't any underwing pattern seen, the observer suggested the view of this area was brief. The head did not stand out as lighter than the rest of the bird. No banding was noted in the tail. Attention to the characteristic short outer primary was not made during the observation.

Much of this report would fit a subadult Mississippi Kite, but with so little else to go on in terms of field marks, the notation of the short outer primary or a better look at the face (not possible at this distance) would be needed to confirm this rather unusual report.

Northern Hawk Owl—
#2005-029 Waukesha Co., 4 March 2005.

Although this must have been clearly observed at 20 yards, there was no description beyond having the "typical Northern Hawk Owl markings." More specific characteristics need to be listed to provide the necessary evidence for this sighting.

Great Gray Owl—
#2005-031 Bayfield Co., 14 May 2005.

This brief description did not address the presence or lack of ear tufts. It merely described a large, gray owl with yellow eyes.

Boreal Owl—
#2005-032 Douglas Co., 20 March 2005.

This "heard only" situation did not describe the call notes, nor any changes on the scale or comparison to a saw-whet's call.

Great Tit—
#2005-036 Door Co., 1–22 April 2005; 9, 12, 13 April 2005 (photo).

Two birds were photographed. Superficially, they looked like chickadees, but with greenish backs, bluish wings, and yellow breasts. A single white wingbar was present. The head was entirely black with a large white

cheek patch, entirely surrounded by the black. This black extended down from the throat through the center of the yellow breast.

The likely origin of these European birds was captive escape.

Blue Tit—

#2005-051 Dunn Co., 15 May 2005, (photo).

Another Chickadee-like bird was photographed with a greenish back, bluish wings, and yellow breast. The crown was bluish and surrounded by a white superciliary line. A black eyeline, black throat, and black collar line surrounded the white cheek patch. No black was noted on the breast. The origin of this bird is again considered to be a captive release.

Aztec Thrush—

#2005-037 Dane Co., 15 May 2005.

This bird was described very briefly as being black on top, white on the bottom, with a black tail with a white tip on it. Behaviorally it sat and then swooped like a swallow in a backyard lawn area.

The behavior described would be most consistent with a flycatcher, leading to the suspicion that this was probably an Eastern Kingbird. If an Aztec Thrush would have been observed in flight, expectations would be that the white rump and wing stripe would be a prominent portion of the description.

Golden-crowned Sparrow—

#2005-045 Waukesha Co., 13 May 2005.

This individual was observed bathing, which may have altered the plumage observed. It was felt to be slightly longer than previously observed White-crowned Sparrows, but it isn't stated that there was a direct size comparison. The bird was overall grayish, with faint white wingbars, and a streaked back similar to the White-crowns. The throat was grayish-white, the breast had faint streaks, and the bill was gray. The most striking characteristic was a yellowish crown spot; however, there specifically was no black seen between the eye and this crown. In addition, no white as observed in the crown.

If this was a Golden-crowned Sparrow, the lack of black or at least some dark area between the yellow crown and the eye is hard to explain. The lighter throat area and faint breast streaking raise the possibility of a "tan-striped" White-throated Sparrow. In the altered wet plumage of a bathing bird, it is hard to tell what is real and what is wet feathers as anyone watching a bird bath with regularity can attest. The "yellow" crown is still intriguing and not fully accounted for by the White-throated Sparrow variant.

Yellowhammer—

#2005-049 Milwaukee Co., 29 April 2005, (photo).

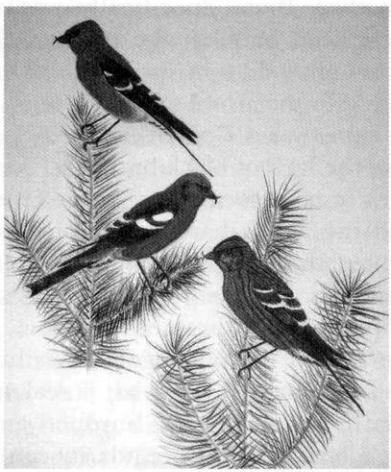
This small bunting was generally patterned in black and brown as most sparrows are. Distinctive characteristics included the yellow head and chestnut lower back and rump. The yellow head consisted of a yellow crown surrounded by a black line, a black eyeline below the yellow superciliary line, and a black moustachial stripe embracing the yellow throat. The yellow of the head and throat extended down the breast where fine, but dense dark streaks were apparent. The relatively long brown tail exhibited white outer feathers.

This adds yet another European

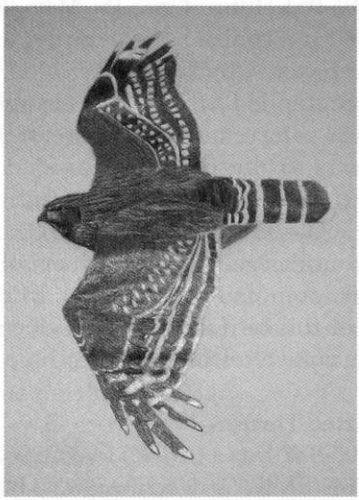
bird of suspicious origin to the growing Wisconsin list.

European Goldfinch— #2005-050 Kenosha Co., ? May 2005, (photo only).

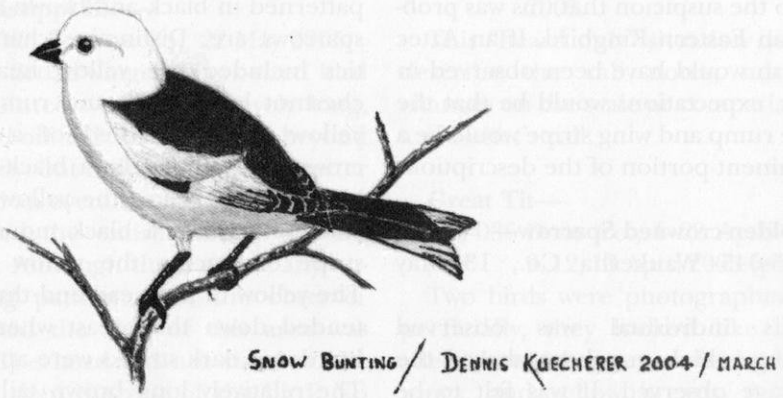
This obviously correct identification was considered to be of captive origin, the fourth species in this spring's list.



White-winged Crossbill drawing by Seth Cutright.



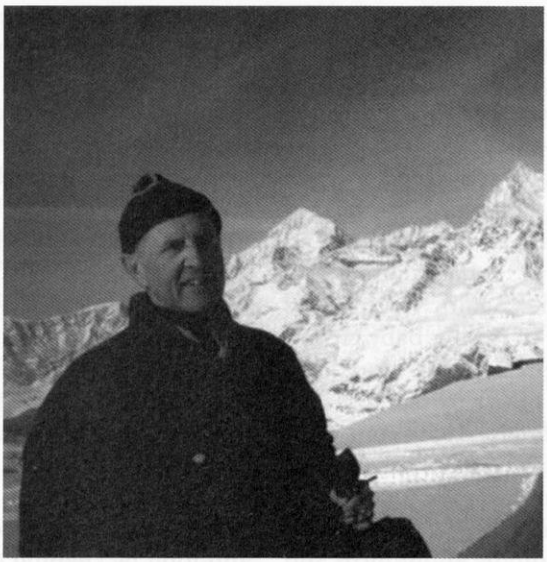
Drawing of Red-shouldered Hawk by Seth Cutright.



Drawing of Snow Bunting by Dennis Kuecherer.

In Memoriam

Carl Goeres "Butz" Hayssen, Jr. 1922–2005



Carl Hayssen, known to most WSO members as the Society's Secretary—a position he held from 1972–1994—died on 21 September 2005. Before serving as Secretary, Carl was the chair of Endowments and Advertisements (1967–1972), thus serving on the Board of Directors from 1967 to 1994. He received the Silver Passenger Pigeon for service to WSO in 1981 and a Certificate of Appreciation in 1992 for continued work for the Society.

Carl was born on 13 November 1922, graduated from Milwaukee University School in 1940, and from Cornell University in 1944 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1943–46. He married Nina (Virginia) on 24 July 1948 and they had five children: Virginia, Carl, Jonathon, Henry, and Andrew (who preceded him in death).

Carl was a self-taught naturalist/conservationist. Besides his volunteering with WSO, he was a member of the S. Paul Jones Naturalists Club from 1964 to his death, serving as their President in 1972, 1986–87, and 1998, Vice

President in 1971 and 1985, and as Secretary from 1999–2001. He also belonged to the Benjamin F. Goss Bird Club, joining in February 1992.

He was good friends with Fred and Fran Hamerstrom. His daughter Virginia fondly remembers the Hamerstroms staying at their home after WSO events and going with her father and siblings to sit in the Greater Prairie-Chicken blinds and record data on the birds. She say this was her first exposure to animal behavior, the subject in which she got her doctorate. Carl was a member of Tympanucus Cupido Pinnatus, which focuses its work on prairie-chickens.

In addition, Carl expressed his love for animals by belonging to various humane societies and often housing the orphaned or rehabilitating animals at his home. Again, Virginia has great memories of raising baby crows.

His son, Henry, notes that Carl worked on the effort to ban DDT in Wisconsin in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Henry also remembers that his father was an ambassador for birds in their community by teaching his friends and neighbors about birds and bird-feeding.

Carl's niece, Lisa Hartman—WSO member and WDNR employee—credits Uncle "Butzie" with encouraging her interest in nature and birds. In her words: "As his niece, I remember our [family's] many visits to Carl's home on North Lake, Hartland, Wis. Uncle Butzie (as he was always known to us) always had some ongoing project in the natural history department of life. There was a tame crow that would greet and harass us, tame squirrels to feed, a multitude of birds at his feeders, and always there were tanks of aquatic invertebrates and pond life brewing in his basement laboratory. He exhibited a gruff attitude toward my siblings and me, but whenever we showed an interest in his aquaria or free-ranging animal visitors, he took time to teach us all he knew about them—which was much. When, as a young adult, I began to nurture my own interest in birds, Uncle Butzie and I had much in common and there followed many years of shared stories and connection. I know for certain that he was pleased—tickled pink, actually—when I named my captive Turkey Vulture after him. I can think of no other relative that would have felt thus honored and his spirit lives on in my continued explorations of the wild world."

Carl Hayssen served WSO very well and long by keeping careful and accurate minutes for the Society and is remembered with affection for his sense of humor at Board meetings and conventions. Perhaps his greatest legacy is passing his love for nature and birds on to the next generation.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Jack R. Bartholmai is an amateur wildlife photographer and wood sculptor. His work appears frequently in local newspapers, travel brochures, calendars, and bird publications. He gives numerous talks on birds and his work and is an active member of the Horicon Bird Club. He is the 2005 recipient of the WSO Bronze Passenger Pigeon Award.

Seth Cutright, one of WSO's younger members, is a recent graduate of Concordia University where he majored in art. He is especially interested in raptors and enjoys hawk watches along Lake Michigan in the fall. He also participates in numerous Christmas Bird Counts each winter and helps with bird banding at the Riveredge MAPS program.

Laura Erickson, a life member of WSO who lives in Duluth, Minnesota, is currently Staff Ornithologist with Binoculars.com. Her newest book, "101 Ways to Help Birds" will appear in April 2006.

Tom Klubertanz is an Associate Professor of Biology and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the University of Wisconsin–Rock County in Janesville, where he teaches Animal Biology, Human Anatomy and Physiology, Ornithology, and other introductory biology courses. Although his graduate training and research interests are in insect ecology, soybean entomology, and aquatic insects, he has enjoyed birding and studying ornithology for over thirty years.

Gary Krogman has been digiscoping birds in western Wisconsin (mostly within 100 miles of Eau Claire) for several years. Butterflies are also a favorite subject for his camera.

Major Dennis R. Kuecherer, a WSO member currently living in Salmon, Idaho, is retired from the US Army and from nine years of bird survey work for the Department of Interior, WDNR, and WSO. He has been an active birder most of his life, and enjoys drawing and photographing birds as well as counting them.

For **John Van Den Brandt**, capturing bird images is the perfect marriage of two of his passions—birding and photography. An Appleton native, John has been very actively birding since 1990 and now has over 500 species on his lower-48 list. While birds are naturally his primary subjects, he also has photographed a wide variety of wildlife across North America, including grizzlies in Alaska, polar bears in northern Canada, and killer whales off the coast of British Columbia.

INDEX TO VOLUME 67

C

D

E

I

J

K

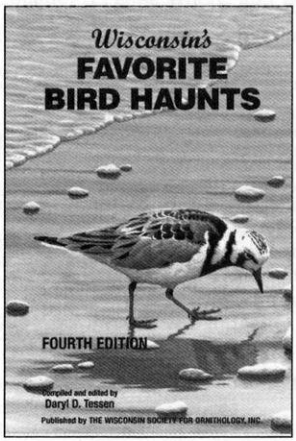
L

P

R

S

Y



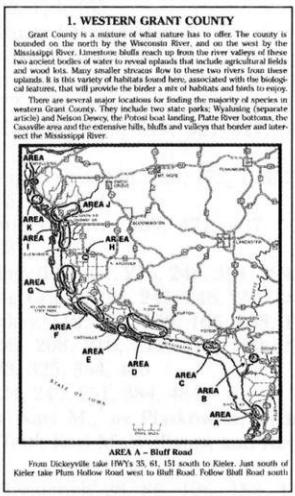
Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts,

Fourth Edition (2000)

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

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

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



Contact WSO Bookstore for price and ordering information.
262.547.6128 or wsobookstore@hotmail.com

THE WISCONSIN SOCIETY FOR ORNITHOLOGY

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology is an educational and scientific non-profit organization founded in 1939 "to encourage the study of Wisconsin birds." The Society achieves this goal through programs in research, education, conservation, and publication.

OFFICERS (2005–2006)

President* Jeffrey L. Baughman, W2640 Middle Road, Campbellsport, WI 53010; 920. 477. 2442; jbaughman@csd.k12.wi.us

Vice President* David W. Sample, 1816 Vilas Avenue, Madison, WI 53711; 608. 257. 1011; djsample@chorus.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. 547. 6128; dcreel@execpc.com

Editors* Bettie and Neil Harriman, 5188 Bittersweet Lane, Oshkosh, WI 54901-9753; 920. 233. 1973; bettie@vbe.com; harriman@uwosh.edu

COMMITTEE CHAIRS (2005–2006)

Annual Conventions Scott Baughman, 3043 Rolling Meadows Drive, Sheboygan, WI 53083-8107; 920. 457. 5574; baughman@milwpc.com

Awards* Daryl D. Tessen, 3118 N. Oneida Street, Appleton, WI 54911; 920. 735. 9903; bhaunts@core.com

Bird Reports Coordinator* Randy Hoffman, 305 Fifth Street, Waunakee, WI 53597; ecurlew@hotmail.com 608. 848. 4502

Badger Birder* Mary Uttech, 4305 Hwy. O, Saukville, WI 53080; 262. 675. 6482; muttech@asq.org

Book Store* Don Reel, 2022 Sherryl Lane, Waukesha, WI 53188-3142; 262. 547. 6128; 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; mnowak@wi.rr.com

Field Trips* Thomas R. Schultz, N6104 Honeysuckle Lane, Green Lake, WI 54941-9609; 920. 294. 3021; trschultz@vbe.com; and Jeffrey L. Baughman, W2640 Middle Road, Campbellsport, 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. 414. 221. 2179; Noel.Cutright@we-energies.com

Honey Creek Barbara Morford, S11691 Badger Road, Spring Green, WI 53588-9742; 608. 544. 2965

Hotline (414-352-3857) Mark Korducki, 2955 N. 77th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53222; 414. 476. 8049; korducki@netzero.net

Legal Counsel David L. Kinnamon, 9507 N. Wakefield Court, Bayside, WI 53217-1245; 414. 277. 5000

Loan of Slides Stephen J. Lang, 5613 Commanche Way, Madison, WI 53704-1027; 608. 249. 5684

Membership* Jesse Peterson, 810 Ganser Drive, Waunakee, WI 53597-1930; 608. 849. 3108; peterson.jesse@tds.net

Publicity* Ursula C. Petersen, 3112 Sunnyside Street, Stoughton, WI 53589; 608. 224. 4538; ursula.petersen@datcp.state.wi.us

Records* Jim Frank, 10524 N. O'Connell Lane, Mequon, WI 53097-3314; 262. 242. 2443; jcfbirddr@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*

Scholarships and Grants* Janine Polk, 1407 Frederic, Eau Claire, WI 54701-4902; 715. 839. 9265; j_1_polk@yahoo.com

Webmaster* Jennifer Davis, UW-Green Bay, Cofrin Center for Biodiversity, Green Bay, WI 54311-7001; 920. 465. 2545; wso@uwgb.edu

Youth Education Coordinator* Barbara Duerksen, 17494 Merry Hill Road, Richland Center, WI 53581; 608. 538. 3820; bduerksen@mwt.net

*Members of the Board of Directors

CONTENTS WINTER 2005

Volume 67, Number 4