# The passenger pigeon. Volume 48, No. 2 Summer 1986

Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Summer 1986

# The Passenger Pigeon

Summer, 1986 — Volume 48, No. 2

## A MAGAZINE OF WISCONSIN BIRD STUDY

*PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY*

**The Wisconsin Society For Ornithology, Inc.**

# IN THIS ISSUE

**Volume 48, No. 2** **Summer, 1986**



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Cover Photo: Killdeer On Guard photo by Roy Lukes

**THE PASSENGER PIGEON,** (ISSN 0031-2703) is published quarterly by the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, W. 330 N. 8275 West Shore Drive, Hartland, WI 53029. Second-class postage paid at Hartland, WI and additional mailing offices. Membership and annual dues: Single $12, Family $15, Sustaining $25, Life $200, Patron $750, Library $18. Send Membership dues to membership chairman, Alex F. Kailing, W. 330 N. 8275 West Shore Drive, Hartland, WI 53029. Send manuscripts to the editor, Charles A. Kemper, 733 Maple St., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729. Back issues available at $2 each from Alex Kailing, W. 330 N. 8275 West Shore Drive, Hartland, WI 53029.

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# President's Message

The 47th Annual Convention of the WSO is now history. Although the WSO doesn't have a lot of members in the Platteville area, the local organizers pulled it off despite the heavy rains and the paucity of spring migrants among the dripping leaves. I think that everyone is impressed with the lush hills and valleys that occur throughout Grant County. The rainfall did influence one scheduled event favorably. Instead of being tempted by birds in nearby haunts, most attendees were happy to forego the rainy outdoors and attend the annual business meeting. Attendance was approximately 50 percent greater than usual.

Especially welcome at the business meeting was the unveiling of our new membership brochure. I think it is very well done and should help attract attention to the activities of our society. Please give the one that was recently included in your *Birder* to a prospective member. If you need more copies for your local club or nature center, please let Alex Kailing know.

The paper sessions at the convention were dominated by excellent reports from DNR's Bureau of Endangered Resources staff and on WSO-related activities. DNR staff discussed an educational program entitled Project WILD, breeding birds of the Lower Wisconsin River, Wisconsin's bluebird recovery program, and the comeback of the cormorant.

Project WILD emphasizes awareness, appreciation, and understanding of wildlife and natural resources. It teaches young people **how** to think about wildlife, not **what** to think.

Mike Mossman discussed DNR's planning activities for the Lower Wisconsin and some of the neat bird habitats along the river. I was surprised to hear how common breeding Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and Brown Creepers are along certain stretches of the river. Mike also discussed a program that may lead to an increase in Wisconsin's bluebird breeding population, and he co-authored a paper on the Turkey Vulture in Wisconsin. Several birds have been color-marked and sightings of marked vultures are requested. Yes, baby vultures do have a certain attractiveness.

The Double-crested Cormorant has made a resounding comeback in recent years as a breeding bird in Wisconsin. The comeback has been so dramatic that the DNR is requesting that the species be removed from the state's "threatened" list. Man's activities have greatly assisted this comeback.

Stan Temple presented results of WSO's checklist research project. Information accumulated through this project over the past few years has not only reinforced previous knowledge about many of our species but also has provided new insight about Wisconsin's birdlife. If you have a specific question that you think the checklist data may be able to answer, please correspond with Stan.

Our Vice-president and member of the Records Committee, John Idzikowski, discussed the need for and establishment of a WSO Photo and Documentation Archives. John showed and discussed several bird photos of recent Wisconsin sightings that will be placed in the Archives.

The membership voted to accept an invitation from the Chequamegon Bird Club in the Medford area to host the 1987 convention. Marshfield will be the center for convention activities. Knowing firsthand the quality and ambition of several of the members of the Chequamegon Club, I can promise that the 1987 convention will be a fine one. I hope to see many of you there. Let's try for an attendance of 300.

Noel J. Cutright

# Geographic Distributions and Patterns of Relative Abundance of Wisconsin Birds: A WSO Research Project

By Stanley A. Temple and Anita J. Temple

Since 1982 the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology (WSO) has sponsored a research project that involves the analysis of weekly checklist-records from cooperating birdwatchers around the state (Temple 1982). In the first phase of our analysis of these checklist-records, we showed that they were sensitive indicators of changes in the seasonal abundance of birds (Temple and Temple 1984). In this, the second, phase of our analysis, we shall demonstrate that the checklist-records can also be used: (1) to construct range maps for Wisconsin birds and (2) to reveal geographic patterns of relative abundance within each species' range. We shall also show that the geographic patterns of relative abundance revealed by the checklist data can be correlated with general geographic patterns of habitat types of Wisconsin.

## METHODS

Beginning in 1982, cooperating members of WSO have voluntarily kept weekly checklist-records of the bird species they have detected in the regions where they watched birds. These weekly records, which are entered on special machine-readable forms, are automatically scanned and then stored on magnetic tape for subsequent computer analysis.

To construct range maps and reveal geographic patterns of relative abundance, we analyzed all of the accumulated records from January 1982 through April 1985. We defined 43 regions of the state (Figure 1), delimited so that we had at least 200 weekly checklist-records to analyze from each region. Most regions corresponded to a single county, but some were combinations of two to four counties. For each species of bird during a specific season of the year, we plotted the presence or absence of reports in each of the 43 regions. The resulting range maps show the regions of the state in which a particular bird had been reported during the specified months of the year.

For each of the regions in which the bird had been reported, we then calculated the regional reporting frequency (the percentage of checklists from the region on which the species had been reported). We also calculated the overall statewide reporting frequency for the species in all of the regions in which the species had been reported. If the regional reporting frequency for a particular region was greater than the overall statewide reporting frequency, we assumed that the species was relatively more abundant there than in regions for which the regional reporting frequency was less than the statewide reporting frequency. For each bird we indicated, on the already prepared range map, the regions in which the bird was either more abundant or less abundant than the statewide average. The final result was a range map that also showed the regions of the state in which the particular species of bird was relatively common or uncommon.

We performed the above analysis on the checklist-records for 23 combinstions of bird species and seasons of the year that were, *a priori,* thought to show interesting patterns.

Finally, in each of these 23 particular cases, we tried to interpret the patterns of relative abundance in terms of general geographic and ecological

**Figure 1. The 43 regions of the state used to analyze patterns of geographic distribution and relative abundance of Wisconsin birds.**

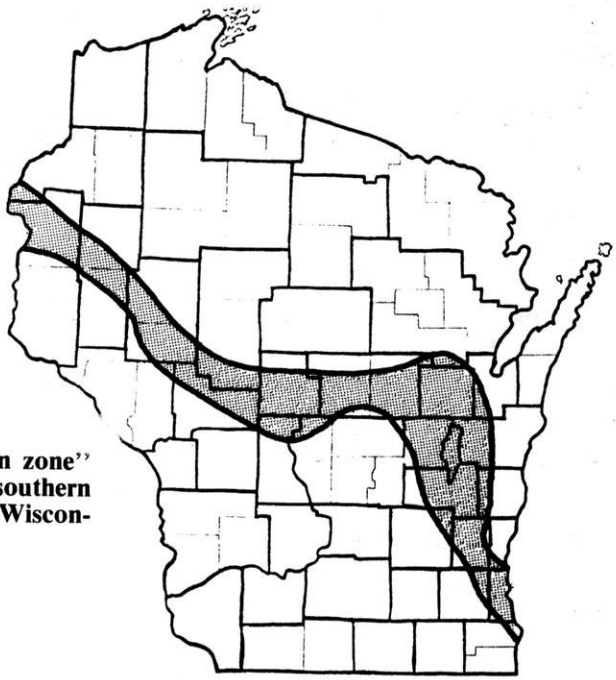


**Figure 2. The "tension zone" between northern and southern forest communities in Wisconsin (after Curtis 1959).**

characteristics that should play a role in determining the distribution and relative abundance of birds. For each of the 43 regions of the state, we determined the percentage of the region's total surface area that was covered by four major habitat types: (1) lakes and ponds, (2) fields, pastures, and prairies, (3) northern forest types (see Curtis 1958), or (4) southern forest types (see Curtis 1959). These statistics were taken from a variety of sources (e.g., State of Wisconsin 1984, U.S. Bureau of Census 1984, Spencer and Thorne 1972).

We looked for significant correlations — by calculating Spearman's rank correlation coefficients, $r_s$ (Zar 1985) — between the reporting frequencies for a species in the regions and the percent area of each of the four major habitat types in the regions. Reporting frequencies for a bird that is typical of field habitat might, for example, be expected to show a positive correlation with the percent area of field in the regions and perhaps a significant negative correlation with the percent area of northern or southern forest. In this example, a significant positive correlation between reporting frequencies and the percent area of field habitat in the regions would indicate that reporting frequencies become progressively higher when there is more percent area of field in a region; a significant negative correlation between reporting frequency and percent area of forest in the regions indicates that reporting frequencies become progressively lower when there is more percent area of forest in a region.

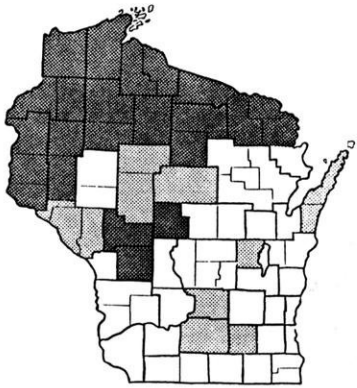
We were particularly interested in geographic patterns of distribution and relative abundance that corresponded to the major change in plant communities that takes place across the "tension zone" of transition between northern type forests and southern type forests (Figure 2). Because many birds are closely associated with either northern or southern forests, we expected to find some species with geographic distributions and patterns of relative abundance that were truncated by the "tension zone."

## RESULTS

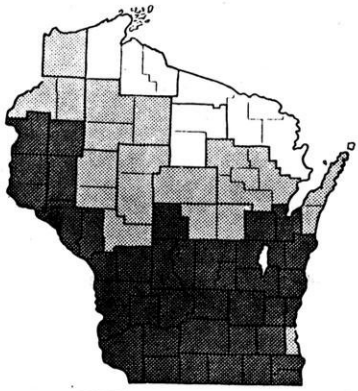
Common Loon *(Gavia immer).*— The range map in Figure 3 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of loons in Wisconsin during the summer breeding season (July through September.) In general, it can be seen that loons were most abundant in the northern regions of the state. More specifically, the reporting frequency for loons was positively correlated with both percent area of water ($r_s = +0.370$, $P < 0.01$) and percent area of northern forest ($r_s = +0.549$, $P<0.001$) in the regions.

Red-tailed Hawk *(Buteo jamaicensis).*—The range map in Figure 3 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Red-tailed Hawks in Wisconsin during the winter season (November through March). Red-tailed Hawks are most abundant in the southern regions of the state south of the "tension zone." The reporting frequency is positively correlated with percent area of field ($r_s = +0.406$, $P<0.005$) and percent area of southern forest ($r_s = +0.414$, $P<0.001$) but negatively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = -0.480$, $P <0.001$) in the regions.

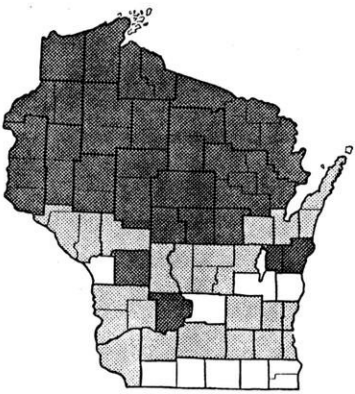
Broad-winged Hawk *(Buteo platypterus).*—The range map in Figure 3 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Broad-winged Hawks in Wisconsin during the summer (June through August). Broad-winged Hawks are generally most abundant in the northern regions of the state. The reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = +0.645$, $P<0.001$) and negatively correlated with the percent area of southern forest ($r_s = -0.381$, $P<0.01$) in the regions.



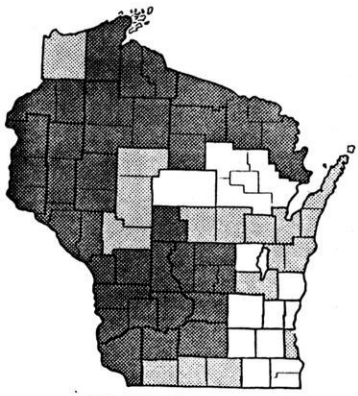
COMMON LOON (JUN-AUG)



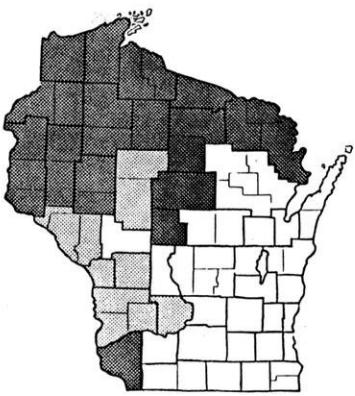
RED-TAILED HAWK (NOV-MAR)



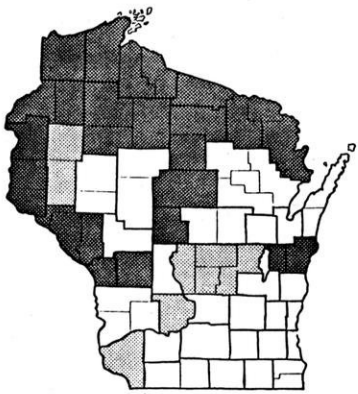
BROAD-WINGED HAWK (JUN-AUG)



BALD EAGLE (NOV-MAR)



BALD EAGLE (JUN-SEP)



OSPREY (JUN-AUG)

**Figure 3. Range maps showing geographic distributions and patterns of relative abundance of birds in Wisconsin. In areas with dark stippling, the bird was reported more often than the statewide average within its range, in areas with light strippling, less often.**

Bald Eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus).*—The two range maps in Figure 3 show the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Bald Eagles in Wisconsin either during the summer (June through September) or during the winter (November through March). Bald Eagles are more widely distributed throughout the state in winter than in summer, but they are always more abundant in the northern regions of the state than in the south, with the exception of the winter concentrations in regions along the Wisconsin and Mississippi Rivers. During the summer the reporting frequency of eagles is positively correlated with the percent area of water ($r_s = +0.384$, $P<0.01$) and the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = +0.522$, $P<0.0005$) in the regions, but in winter there were no significant correlations between reporting frequencies and the geographical variables we analyzed. Almost certainly the distribution of eagles during the winter would be correlated with the percent area of open water in a region, but we have no statistics available on this variable.

Osprey *(Pandion haliaeetus).*—The range map in Figure 3 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Ospreys in Wisconsin during the summer (June through August). Ospreys are restricted mainly to the northern regions of the state. The reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area of water ($r_s = +0.397$, $P<0.005$) and the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = +0.368$, $P<0.01$) in the regions.

Sandhill Crane *(Grus canadensis).*—The range map in Figure 4 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Sandhill Cranes during the summer breeding season (May through August). Although widely distributed around the state, Sandhill Cranes are most abundant in the central regions where extensive, shallow-water wetlands provide nesting sites. Reporting frequencies are not correlated significantly with any of the four geographic variables we examined; other variables, such as percent area of wetland, are probably correlated, but we did not analyze these statistics.

Barred Owl *(Strix varia).*—The range map in Figure 4 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Barred Owls in Wisconsin throughout the year. They are widely distributed throughout the state wherever forest cover is available. The reporting frequency is negatively correlated ($r_s = -0.308$, $P<0.05$) with the percent area of field in the regions, reflecting the owl's avoidance of regions with little forest cover.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird *(Archilochus colubris).*—The range map in Figure 4 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of hummingbirds in Wisconsin during the summer breeding season (June through August). Although widely distributed around the state, the hummingbird is most abundant in northern regions. The reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = +0.608$, $P<0.0005$) in the regions.

Pileated Woodpecker *(Dryocopus pileatus).*—The range map in Figure 4 shows the geographic distribution of Pileated Woodpeckers in Wisconsin throughout the year. Although widely distributed around the state this woodpecker tends to be increasingly common as one moves northwestward through the state. The reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area in northern forest ($r_s = +0.453$, $P<0.0025$) in the regions.

Red-bellied Woodpecker *(Melanerpes carolinus).*—The range map in Figure 4 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Red-bellied Woodpeckers in Wisconsin throughout the year. Although widely distributed around the state, it is most common south of the "tension

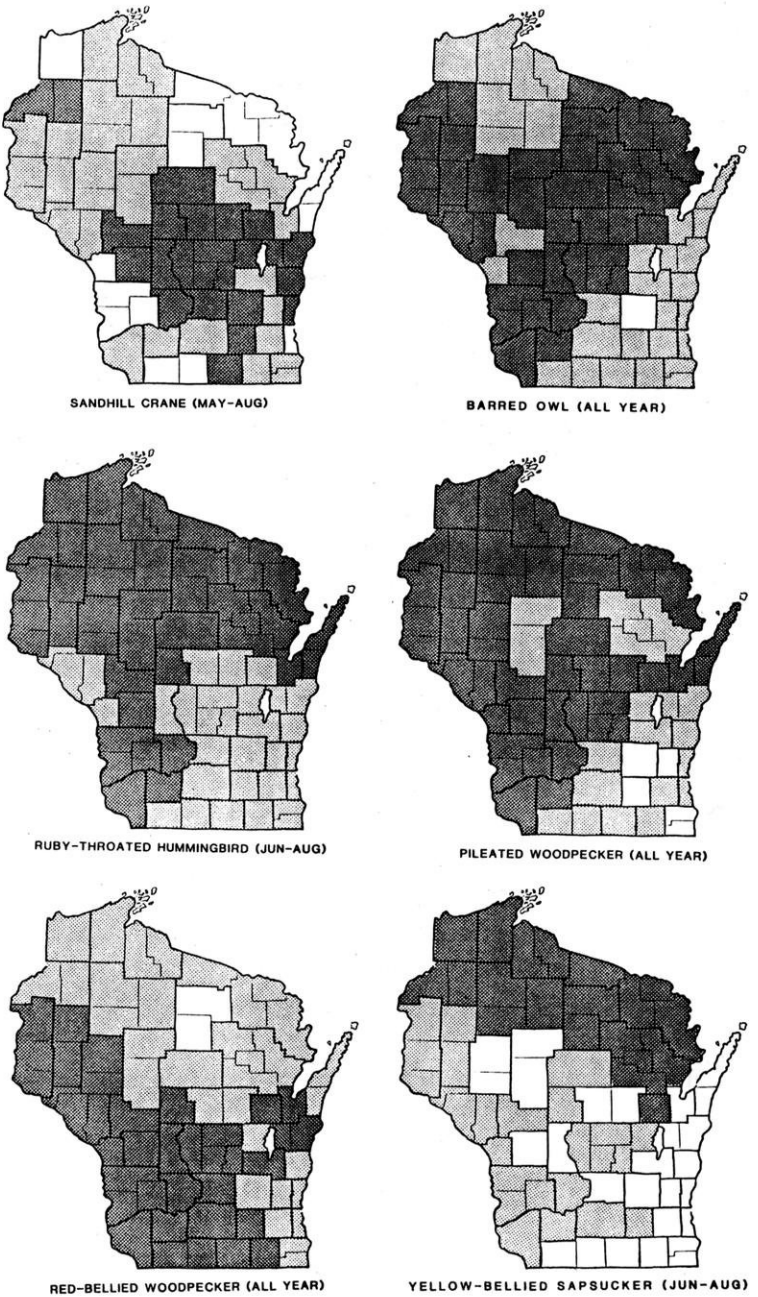



**Figure 4. Range maps showing geographic distributions and patterns of relative abundance of birds in Wisconsin. In areas with dark stippling, the bird was reported more often than the statewide average within its range, in areas with light stippling, less often.**

zone." The reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area of southern forest ($r_s = +0.467$, $P<0.001$) and percent area of field ($r_s = +0.616$, $P<0.005$) in the regions, suggesting an affinity to areas of broken fields and forest stands.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *(Sphyrapicus varius).*—The range map in Figure 4 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in Wisconsin during the breeding season (June through August). The sapsucker is most abundant north of the "tension zone." Its reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = +0.551$, $P<0.005$) and negatively correlated with the percent area of southern forest ($r_s = -0.331$, $P< 0.05$) in the regions.

Cliff Swallow *(Hirundo pyrrhonota).*—The range map in Figure 5 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Cliff Swallows in Wisconsin during the summer breeding season (June through August). Although widely distributed around the state Cliff Swallows are most abundant north of the "tension zone." The reporting frequency was positively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = +0.466$, $P <0.001$) in the regions.

Tufted Titmous *(Parus bicolor).*—The range map in Figure 5 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of the Tufted Titmouse in Wisconsin throughout the year. The titmouse is restricted to areas south of the "tension zone" between northern and southern forest regions. The reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area of southern forest ($r_s = +0.481$, $P <0.001$) and negatively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = -0.459$, $P <0.0025$) in the regions.

Brown Creeper *(Certhia familiaris).*—The range map in Figure 5 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Brown Creepers during the summer breeding season (June through September). The creeper is most abundant in regions north of the "tension zone." Its reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = +0.562$, $P <0.0005$) and negatively correlated with the percent area of southern forest ($r_s = -0.582$, $P <0.0005$) in the regions.

House Wren *(Troglodytes aedon).*—The range map in Figure 5 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of House Wrens in Wisconsin during the summer breeding season (May through August). This wren is widely distributed throughout the state but is most abundant south of the "tension zone." Its reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent of southern forest ($r_s = +0.345$, $P <0.05$) and the percent area of fields ($r_s = +0.497$, $P <0.0005$) but negatively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = -0.443$, $P <.0025$). This pattern is in keeping with the wren's habitat preference for southern forest edges adjacent to fields.

Ovenbird *(Seiurus aurocapillus).*—The range map in Figure 5 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Ovenbirds in Wisconsin during the summer breeding season (June through August). Ovenbirds are widely distributed throughout the state but most abundant north of the "tension zone." Its reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = +0.604$, $P <0.0005$) in the regions.

Northern Cardinal *(Cardinalis cardinalis).*—The range map in Figure 5 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Northern Cardinals in Wisconsin throughout the year. Although widely distributed

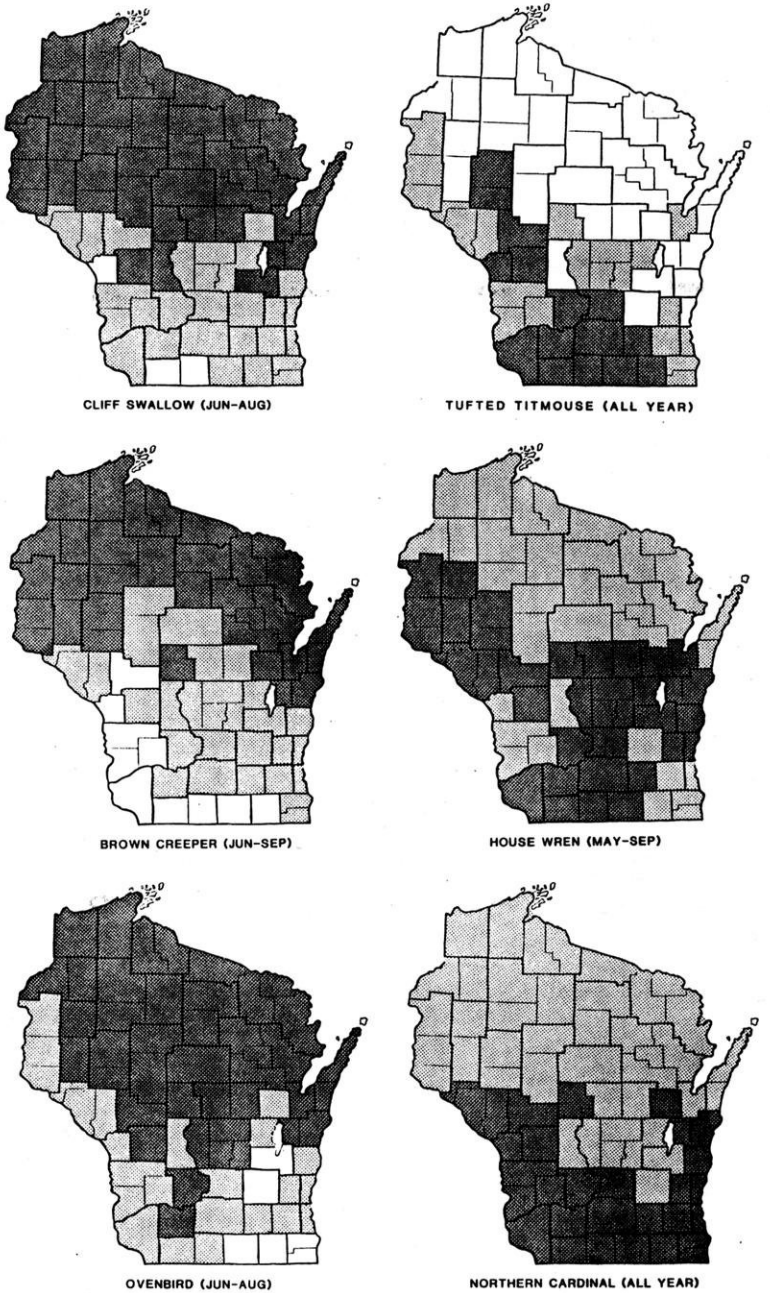



**Figure 5. Range maps showing geographic distributions and patterns of relative abundance of birds in Wisconsin. In areas with dark stippling, the bird was reported more often than the statewide average within its range, in areas with light stippling, less often.**

throughout the state, the cardinal is most abundant south of the "tension zone." Its reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area of southern forest ($r_s = +0.374$, $P < 0.01$) and negatively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = -0.655$, $P < 0.0005$) in the regions.

Purple Finch *(Carpodacus purpureus).*—The range map in Figure 6 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Purple Finches in Wisconsin during the summer breeding season (June through August). The Purple Finch is found primarily north of the "tension zone." Its reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = +0.706$, $P < 0.0005$) and negatively correlated with the percent area of southern forest ($r_s = -0.427$, $P < 0.0025$) in the regions.

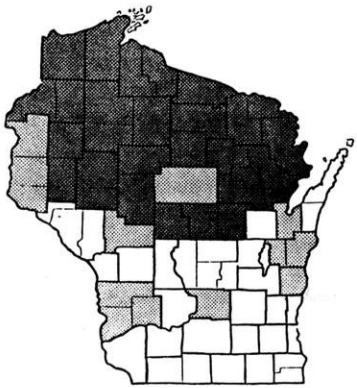
Field Sparrow *(Spizella pusilla).*—The range map in Figure 6 show the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Field Sparrows in Wisconsin during the summer breeding season (June through August). Although Field Sparrows are widely distributed throughout the state, they are far more abundant south of the "tension zone." The reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area of fields ($r_s = +0.367$. $P < 0.01$) and percent area of southern forests ($r_s = +0.427$, $P < 0.0025$) but negatively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = -0.385$, $P < 0.01$) in the regions.

Dark-eyed Junco *(Junco hyemalis).*—The range map in Figure 6 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of Dark-eyed Juncos in Wisconsin during either the summer breeding season (June through August) or the winter season (October through March). An interesting seasonal reversal of geographic distributions occurs as a result of migration movements. During the summer, juncos are found only north of the "tension zone," but during the winter they are found throughout the state and most commonly south of the "tension zone." During the summer the reporting frequency is positively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = +0.567$, $P < 0.005$) and negatively correlated with the percent area of southern forest ($r_s = -0.560$, $P < 0.0005$) in the regions. During winter the reporting frequency is negatively correlated with the percent area of northern forest ($r_s = -0.391$, $P < 0.005$) in the regions.

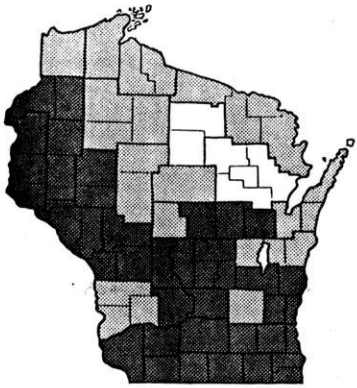
White-throated Sparrow *(Zonotrichia albicollis).*—The range map in Figure 6 shows the geographic distribution and relative abundance of White-throated Sparrows in Wisconsin during the summer breeding season (June through August). This sparrow is restricted to regions north of the "tension zone." Its reporting frequency is positively correlated with percent area of northern forest ($r_s = +0.494$, $P < 0.0005$) and negatively correlated with the percent area of southern forest ($r_s = -0.424$, $P < 0.0025$) in the regions.

## DISCUSSION

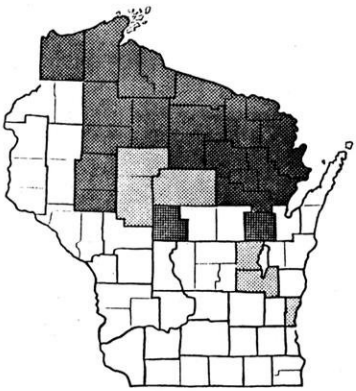
The range maps and patterns of relative abundance derived from analyses of weekly checklist-records are apparently good indicators of the geographic distribution and relative abundance of birds in Wisconsin. In some cases, we can compare the results of the analysis of checklist-records with other indications of the geographic distribution and relative abundance of birds. We can, for example, compare the geographic patterns of relative abundance of selected winter birds derived from the checklist-records with the geographic patterns of relative abundance suggested by the number of individuals of the same species reported on the 1984 Christmas Bird Counts (Hilsenhoff 1985). By segregating Christmas Bird Counts into the 43 regions used in the checklist analysis, we could calculate Spearman rank



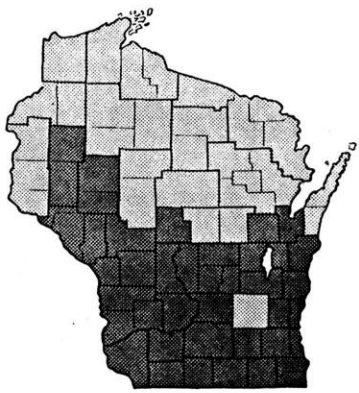
PURPLE FINCH (JUN-AUG)



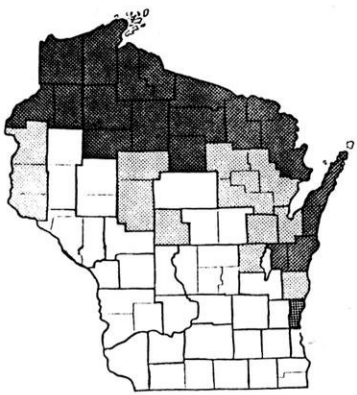
FIELD SPARROW (JUN-AUG)



DARK-EYED JUNCO (JUN-AUG)



DARK-EYED JUNCO (OCT-MAR)



WHITE-THROATED SPARROW (JUN-AUG)

**Figure 6. Range maps showing geographic distributions and patterns of relative abundance of birds in Wisconsin. In areas with dark stippling, the bird was reported more often than the statewide average within its range, in areas with light stippling, less often.**

correlation coefficients between the two indicators of regional abundance. We analyzed winter checklist data for 5 species: Red-tailed Hawk, Bald Eagle, Kestrel, Brown Creeper, and Dark-eyed Junco. The correlation between the percentage of all birds seen on 1984 Christmas Bird Counts in the 43 regions that were Red-tailed Hawks and the checklist reporting frequencies for those regions was very high and positive ($r_S = +0.613$, $P < 0.0005$), indicating a close agreement between the two indices of geographic patterns of relative abundance. Similarly, high positive correlations existed between Christmas Bird Count records and checklist-records for Bald Eagles ($r_S = +0.540$, $P < 0.0005$), Kestrels ($r_S = +0.706$, $P < 0.0001$), Brown Creepers ($r_S = +0.313$, $P < 0.05$), and Dark-eyed Juncos ($r_S = +0.431$), $P < 0.0025$). These close agreements between the two indices of geographic patterns of relative abundance of winter birds is an encouraging indication that the patterns are real and not artifacts of the ways in which the respective data are recorded.

The Sandhill Crane provides another case in which the results of our analysis of checklist data can be compared with other independent indicators of geographic distribution and relative abundance. The 1984 Sandhill Crane count, sponsored by the International Crane Foundation (see **Passenger Pigeon** 47:41), provides information on the number of cranes in each of 59 counties. We found a significant positive correlation ($r_S = +0.698$, $P < 0.0005$) between the numbers of cranes counted in a region and the regional reporting frequencies from checklist records. Again, this strong positive correlation suggests that the counts and the checklists are measuring the same characteristics of the crane population.


## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank the volunteers who have contributed their weekly checklist-records for analysis. John Cary gave us valuable assistance with computer programming. Funding for the project has come from the A.W. Schorger Fund of the Department of Wildlife Ecology, University of Wisconsin-Madison.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# Winter Raptors at Devil's Lake State Park, Wisconsin

**By Kenneth I. Lange**

An unusual variety and number of hawks -- an adult Red-shouldered Hawk *(Buteo lineatus),* 1-7 transient Rough-legged Hawks *(Buteo lagopus),* and 3 resident pairs of Red-tailed Hawks *(Buteo jamaicensis)* -- hunted in and near Devil's Lake State Park, Sauk County, Wisconsin, during the winter of 1985-86. Typically one only finds Red-tails and an occasional *Accipiter* overwintering in the park. The following field observations and comments may be of interest.

All three species perched in the same large, open-grown white oak at different times. The same trees were also used for perching at different times by Red-tail and Red-shoulder, and Rough-leg and Red-shoulder. Only once did I see two Rough-legs in the same tree at the same time; this was on 30 January, the only day when I found 7 Rough-legs in the area. Rough-legs perched typically at the tops of trees on slender branches, Red-tails within the upper parts of the larger trees, and the Red-shoulder at heights from 5-50 feet, generally 20-30 feet. Rough-legs preferred lone trees, while Red-tails and the Red-shoulder were seen more often in groups of trees and forest edges. Red-tails were never seen on utility poles, whereas Rough-legs and the Red-shoulder perched on them frequently. These hawks also differed in that the Red-tails and Red-shoulder spent relatively more time watching for prey from a perch, whereas the Rough-legs spent relatively more time searching for prey while in flight. Schnell (1968) utilizes quantitative data to compare wintering Rough-legs and Red-tails in detail.

The Red-shoulder was seen by itself except for two occasions in the park's Steinke Basin, when it was perched within 1/3 mile of both a Rough-leg and a Red-tail. Rough-legs and Red-tails also were seen together, notably in Steinke Basis on 29 January when a Rough-leg caught a small mammal, most likely a meadow mouse, just 600 feet from a perched Red-tail. All three species were never seen in the same area at the same time.

Northern Shrikes *(Lanius excubitor)* also frequented the park this winter, and on two occasions a shrike and the Red-shoulder perched in the same tree at different times.

Apart from Red-tails chasing other hawks, e.g. one diving at a Rough-leg on 22 February, the only direct interspecific aggression witnessed between different species of Buteos involved the Red-shoulder and a Rough-leg on 28 January in mid-afternoon. The Red-shoulder flew from the top of a powerline pole along State Highway 113 and perched on a dead sumac bordering a patch of standing corn and an open field, snow covered and ice crusted; it then flew off the sumac and skimmed the field for about 100 feed, extended its legs, and caught a white mammal, which I later determined by the tracks in the snow to be a least weasel. The hawk pecked a few times at the prey, when suddenly a dark phase Rough-leg appeared in my binocular field-of-view. In a sequence of events that was too fast to follow, the Red-shoulder flew away and the Rough-leg was standing in the field and pecking at the prey, now held in its feet. Momemts later the Rough-leg flew to a tree and began eating the prey, which it apparently finished consuming at a second tree perch screened from my viewing area.

In a nearby area on 29 January, the Red-shoulder may have stolen prey from a Northern Shrike, The hawk flew from a tree perch across a field and

into a forest edge, whereup a shrike flew from the ground nearby and perched in a tree. The hawk landed on the snow where the shrike had been and ate a small mammal, most likely a meadow mouse, which I suspect the shrike had caught and then dropped when it was startled by the larger bird.

Paulson (1985) speculates that raptors in open country are more likely to steal food from other birds than those in forests and woodlands. The encounter between the shrike and Red-shouldered Hawk involved a forest raptor, but it was hunting here over open country.

Birds of prey are noted for their visual acuity, and the following account indicates the great distances at which they can detect prey. In the late afternoon of 21 February in Steinke Basin, I saw the Red-shoulder attack and catch a meadow mouse at a distance of approximately 260 yards. A moving dark object is highly visible against a background of snow, but the hawk had to spot the mouse while looking into the setting sun at a considerable distance; further, it did so and initiated its attach within a few seconds after the mouse emerged from the snow pack, judging from the mouse tracks at the site.

I have explored the Devil's Lake State Park area regularly since 1966, and this is the first time I have found Buteos, other than Red-tailed Hawks, overwintering here. Rough-legs were numerous in the Baraboo Hills and nearby areas through December, despite a snow cover of up to 18 inches, and they remained common in the park area after December. Two or three could generally be found on a given day, along with the Red-shoulder.

An ice crust was added to the snow pack by the third week of January, and then another with the ice storm of 4-5 February. Raptors concentrate in areas where their prey is most available (Craighead and Craighead, 1956: 169-171), so why did hawks concentrate in the Devil's Lake area this winter when their small mammal prey seemed to be relatively unavailable under deep snow and ice crusts?

**Figure 1. An open-grown white oak on the former Johnson farm in Devil's Lake State Park, used for perching by three species of Buteos in the winter of 1985-86. All pictures taken on 21 February 1986.**

The snow and ice in a given area, e.g. Steinke Basin, appeared to be unbroken, but closer observation proved otherwise. There were openings of varying size, typically at the bases of hummocks such as ant hills, and these breaks were being used by mice and probably shrews as exits and entries. Likewise there were gaps in the snow and ice cover at the basis of corn stalks in corn fields, and these were also being used for passageways by small mammals.

**Figure 2. Private property near Devil's Lake State Park where one or more Rough-legged Hawks were seen regularly from 14 November 1985 - 25 February 1986; favorite perches were the larger white pine in the left distance and the lone hardwood (an American elm) within the cornfield in the right distance. US Highway 12 is to the left, Devil's Lake to the right.**

But why would meadow mice emerge from the safety of snow cover? Getz (1961) found that approximately 20% of a meadow mouse population, mostly males, shift their home ranges every month. Possibly when these mice are dispersing during the winter they move about more on the snow surface than when they are sedentary. The situation undoubteely is complex, as meadow mice dispersal seems to be independent of density (Verner and Getz, 1985).

This winter the snow cover was deep and continuous for more than 100 days, an unusually long time for southern Wisconsin. Perhaps meadow mice emerge more often under such conditions than when the snow cover is shallow and discontinuous, but in the only other winter in recent years with a continual snow cover of more than 100 days (1978-79), overwintering raptors were not particularly abundant at Devil's Lake. Localized conditions in the Devil's Lake area may have influenced the hawks, as nearby areas with the same snow and ice pack had few hawks hunting over them.

These observations demonstrate that winter raptors sometimes remain in areas with deep snow and ice crusts, and suggest that small mammals can be available to them under such conditions. One should be cautious in correlating winter movements of raptors with snow depth (e.g., Thiel, 1985). If

prey is available, winter raptors may linger in environments that we might judge as adverse.

Stanley A. Temple reviewed the manuscript, and both Temple and Scott R. Swengel informed me of pertinent references that I would otherwise have missed.

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Devil's Lake State Park
Baraboo, WI 53913

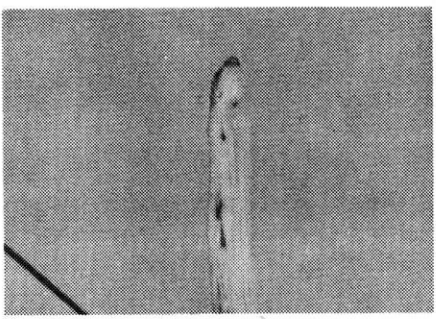

**Figure 3. A favorite perch of the Red-shouldered Hawk was the top of a powerline pole, such as here along Steinke Basin.**

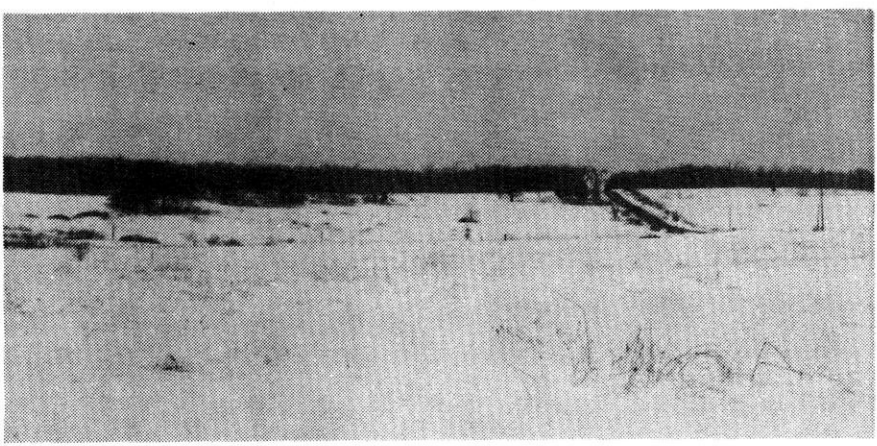

**Figure 4. The snow and ice pack of the winter of 1985-86, as seen in the park's Steinke Basin; up to a foot and a half of snow was still on the ground here in March. Looking west, with County Highway DL in the right distance.**

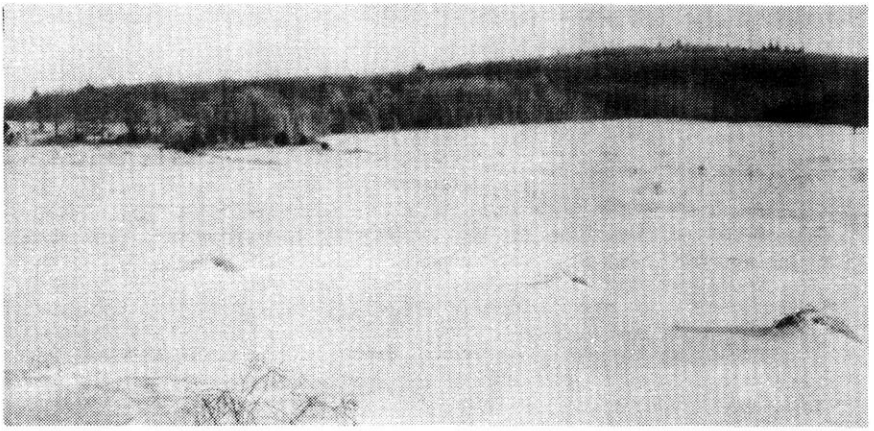

**Figure 5. Steinke Basin, Devil's Lake State Park, looking south toward the east bluff woods. The snow and ice pack appears to be unbroken, but there are openings of varying size at the basis of hummocks, such as the grass clumps marking ant hills in the foreground.**

## Barred Owl: A Demonstration of Focal Concentration

**By Don G. Follen, Sr.**

On February 19, 1985, Ken Luepke of Spencer, Denis Gabel of Marshfield and I observed a Barred Owl *(Strix varia)* sitting approximately one hundred feet off the roadway in a well shaded tree. This was in northwestern Taylor County, Wisconsin and the time was 3:00 p.m. We baited a balchatri trap with a live mouse and a larger trap with a feral pigeon. The traps were set out on the opposite side of the roadway from the owl. We then moved down the highway to see if we would elicit a reaction from the owl.

We waited about twenty minutes. The mouse was cold and still; the pigeon had succeeded in pulling a noose into the trap and was succeeding in hanging itself. We decided that a reaction from the owl was unlikely and that we would pick up the equipment.

As we approached the traps the owl suddenly launched in our direction. "Stop, stop it's coming in!" I yelled. The bird kept bearing in. Even as the car stopped and the bird's line of view had been cut by the vehicle it came on and on and finally slammed into the right head light. It bounced off with a thud and landed in the center of the highway. It stared at the car for about five seconds and then took flight to the south from whence it had come. We proceeded to use the mouse and dip net method to no avail. The owl would no longer come to the traps and was eventually flushed by three passing vehicles. We picked up our traps and went home.

I could find nothing in reference to focal concentrations for Barred Owls. This is a possible reason why so many Barred Owls are traffic victims across the nation's roadways.

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# Strong Affinity to an Old Nest and Hatching of an Abandoned Egg by Common Loons

By Paul I.V. Strong and Bruce W. Lutz

Common Loons *(Gavia immer)* frequently reuse old nest sites (McIntyre 1975, Titus and VanDruff 1981, Strong 1985). Strong (1985) reported that water levels affected nest site location and hypothesized that the visibility of an old nest is a stimulus affecting its reuse. We report here an example of strong affinity to a previously used nest and the adoption and hatching of a previously abandoned egg by Common Loons.

We observed a pair of Common Loons laying eggs in the same nest over four consecutive years (1980-83) in Newmann Lake, Price County, Wisconsin. At the beginning of the 1984 breeding season the traditionally used nest was saturated and nearly under water. On 19 May one egg was laid in a newly constructed nest approximately 10 m from the old nest. The pair was seen near the new nest during the next ten days, but never on the nest incubating. On 29 May one egg was laid in the traditionally used nest which had dried out as the water level receded.

After the egg was laid in the old nest we observed both loons swimming close to shore near the nests and vocalizing. At approximately 1200 of the same day one bird began incubating the egg in the traditional nest. At 1300 we moved the first-laid egg to the traditional nest. One hour later one member of the pair returned to the nest and incubated for less than one minute, then left the area for an hour. The pair returned to the nest, and one bird incubated for several minutes, but left again. Incubation occurred sporadically for the rest of the day until early evening when one of the birds initiated a longer incubation bout. The pair incubated the eggs until 27 June when both eggs hatched. Both chicks fledged eleven weeks later.

We did not know if the same birds were returning to the territory each year, but yearly reuse of the nest sites suggests this was the case. The proximity of the new nest to the traditionally used nest and the subsequent use of the traditional nest after it dried out indicates that affinity to the old site was very strong. Strong (1985) reported Common Loons nesting within one meter of previously used nests from which they had been experimentally barricaded. The eventual reuse of the traditional nest supports his hypothesis that the sight of the old nest when it became visible above water stimulated the loons to reuse it.

The eventual hatching of an egg unincubated for 10 days has not been documented previously for Common Loons. Eggs of other bird species are known to have survived chilling (Greenwood 1969) and periods without incubation (Pefaur 1974). Resistance to cooling is greatest before any embryonic development has occurred (O'Connor 1984:38-40). It is likely that the embryo had developed very little, if at all, in the first-laid egg because the loons were never seen incubating it. The hatching synchrony of the two eggs provides additional support for this conclusion.

We thank Jeff Fair and Scott Sutcliff for their comments on an earlier version of the manuscript.

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# Proposed Lower Wisconsin River State Forest (LWRSF)

**By Joe Trueblood**

In a draft proposal for a new state forest, the DNR specifies plans to create the 71,210 acre LWRSF extending from Prairie du Sac to the Mississippi. Landowners, environmentalists, public officials, and recreationists constitute a Citizens Advisory Committee which is soliciting public reaction to the DNR proposal.

An outline plan to protect waterfowl appears in section II, "Proposed Actions." By protecting nesting trees and erecting nesting houses, the DNR hopes to enhance the river's wood duck population. Proposed millet and wild rice plantings might attract waterfowl. Hedgerows would be preserved alongside cornfields planted as wildlife feeding areas. And annual stocking of pheasants would appease hunters.

The proposal gives somewhat more specific plans for protecting endangered and threatened birds along the river. Increased monitoring of nesting and roosting sites used by Bald Eagles *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus),* Ospreys *(Pandion haliaetus)* , herons, and Great Egrets *(Casmerodius albus)* would help stabilize these troubled species and prevent logging interference. Experimentation with Osprey and Bald Eagle nesting platforms would help establish a southern nesting habitat. The proposal mentions Peregrine Falcon *(Falco peregrinus)* reintroduction without giving any details. Maintenance of diverse habitat and limitation of human disturbance are cited as ways to bolster the Loggerhead Shrike *(Lanius ludovicianus)* and Red-shouldered Hawk *(Buteo lineatus) populations. The proposal also states that Barn Owl (Tyto alba)* nest boxes should be erected in silos at likely breeding sites where habitat appears suitable or the species is recorded.

The trouble with DNR proposals is that useful ideas on paper can prove counterproductive in reality. One wonders whether the increased river use (perhaps inevitable) resulting from creation of a state forest would overpower the plans to protect wildlife. Rather than establishing a sanctuary area, the DNR proposes development of various campsites, parking lots,

nature trails, observation towers, boat landings, picnic sites, ski trails, dog training areas, an archery course, and other user-oriented facilities. But the proposal also restricts destructive all-terrain vehicles and limits the establishment of canoe liveries along the river. Most importantly, by acquiring more private land the DNR sould control development of the diverse river habitats.

The proposal is now in a public review stage. Send comments or requests for information to:
David Aslakson (planner) or Darlene Karow (community aids)

DNR Southern District Headquarters
3911 Fish Hatchery Road
Fitchburg, WI 53711

Lower Wisconsin River State Forest Conceptual Actions Plan publication.
p. 77 Species Management, Waterfowl
p. 104 Proposed Endangered Resources Management,
Endangered and Threatened Species

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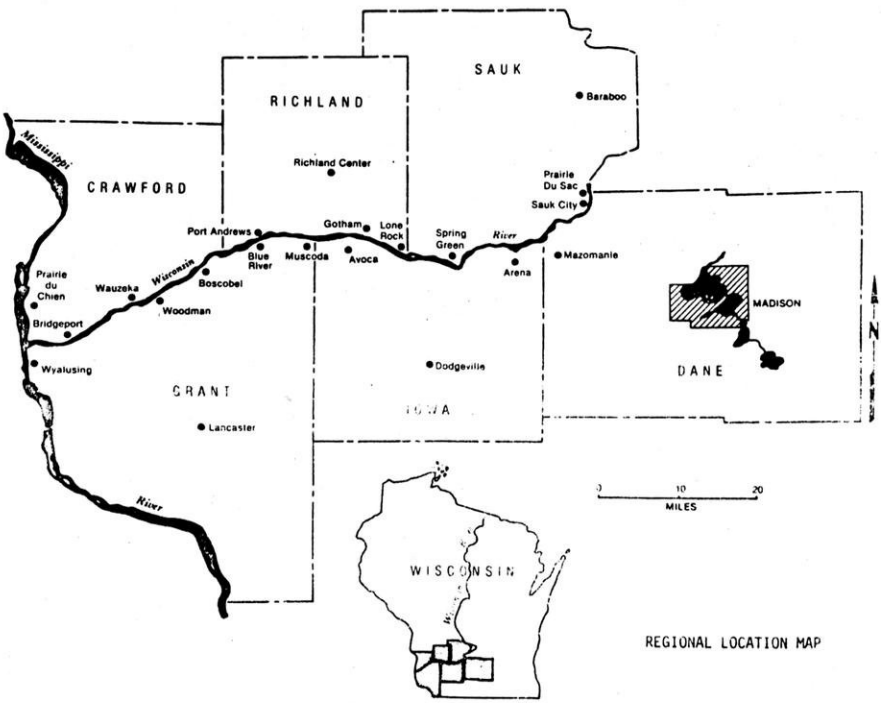


**Figure 1: Regional Location Map**

# McDonalds, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Isabell, and Smelt....a Love Story

**By Daniel J. Lynch**

At 0515 hours, Sunday, April 6, 1986, in Port Washington, WI., the sky was overcast (nothing unusual about that.) The sun had climbed over the horizon and held the promise (hope) of a bright day.

I left Port Washington about 0630 hours with visions of the Horicon Marsh in my mind. I got skunked last weekend, and was still kind of burned about it. No Yellow-headed Blackbirds.

At McDonalds in Port Washington the Egg McMuffin specialists, and the coffee brewers, were preparing for the mornings pre-, during-, and post-church customers. I arrived at about quarter to six and selected a location directly across the street as my command post. I had a clear view of the entire perimeter (I had a good view of the street in both directions.) I arrived at the city (village?) of Horicon I suppose at about 0720 hours, really not too sure, kind of ignored my watch after leaving McDonalds. I then backtracked a ways on Highway 28, and started ascending the eastern side of the great marsh. I drove down some of the roads leading to the very brink of the Houghton Musk soil (kind of guessing it is mapped as Houghton, I had no soil survey along) and cattails. These roads, with names such as Green Head Road and Federal Dike Road, were sure not super highways, but, with slow, careful (rut-avoiding) driving, they suited my endeavors to a "T" (or to a "heron", some sightings of which I was rewarded.)

I actually do know what time McDonalds opens in the morning, and, as you must realize by now, I actually had my wrist watch with me (which is kind of unusual for me when I am not at work.) Bothersome things watches are, always making you look at them so you can pretend to be a big shot (I hate to use that word "shot" when talking about Yellow-headed Blackbirds). Anyway, I was not at McDonalds to partake in their fine breakfast cuisine. My purpose was to get an early morning sighting of the light-haired, female *Homo sapien* to whom my heart has fled (I don't think I shall ever get it back).

After traveling some of these roads, and even traversing some of the fields on foot, I was getting a little discouraged, and had even given up hope of seeing any Yellow-headed Blackbirds today. I turned north on one of the town roads located near the eastern rim of the giant wetland when a large flock of Red-winged Blackbirds flew across the road, directly in front of the car.

At about 0605 hours (I love military time) I was saying to myself "I bet she got a late start and decided to fore-go McDonalds coffee to-go." I had repeated this statment to myself twice (must be a little slow on the uptake) when suddenly a small, blue Ford Escort turned off Highway LL and headed directly toward McDonalds. My heart doubled in size as the woman driver quickly spied me, pulled over, and stopped right beside me.

Would you believe it!!? On the closest edge of that flock of Red-winged Blackbirds was one single bird with a bright yellow head and shoulders. My heart leaped with excitement (my heart got quite a workout that day) as I pulled the car over to the roadside and watched the object creature fly over, and land in, a field of last fall's alfalfa. I was overjoyed that my second foray of the year to the Horicon Marsh has yielded the singular bird that I

must see each spring to convince myself that the world is still working correctly (pretty correctly, at least the marsh bird part, anyway). Of course, had I checked a copy of "Wisconsin Birds a checklist with migration graphs", many copies of which I have, I would have seen that Yellow-headed Blackbirds do not usually arrive back in Wisconsin until the middle of April or later. Had I put off my necessary, annual trip for a week or two I probably would have seen hundreds of them. But, who believes (uses) books and charts much anyway. It is instinct that counts.

I was overjoyed, and ran to embrace the object of almost all my attention. She was very surprised to see me, to see someone that got up at 0515 hours on his day off, just to get a 20 second glimpse (okay, a couple hugs and small kisses too) of her as she headed toward her job in the emergency room at Sheboygan Memorial Hospital.

There are two things (organisms, people, objects, etc.) in this world that are named perfectly (if that is possible) Yellow-headed Blackbirds are just that, at least the males are anyway. They are impossible to mistake. Even if a person doesn't know their name, they would almost assuredly name them correctly. "Isabell, look at that Yellow-headed Blackbird".

Isabell is also named correctly. To me, Isabell means breath-taking beauty, tenderness, self reliance, intelligence, and super personality. Love that Isabell. Even getting up at 0515 hours to catch her at McDonalds. What a day!! A Yellow-headed Blackbird, and Isabell.

P.S. The smelt run is on at Port Washington.

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## 1986 WSO Summer Campout at Three Lakes

**By Mark Peterson**

The 1986 WSO summer campout was held from June 20-22 in the Three Lakes area with field trips in parts of Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties. 34 participants found a total of 96 species during the three days of the campout. The weather was cooperative, except for several small showers and a tornado warning on Saturday evening.

Friday afternoon a small group went east of Three Lakes and found a Boreal Chickadee, a Northern Junco, several Golden-crowned Kinglets, a Solitary Vireo, and two Olive-sided Flycatchers near Scott and Shelp Lakes. Four Boreal Chickadees were found along Forest Road 2174 on Friday afternoon. On Friday evening a group of about 20 went up to Powell Marsh in western Vilas County and found several American Bitterns, several Canada Geese, two Common Loons, and two singing LeConte's Sparrows.

On Saturday morning after a rain delay of about two hours, a group of about thirty went first to the area along Highway A about a mile southwest of Three Lakes and found a Boreal Chickadee, several Golden-crowned Kinglets, several Yellow-rumped Warblers, two Lincoln's Sparrows, a Palm Warbler, and several White-throated Sparrows. A trip east of Three Lakes produced several Olive-sided Flycatchers, ten to 12 species of warblers,

several more Golden-crowned Kinglets, and numerous unusual wildflowers near the boardwalk at Scott and Shelp Lakes. On Saturday evening, a trip out to Thunder Marsh west of Three Lakes produced three Ospreys, a Clay-colored Sparrow, many mosquitoes, and Harold Peterson in a mud hole up to his knees.

On Sunday morning, a trip to the place along Highway A produced a very good look at a Boreal Chickadee for those present. A spot along Forest Road 2182 about .2 mile east of the junction with Forest Road 2414 produced a nice look at a group of six Gray Jays.

The following is a list of the birds seen at the campout: Common Loon, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, American Bittern, Canada Goose, Mallard, Broad-winged Hawk, Northern Harrier, Osprey, American Kestrel, Ruffed Grouse, Sandhill Crane, Killdeer, Common Snipe, Ring-billed Gull, Barred Owl, Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Common Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Great Crested Flycatcher, Alder Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-pewee, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Purple Martin, Gray Jay, Blue Jay, Northern Raven, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Boreal Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Nrothern House Wren, Winter Wren, Sedge Wren, Gray Catbird, American Robin, Wood Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Veery, Eastern Bluebird, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwing, European Starling, Solitary Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Black and White Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Pine Warbler, Palm Warbler, Ovenbird, Mourning Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Canada Warbler, American Redstart, House Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Northern Oriole, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, Savannah Sparrow, LeConte's Sparrow, Northern Junco, Chipping Sparrow, Clay-clored Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and Song Sparrow.

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## Iowa-Banded Barn Owl in Waupaca County

**By Adrian P. Wydeven**

A banded Barn Owl *(Tyto alba)* was found dead 10 January 1985 in a barn on the John Krueger farm in Waupaca County (sec. 17, T25N, R5E). The Barn Owl has been on the Wisconsin Endangered Species List since 1 October 1979, and is generally reported as restricted in its range to Southern Wisconsin (Peterson, 1980), although there have been reports of owls in central and northern Wisconsin (Follen 1986, Tom Erdman, pers. comm.).

The carcass was sent to the State Lab of Hygiene in Madison, WI for toxin analysis. Low levels of several chemicals (PCBs, Dieldrin, p, p-DDE, and heptachlor expoxides) were found in the breast muscle. According to Dr. Terry Amundson, Wildlife Disease Specialist with the Wisconsin Depart-

ment of Natural Resources, no one chemical was the ultimate cause of death, but the cumulative effects of the compounds may have contributed to impaired feeding behavior, leading to emaciation and eventual death due to starvation.

Band information revealed that the owl had been raised in captivity, banded, and released under the Nongame Program of the Iowa Conservation Commission. It was 6 months old when released in Clayton County, Iowa (sec. 11, T94N, R4W) on 22 August 1984. At that time, it was judged to be a male based on external characteristics. The straight line distance moved from Clayton County, Iowa to the Krueger farm was 175 miles.

The Krueger farm and the surrounding area is mostly open farmland with scattered small woodlots of white pine and northern hardwoods, and areas of aspen and birch. The Embarrass River, 1/4 mile from the Krueger farm is bordered by a narrow strip of bottomland hardwoods.

The skin was given to the Mosquito Hill Nature Center in New London, WI. I would like to thank John Krueger, Conservation Warden Todd Wipperman, Dr. Terry Amundson, and Douglas Reeves -- Nongame Wildlife Biologist with the Iowa Conservation Commission.

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# FIELD NOTES

## The Summer Season

**June 1 - July 31, 1985** **Tom Soulen**

Early June was cool and dry, with light frost in northern areas several nights. Rapid warming brought temperatures into the 90's in many regions by the 8th, with Eau Claire recording 100°. Cool weather returned within the next few days, with Madison reporting a record low of 38° on June 12. Temperatures see-sawed through the season, but there were no prolonged periods of very hot or very cool weather.

Precipitation patterns were somewhat spotty. June began rather dry, but several periods of showers brought relief to some sections; yet those areas receiving rain varied through much of the season, with few periods of widespread significant rainfall. Very heavy rains (occasionally 3-6 inches within 24 hours) occurred during some periods of precipitation, but such downpours tended to be localized. A fair number of observers commented that it was a dry season overall in their areas. Several times during the summer, severe storm damage was reported in many areas; most extreme were the 1½ inch hail and 125 m.p.h. wind gusts reported at LaCrosse July 9. Several observers commented that along with considerable crop and tree damage, birds also suffered considerably from the effects of the violent weather.

There was little apparent correlation of migration with weather. While several species rarely recorded as late as June lingered that long this year, there also seemed to be fewer reports generally of late stragglers. On the other hand, more species of shorebirds than usual were on the move south again even during the last week in June. There was little comment on passerine southward migration except for a major movement of Eastern Kingbirds in Dane Co. noted by David Cederstrom on July 28.

Overall, 255 species were reported during the season; 130 of them are included in the seasonal summary below. An additional 88 species common and widespread enough to be found in more than 25 counties are omitted from this report. The remaining 37 species, usually noted in 10-25 counties, are listed here, with the number of counties in which each was observed given in parentheses: Common Loon (21), American Bittern (21), Least Bittern (15), Great Egret (13), Black-crowned Night Heron (12), Green-winged Teal (13), American Black Duck (10), Ruddy Duck (10), Bald Eagle (15),

Northern Harrier (25), Cooper's Hawk (15), Red-shouldered Hawk (20), Broad-winged Hawk (25), Virginia Rail (13), Sora (24), Common Moorhen (13), American Coot (23), Upland Sandpiper (22), Bonaparte's Gull (13), Ring-billed Gull (25), Herring Gull (19), Common Tern (12), Forster's Tern (13), Yellow-billed Cuckoo (22), Eastern Screech Owl (10), Tufted Titmouse (10), Brown Creeper (13), Golden-winged Warbler (20), Nashville Warbler (25), Blackburnian Warbler (16), Pine Warbler (19), Clay-colored Sparrow (23), Grasshopper Sparrow (21), Henslow's Sparrow (18), Brewer's Blackbird (24), and Pine Siskin (10).

The summer produced an interesting assortment of rarities. Most unusual was a Royal Tern that obligingly spent over 3 weeks in the Manitowoc harbor and lengthened Wisconsin's official list by one species. Also in Manitowoc were an adult and a yearling Laughing Gull and, in mid-June, both Black and Surf Scoters. Excitement on the raptor front was provided by the observation of a Mississippi Kite in Dane Co. Several observers were able to hear the infrequently reported Chuck-will's-widow in Adams Co. during the first half of July. A Yellow-throated Warbler was seen and heard in the Avon Bottoms in Rock Co. Finally, those attending the WSO convention in Eau Claire around June 1 were treated to the chance to see and hear a Prairie Warbler, and a second individual of this species was noted in Fond du Lac Co. later in June.

Again this year, most contributors elected not to comment on changes in abundance. There was unanimous agreement by at least 3 observers that each of these species was less common this year than last: Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Common Nighthawk, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Cliff Swallow, Wood Thrush, Brown Thrasher, Yellow Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Rufous-sided Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and Eastern Meadowlark. No species were identified by as many as 3 observers to be more common this year than last. Sam Robbins provided some quantitative data on meadowlark abundance, comparing numbers of both species in the period 1966-68 with those found in 1985 on the same breeding bird survey route: earlier averages of 22 (Eastern) and 34 (Western) contrast strikingly with 4 (both species) this year.

This summer's 70 contributors almost matches the 71 of the past 2 years. It is heartening to be sustaining that level of coverage. While relatively few counties (Calumet, Kewaunee and Rusk) were mentioned not at all, however, a number were "covered" only because one individual happened to be there for part of one day and reported his/her observations. Because several individuals happen to be very active in the field in June, we learn much about the bird life in some counties that otherwise might receive no coverage, and that kind of information is indeed valuable. Also very desirable, however, would be reports from more individuals who do most of their birding in one or very few counties through a major part of the season. Especially in terms of discerning the specifics of migration patterns or trends regarding changes in abundance, it is the repeated observations in relatively small areas that are particularly helpful. And as always, information on certain or suspected nesting is welcome. Several observers continue to provide extensive data, but we could benefit from any expansion of our base of activity or reporting in this area.

Here are the details of the summer season:

**Red-necked Grebe:** A number of people attending the WSO convention saw a pair in courtship display in Dunn Co. June 1; the birds were not seen after that date. A pair bred at Grassy Lake, Columbia Co.; 2 adults and 2 young were last reported July 28 (Cederstrom). Also reported from Burnett Co. June 2 (Matteson) and Winnebago Co. thoughout the period (Ziebell; 23 birds on June 29).

**Eared Grebe:** This Dunn Co. bird also obliged many attending the WSO convention on June 1; it was last seen June 8 (Polk). A pair remained very close to the containment wall in the Manitowoc harbor June 9-14, reported first by Sontag and seen subsequently by several other observers.

**Double-crested Cormorant:** The largest numbers reported were 350 in Dodge Co. (Horicon refuge staff) and 300 in Marathon Co. (the Luepkes). Noted in 24 counties overall.

**Snowy Egret:** Up to 2 birds were seen by a number of observers in Brown Co. throughout most of the period.

**Cattle Egret:** A number of observers also saw these in Brown Co. throughout the period. The largest number reported was 20 on June 1 (Peterson).

**Yellow-crowned Night Heron:** This species was reported from 3 counties: Crawford June 26 (Epstein, Mossman), Milwaukee July 27 (Mueller) and Rock June 2 (Hoffman).

**Tundra Swan:** A single bird was noted by several observers at Crex Meadows, Burnett Co., during the season.

**Mute Swan:** In addition to the usual Ashland/Bayfield/Douglas Co. locations, this species was noted in Door Co. June 13-23 (Glueckert) and in Racine and Waukesha Counties throughout the period (DeBoer).

**Northern Pintail:** Observed in a few more counties than usual: Brown, Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Dunn, Green Lake, Marinette and Oconto.

**Northern Shoveler:** By contrast, this species was noted in less than one-half the usual number of counties: Barron, Brown and Dodge.

**Gadwall:** There were observations in these 5 counties, also fewer than usual: Ashland, Brown, Dodge, Green Lake and Marathon.

**American Wigeon:** Noted in Dodge, LaCrosse and Shawano Counties.

**Redhead:** Birds of this species were recorded in 8 counties in all: Burnett, Columbia, Dodge, Dunn, Green Lake, Jefferson, Manitowoc and Winnebago.

**Ring-necked Duck:** Noted in Barron, Burnett, Columbia, Dunn, Juneau, Manitowoc, Monroe, Vilas and Wood Counties.

**Greater Scaup:** Still present in Douglas Co. June 2 (Tessen).

**Lesser Scaup:** Observed in only 6 counties this summer: Columbia, Dane, Douglas, Dunn, Manitowoc and Milwaukee.

**Black Scoter:** A straggler was present in Manitowoc Co. June 19 (the Leglers, Sontag) to 24 (Sontag).

**Surf Scoter:** One was found in Manitowoc Co. June 17 (Baughman) and remained through June 19 (the Leglers, T. Schultz, Sontag).

**Common Goldeneye:** Noted in these 5 counties: Door, Iron, Manitowoc, Sheboygan and Vilas.

**Hooded Merganser:** A female and 11 young were seen in Columbia Co. June 7 (Swengel). Observed in 11 additional counties.

**Common Merganser:** Seen July 5 in LaCrosse Co. (Lesher). The remaining 8 counties from which reports came were all eastern or northern.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** Recorded in Milwaukee Co. June 18-20 (Woodmansee) and also in Dane (June 9) and Sauk (June 14) Counties (Cederstrom). The remaining observations (4 more counties) were much more northern.

**Turkey Vulture:** The 32 counties in which observers saw this species represent all but the extreme northwestern portion of the state. Mossman found a number of active nests in Sauk Co. June 2 and a nest with young in Washburn Co. July 4.

**Osprey:** Noted in 18 counties overall, with the southernmost being Dodge (Horicon refuge staff; June 20 to July 22, up to 3 birds), LaCrosse (Lesher; June 5), and Sauk (Lange; June 1).

**Mississippi Kite:** John Emlen and Bill Foster had an exciting view of a bird of this species in Dane Co. June 25. Accepted by the Records Committee. See **By the Wayside.**

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Recorded in these counties: Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, Monroe (active nest on July 14, Epstein) and Sauk.

**Bald Eagle:** A bird killed in a tornado near Fifield in Price Co. July 6 had been banded as a nestling near Boulder Junction, Vilas Co. on May 30, 1972 (Hardy).

**Northern Goshawk:** There were 3 reports this summer: Door Co. June 1 (Glueckert), Douglas Co. June 28 (Matteson) and Iron Co. at the beginning of the period (Butterbrodt).

**Merlin:** Observed in Price Co. June 30 (Hardy) and in Vilas Co. from June 22 on (Green).

**Peregrine Falcon:** A single bird was seen in Burnett Co. June 3 (Hoefler). A strange-looking individual with unusually light head color was present at Devil's Lake State Park, Sauk Co., much of the summer (Swengel). It could not be determined whether the bird was an escape, and there was speculation, based on the light color, that it might be a Peregrine-Prairie Falcon hybrid.

**Gray Partridge:** There were observations in Brown, Columbia, Dodge, Grant and Manitowoc Counties.

**Spruce Grouse:** Only one bird was reported this summer, from Forest Co. July 30 (Tessen).

**Greater Prairie Chicken:** Noted on June 5 in Portage Co. (Mossman) and throughout the period in Burnett Co. (Hoefler).

**Sharp-tailed Grouse:** There were sightings in Douglas Co. June 2 (Tessen) and in Burnett Co. throughout the period (Hoefler).

**Wild Turkey:** Recorded in 5 counties in all: Fond du Lac, Grant Jackson, Marinette and Monroe.

**Northern Bobwhite:** A Washburn Co. report June 10 was considerably further north than others, although it may have been a released bird (Polk). The total number of counties reporting (17) was higher than for the past few summers.

**King Rail:** Noted in only 4 counties: Dodge (Horicon refuge staff), Green Lake June 14 and Marinette (2 birds) June 9 (Mossman), and Monroe (one dead) June 10 (Epstein).

**Black-bellied Plover:** There were June reports from 7 counties, the latest June 10 in Burnett (Polk) and Oconto (Mossman).

**Lesser Golden-Plover:** Birds lingered until June 9 in Fond du Lac Co. (T. Schultz) and June 10 in Burnett Co. (Polk).

**Semipalmated Plover:** The latest obviously spring migrants remained until June 14 in Manitowoc Co., where the first obviously fall migrants also appeared, on July 7 (Sontag). A bird seen in Ashland Co. June 28 might well have been a fall migrant (Mossman).

**Piping Plover:** Two adults were observed in Ashland Co. June 3 (Orlando Kjosa, Matteson) and 28 (Lisa Hartman, S. Kelly Kearns, Matteson, Mossman) in an area where nesting has occurred previously,but there was no evidence of breeding.

**Greater Yellowlegs:** Northbound migrants were still present in Dane (Sutton) and Columbia (Tessen) Counties June 2. The first southbound birds appeared July 6 in Dodge Co. (Haseleu), July 8 in Columbia Co. (Cederstrom) and July 9 in Barron Co. (Goff).

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** Spring migrants could still be found June 2 in Dane (Sutton) and Columbia (Tessen) Counties and June 9 in Fond du Lac Co. (T.Schultz). Just 2 weeks later, June 23, returning birds were noted in Dodge (Mueller) and Pierce (Polk) Counties, with others appearing in Shawano Co. June 25 (Peterson) and Winnebago Co. June 29 (Ziebell). An additional week brought birds to 6 more counties.

**Solitary Sandpiper:** A June 23 report from Pierce Co. (Polk) preceded others by over a week. There was major migratory movement July 2-4, as evidenced by observations in 5 additional counties.

**Willet:** The only 2 reports came from Manitowoc Co June 23 (Sontag) and Brown Co. July 31 (Cleary, Columban).

**Whimbrel:** Noted in Douglas Co. June 1 (Johnson), LaCrosse Co. June 5 (Lesher), and Manitowoc Co. through June 9 (Gustafson, Sontag; up to 2 birds) and again July 26 (Tessen).

**Hudsonian Godwit:** This species made only its third summer appearance in the past 10 years, as birds lingered until June 7 in Dodge Co. (Baughman), June 9 in Fond du Lac Co. (T. Schultz) and June 10 in Burnett Co. (Polk).

**Marbled Godwit:** A single bird was in Dodge Co. June 24 (Horicon refuge staff).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** Spring migrants could still be found in Manitowoc Co. July 10, although the migration peak (65) had been June 3 (Sontag). The first fall migrants also were noted there, on July 21 (Gustafson). Johnson reported over 300 birds in Douglas Co. June 1.

**Red Knot:** The last spring reports came from Douglas Co. June 2 (Tessen), Manitowoc Co. June 4 (Sontag) and Dodge Co. June 7 (Baughman).

**Sanderling:** While most spring migrants had disappeared by June 7-8, one was still in Manitowoc Co. June 17 (Baughman). An observation in Ashland Co. June 28 (Mossman) was about 2 weeks before obviously returning birds in Manitowoc Co. (July 11, Sontag).

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** Some were still to be found in Chippewa (Polk) and Dane (Sutton) Counties June 16, although the bulk of the birds apparently departed June 3-9 (10 counties). There was very little break between spring and fall migration in Manitowoc Co. (Sontag). After a June 28 report from Ashland Co. (Mossman), the next observation was of obviously fall migrants in Dane Co. July 10 (Sutton), with appearances in several other locations within the next week.

**Western Sandipier:** Tessen provided the season's only 2 reports, from Douglas Co. June 2 and Manitowoc Co. July 26.

**Least Sandpiper:** Although birds had left most areas by June 2-7, some lingered until June 19 in Manitowoc Co. (Sontag). A June 28 observation in Ashland Co. (Mossman) was followed by sightings in 6 other counties within a week, the earliest July 2 in Dane Co. (Sutton).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** Always one of the latest migrants, this species was noted until June 16 in Dane Co. (Sutton) and June 18 in Manitowoc Co. (T. Schultz). Returning birds were observed in Manitowoc Co. July 12 and Outagamie Co. July 26 (Tessen) and Brown Co. July 31 (Cleary, Columban).

**Baird's Sandpiper:** Tessen reported birds in Columbia Co. June 8 and Manitowoc Co. July 12 and 26.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** Lingered in Chippewa Co. until June 13 (Polk) and returned to 3 counties by July 4-6. Almost exactly halfway between these dates (June 23) was a Dodge Co. bird (Mueller).

**Dunlin:** Still present in Manitowoc Co June 17 (Sontag). The Horicon refuge staff reported 3000 in Dodge Co. June 1.

**Stilt Sandpiper:** Somewhat fewer reports than in recent years. Still present in Dane Co. June 2 (Sutton). Fall migrants were noted beginning July 7 in Manitowoc Co. (Sontag), Chippewa Co., July 18 (Polk), Outagamie Co. July 26 (Tessen) and Brown Co. July 31 (Cleary, Columban).

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** Returning birds in Manitowoc Co. July 3 (Frank, the Leglers) were followed by others in several additional locations within the next few days.

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** A bird in Dane Co. June 8 (Tessen) was late.

**Wilson's Phalarope:** Because of summering birds, it is sometimes difficult to characterize the end of spring migration of this species, but 5 counties produced no reports after June 2-9. Definite fall movement might be indicated by first sightings in several areas the last week of July.

**Laughing Gull:** The Manitowoc harbor again hosted this species, an adult and a yearling, at various times between June 14 and 23 (Baughman, T. Schultz, Sontag). All the reports excerpted in **By the Wayside** were accepted by the Records Committee.

**Franklin's Gull:** In addition to up to 5 birds at Manitowoc during the summer (several observers), individuals were noted in Chippewa Co. June 28 (Polk) and LaCrosse Co. July 5 (Lesher).

**Little Gull:** Many observers saw up to 6 in Manitowoc Co. during the season. One immature was observed also in Brown Co. June 10 (Mossman).

**Caspian Tern:** One in Oneida Co. July 4 was thought to be unusual (the Engbergs). Sontag reported almost 300 in Manitowoc Co. at the end of July. Recorded in 14 counties overall.

**Royal Tern:** This salt water species, previously accorded hypothetical status in Wisconsin, has now been added to the official state list as a result of a bird present at Manitowoc for nearly a month. It was first observed June 18 by Baughman and T. Schultz and seen subsequently by Volkert and by Sontag, who last reported it July 15. See **By the Wayside** for excerpts of the accounts submitted, which--along with photographic evidence--formed the basis for acceptance by the Records Committee.

**Common Barn-Owl:** The first reported nesting in some years occurred in Dane Co., where Matteson noted 4 eggs on June 10 and 4 young on July 24.

**Short-eared Owl:** Reported from the Buena Vista Marsh in Portage Co. on June 5 (Mossman).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** There were 2 reports of this species, from Douglas Co. June 2 (Tessen) and Manitowoc Co. July 18 (Sontag).

**Chuck-will's-widow:** Wisconsin's seventh record was provided by a bird in Adams Co. that was heard by a number of observers, first reported July 3 (Robbins, Joan Humphrey) and last on July 10 (Tessen). Accepted by the Records Committee. A second bird was noted in the area July 6 (Don Follen, Sr. fide Robbins).

**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** The only northern counties among the 26 from which this species was reported were Barron (Goff), Brown (Cleary, Columban), Marinette (Lindberg), Oconto (Tessen) and Shawano (Peterson).

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** As is frequently the case, most observations were of birds in the northern or western part of the state. The only exceptions among this year's 33 counties were Dane (the Leglers) June 29 and Fond du Lac (3 on June 20) and Iowa June 8 (Tessen).

**Black-backed Woodpecker:** One was observed in Price Co. July 1 (Sjolander).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Still present in Manitowoc Co. June 16 (Sontag). The only later reports came from Ashland, Douglas and Forest Counties.

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** The latest southern observation was in Milwaukee Co. June 10 (Woodmansee). A June 12 bird in Outagamie Co. was not in suitable nesting habitat (Robbins). Individuals in Jackson Co. June 23 and at 2 sites in Polk Co. July 2 were unusual and may have been residents (Mossman).

**Acadian Flycatcher:** Swengel reported nesting in Columbia Co. June 7. Noted in 12 additional southern counties.

**Western Kingbird:** Noted in 3 counties: Douglas June 2 (Tessen, 2 birds), St. Croix June 6 (Grunewald) and Taylor June 9 (Robbins).

**Cliff Swallow:** Somewhat unusual was a report of 550 in Columbia Co. July 28 (Cederstrom).

**Gray Jay:** Observed in these far northern counties: Douglas, Forest, Iron, Price and Vilas.

**Common Raven:** The southernmost of the 22 counties in which this species was recorded were Jackson and Monroe (Mossman).

**Boreal Chickadee:** This is the first summer in many years that no one reported this species.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Lange found 6 individuals in Sauk Co. June 27, and Woodmansee noted one in Milwaukee through most of the period. Recorded also in Fond du Lac Co. June 9 (Baughman) and in Juneau Co. June 16 (Epstein). There was an active nest in Monroe Co. June 2 (Epstein). Most of the remaining reports came from 23 considerably more northern counties.

**Winter Wren:** Noted in Fond du Lac (Baughman, June 9), Manitowoc (Sontag, through July 1) and Sauk (the Leglers, June 15) Counties, as well as 12 more northern ones.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** A report from Sauk Co. June 27 is considerably south of the normally reported range of this species (Lange). Ten northern counties provided the remaining observations.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** A bird in Dane Co. July 5 was very unusual. Noted also in Ashland, Douglas, Florence, Iron, Lincoln, Oneida and Price Counties.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** Reported from Marathon (Robbins; 2 adults feeding one young July 25), Marinette (Lindberg), Iron (Butterbrodt), Shawano (Peterson) and 22 southern counties.

**Swainson's Thrush:** Of several early June observations, the one in Milwaukee Co. June 10 was the latest (Woodmansee). Robbins speculates that a singing bird in Taylor Co. June 29 might have been a resident. Also noted in Oneida Co. July 12 (the Engbergs).

**Hermit Thrush:** For the third year in a row, Monroe Co. provided the southernmost observation (Epstein). Noted in 18 additional counties.

**Water Pipit:** A straggler in Douglas Co. June 2 (Tessen) provided the first June record of this species in at least 10 years.

**Loggerhead Shrike:** Nested in Eau Claire (Polk), Monroe (Epstein, Mike Ebersold) and St. Croix (Hudick) Counties. Up to two birds also present throughout the period in Shawano Co. (Peterson).

**White-eyed Vireo:** Observed in 3 counties in early June: Green (several observers), Lafayette (Baughman, T. Schultz) and Milwaukee (Woodmansee).

**Bell's Vireo:** Several observers found this species in Grant Co. in early June. Noted also in Iowa and Lafayette Counties June 8 (Tessen), Richland Co. through June 18 (Duerksen) and Columbia Co. in early July, with a peak count of 4 on July 12 (Swengel).

**Solitary Vireo:** All 8 counties reporting this species were within its normal northern range.

**Lawrence's Warbler:** This infrequently seen hybrid was observed July 6 in Barron Co. (Berner).

**Blue-winged Warbler:** Noted again in Shawano Co. (Peterson, June 25). An individual was heard and seen in Sawyer Co. June 10 (Polk). The remaining 12 observations were from counties in the more usual southern range of this species.

**Tennessee Warbler:** There were early June reports from Door (Glueckert) and Iron (Butterbrodt) Counties. A bird in Price Co. June 26 could have been a resident (Hardy), as those in Douglas Co. through July 18 undoubtedly were (Johnson).

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** A very late straggler was observed in Ashland Co. June 4 (Matteson).

**Northern Parula Warbler:** A report from Devil's Lake State Park, Sauk Co., through June 24 (Lange)was considerably south of those from 9 northern counties.

**Magnolia Warbler:** Of the 7 counties in which this species was noted, 6 were in its normal northern range. The seventh report was of a late migrant in Milwaukee Co. June 5 (Woodmansee).

**Cape May Warbler:** Tessen found 5 in Douglas Co. June 2. Other June reports came from Ashland (the Leglers, Matteson), Forest (the Leglers) and Iron (Butterbrodt) Counties.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** Noted in Iron Co. (Butterbrodt), Marinette Co. June 8 (Mossman) and Shawano Co. through July 12 (Peterson, the Leglers).

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** Observed in 15 northern counties and also south of its normal range, in Jackson Co. June 22 (Mossman).

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** In addition to reports from 18 predominantly northern counties, a bird was still present June 6 in Milwaukee Co. (Gutschow), and a singing male was heard in Monroe Co. at the same location on June 24 and July 14 (Epstein).

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** A bird was seen and heard June 2 in the Avon Bottoms, Rock Co., not far north of an area in Illinois where this species has recently summered regularly (Hoffman).

**Prairie Warbler:** A bird located in Eau Claire Co. in May lingered until June 12 (Polk); many attending the WSO convention were fortunate to see and/or hear it. Also reported in Ozaukee Co. June 19 (Frank).

**Palm Warbler:** The only report came from Douglas Co. July 3 (Mossman).

**Blackpoll Warbler:** Still to be found the first few days of June in Burnett (Matteson) and Iron (Butterbrodt) Counties.

**Cerulean Warbler:** Several were again present in northern Chippewa Co. (Polk), at least through July 19 (Robbins). Noted also in Marinette (Lindberg, Mossman), Menominee and Polk (Mossman) and 12 southern counties.

**Prothonotary Warbler:** Thirty were present in the Duck Creek part of Columbia Co. June 7 (Lisa Hartman, Swengel), with some still there July 12. Other reports came from Buffalo, Crawford, Grant, LaCrosse, Richland, Rock and Waupaca Counties.

**Worm-eating Warbler:** Noted in Iowa Co. June 8 (Tessen) and in Sauk Co. June 8 (Tessen) and 25 (the Leglers).

**Northern Waterthrush:** Reports came from Columbia Co. June 7 (Lisa Hartmen, Swengel; 4 birds) and Sauk Co. (Lisa Hartman fide Lange), as well as from 9 northern counties.

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** There were June observations from Crawford, Fond du Lac, Grant, Monroe, Rock, Sauk and Vernon Counties.

**Kentucky Warbler:** This species was recorded in Crawford Co. June 26 (Epstein, Mossman), Richland Co. June 26 (Duerksen, Mossman), Sauk Co. June 8 (Cederstrom) and 24 (the Leglers), and Grant Co. between June 8 and 29 (several observers).

**Connecticut Warbler:** Birds in Burnett Co. June 7 (Matteson) and Sauk Co. June 13 (Lange) could have been very late migrants. The only reports within normal breeding range came from Ashland, Douglas and Iron Counties.

**Hooded Warbler:** This species was found in Fond du Lac Co. (Baughman) and on July 12 in Shawano Co. (the Leglers, Peterson).

**Wilson's Warbler:** A straggler was in Douglas Co. June 2 (Tessen).

**Canada Warbler:** One lingered in Milwaukee Co. until June 19 (Frank). Present throughout the period in Sauk Co., with a peak of 5 on June 17 (Swengel). There were four singing males in suitable breeding habitat in Crawford Co. June 6 (Epstein). The remaining counties from which this species was reported included Green Lake and Marquette (Mossman, June 13-14) and 11 northern ones.

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** A bird was present at Devil's Lake State Park, Sauk Co. until July 2 (Lange), and 2 were noted in Grant Co. June 2 (Baughman, T. Schultz). Also observed in Iowa Co. June 8 (Tessen) and in Green Co. between June 8 and July 6 (the Leglers, Peterson, Tessen).

**Northern Cardinal:** Of the 43 counties from which this species was reported, the most northern were Barron, Iron (noted carrying nesting material), Marathon and Marinette.

**Dickcissel:** Noted in 10 counties, all in the southern third of the state except for Dunn.

**Lark Sparrow:** Recorded in Dunn and Eau Claire (Polk), Chippewa (Robbins) and Sauk (Peterson, Tessen) Counties.

**Le Conte's Sparrow:** There were reports from Burnett Co. June 7 through July 2 (the Leglers, Matteson, Mossman), Douglas Co. through July 4 (Johnson) and Taylor Co. June 29 (Robbins).

**Sharp-tailed Sparrow:** Coninciding with the WSO convention were reports from Chippewa Co. at the beginning of June (Polk, Tessen). Also noted in 2 different locations at Crex Meadows, Burnett Co., June 7-13 (the Leglers, Matteson).

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** A bird in Jackson Co. June 23 was unusual (Mossman), as were 8 birds (6 singing) in Taylor Co. June 24 (Robbins). Also noted in Ashland, Douglas, Florence, Forest, Oneida, Washburn and Vilas Counties.

**White-throated Sparrow:** Recorded in Fond du Lac (Baughman), Green Lake (T. Schultz), Jackson (Mossman) and Ozaukee (Mueller) Counties in June, as well as in 19 more northern ones.

**Dark-eyed Junco:** Noted in 4 northern counties: Forest, Iron, Oneida and Vilas.

**Orchard Oriole:** Recorded in Milwaukee Co. through July 3 by several observers. All remaining reports came from 8 western counties.

**Purple Finch:** The most southern observations were in Jackson (Mossman), Manitowoc (Albrecht) and Monroe (Epstein) Counties.

**Red Crossbill:** Noted in 9 counties, considerably more than usual but perhaps not surprising in view of last winter's invasion. Southern observations included Fond du Lac Co. June 9 (Baughman), Milwaukee Co. through July 13 (Woodmansee) and Sauk Co. June 18 (Lange). There were 140 counted in Douglas Co. June 2 (Tessen).

**White-winged Crossbill:** Seen much less frequently in summer than the preceding, there were nevertheless 2 reports: Burnett Co. June 26 (Hoefler, 12 birds) and Price Co. June 5 (Hardy).

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# By the Wayside...

## Four Accounts of Wisconsin's First Royal Tern

My wife, Wendy, first spotted this bird as she was scanning through the Caspian Terns. Jeff Baughman and I couldn't believe our eyes! Here was a bird which is usually strictly associated with salt water, but there was no doubt as to its identity. The lighting was perfect (mostly sunny day), the comparisions were easy with Caspian Terns all around it, and the bird stayed in view for long periods of observation.

Size: It was easy to see that this bird was substantially smaller than the Caspian Terns, but was easily larger than the Common Terns which were also nearby.

Bill: Along with the bird's smaller overall size (when compared to Caspians) the bill differences were the feature most easily seen. Instead of being orangey red or crimson as the bills of the Caspians were, this Royal Tern's bill was yellowish orange. The size difference was also readily seen, with the Royal Tern's bill being notably slimmer in profile -- perhaps only 1/2 to 2/3 as deep at the base, depending on the particular Caspian Tern it was compared with. The bill lengths, however, were approximately equal.

Legs: The legs of the Royal Tern were black and noticeably shorter than those of the Caspians. They also seemed to be slightly slimmer.

Cap: This individual was apparently an adult in breeding plumage, since the black cap was complete, extending forward right down to the base of the bill. The rear portion of the black cap terminated in a slightly "shaggy" crest on the bird's nape or hind-neck. The crest was slightly but noticeably longer than that of the Caspians, and was lifted higher when caught by the moderate breeze. This feature made this individual relatively easy to pick out from a crowd of Caspians even when the birds were snoozing with their bills tucked back into their scapulars.

Primaries: When stretching the wings during preening, etc., the Royal Tern could be seen to have a pale underside to the outer wing (primaries), except for the trailing edge, which was dark. The upperwing surface, however, was more extensively dark, having a large blackish "wedge" covering the outer 4 or 5 primaries. These outer wing patterns are exactly reversed in Caspian Terns, which have extensively dark undersurfaces on the outer primaries, and only a dark trailing edge on the upper surface of the outer wing.

Tail: The tail of this bird was quite difficult to see, so a good direct comparison with the tails of the Caspian Terns was not easily made. Nevertheless, occasional glimpses of the tail during preening or stretching movements showed that the outermost feather tips extended almost to the primary tips (perhaps 3/4" to 1" shorter than the extent of the wingtips) in the standing bird. The tail tips of the Caspian Terns, however, only reached to within 2" to 3" of the wingtips.

Thomas Schultz

Head: The Caspian's head appeared larger and heavier overall. The black "cap" of the Caspian Tern, however, extended less on the rear of the head and down the nape. The Royal Tern's "cap" extended down the nape almost to the mantle and out past the rear edge of the head, giving the bird an elongated "jagged" look. The wind would raise the crest of the Royal Tern more noticeably than that of the Caspian Tern.

Bill: The Caspians showed their "red-orange" bill with the dark subterminal ring. The Royal Tern's bill lacked the ring and was "yellow-orange" or "carrot" colored. The Caspian's bill was heavier and thicker throughout its length. The Royal's thinner bill gave the effect it had a longer bill, but when directly compared it proved not true.

Legs: Both the Caspian and Royal Terns had very dark (black) legs. The Royal's legs (tarsus) were about 3/4" shorter and about 2/3 the diameter of the Caspian's.

Body: The Royal Tern was about 3/4 the size of the Caspian Terns present. Both species showed a light gray mantle and black primary wing tips while at rest (standing). Standing, the Royal Tern's tail extended to the primary tips, where the Caspian's extended half that.

Primaries: Seen in flight and standing with raised wing, the primaries' undersurface was light compared to the Caspian's dark color.

Tail: Seen in flight the tail of the Royal was more deeply forked than the Caspian Terns present.

Jeffrey L. Baughman

The bird appeared to be a down sized Caspian Tern (about 2" smaller) in almost every respect.

Bill: Orange with characteristic shape to the gonys.

Cap/crest: Black cap characteristic of adult in breeding plumage. Cap was often flattened while standing making a continuous line from tip to bill to crest. Crest feathers seen in wind when feathers blown on from behind.

Tail: The tail was not deeply "forked", a frustration in the field mark observations. While standing, however, the outer tail feathers were longer.

Wings: The typical light primaries on the underside of the wings were evident, as distinguished from the dark primaries of the Caspian Tern.

Legs: Comparing the Royal Tern standing in the same plane as Caspian Terns, the Royal stood only about 3/4 the height of the Caspians.

Charles Sontag

After scanning the flock for about 10-15 minutes I found the Royal Tern in among a large flock of Ring-billed Gulls, Caspian Terns (15-20 birds), Common Terns and a Bonaparte's or two. The bird was distinctly smaller, being slimmer and more shallow in the breast, having distinctly shorter legs and a thinner and more orange bill, lacking the dark tip. It was an adult in breeding plumage, showing a dark cap; the crested feathers were sleeked against the back of the head and upper nape, being only slightly visible when it turned its head.

William K. Volkert

*(Editor's Note: The above accounts were excerpted from more extensive descriptive material furnished, which collectively also included drawings and photographs.)*

## Immature Laughing Gull at Manitowoc

As I scanned through the large flock of gulls present on the containment's mudflat, I noticed two dark-mantled gulls with dark bills standing side by side. They were both in profile, and from my vantage point, one was directly in line with the other and only a few feet apart. The bird in front was a first year Franklin's Gull, while the other, a somewhat larger bird with a longer, more "droop-tipped" bill, was a first year Laughing Gull! Other comparisions were then made (unbelievably easily, because of the proximity and relative positioning of the two birds) and were as follows:

Both birds had a partial dark hood, incomplete because the "frontal" part of the face was white (around the base of the bill). The Franklin's Gull had a darker appearing hood, due to the uniformity of the dark gray which comprised it. The Laughing Gull's hood was less uniform -- more flecked with white.

Both birds had black primaries (the portions which showed in the standing birds) with only the Franklin's Gull having small but prominent white tips. The visible wingtip length was noticeably greater in the Laughing, giving its body a longer, more "tapered" look. The Franklin's shorter wingtips made it appear "stubbier" overall. Its smaller size was also easily evident.

The Franklin's Gull's neck, breast and belly were solid white, while the Laughing Gull had pale grayish patches along the sides of the neck and breast.

Eye crescents: They were noticeably different. They were wider and larger in the Franklin's Gull, only narrowly separated behind the eye. The Laughing Gull's were narrower and smaller and were more broadly separated behind the eye. The eyes of both birds were dark.

Bill: As mentioned earlier, the Laughing Gull's bill was larger (at least half again as long, and deeper) and more "droop-tipped". The bill was approximately twice the bulk of the Franklin's bill. Laughing had faint reddish tinge to base of lower mandible. Remainder of bill was black. The Franklin's bill was all black.

Tails: Difficult to see in standing birds, but both birds had broad, black sub-terminal tail band, although extent not well seen.

Legs: Both birds had dark (grayish or blackish) legs with a reddish or pinkish tinge. The legs of the Laughing Gull were noticeably longer.

Wing coverts: More uniformly dark gray in Franklin's. Laughing had many brownish feathers remaining in coverts.

Size: Size difference was readily apparent. The Laughing Gull was almost as large as the smallest Ring-billed Gulls.

Observations were made from a distance of 150-175 feet with a scope at 15-40X. Was not seen in flight. Also seen on this day (June 14, 1985) by Wendy Schultz.

Thomas Schultz

*(Editor's Note: The above account was selected because it was the most complete of the Laughing Gull descriptions submitted. Baughman also submitted a write-up that noted a number of distinguishing features, and both he and Schultz also submitted descriptions of an adult Laughing Gull present at about the same time in the Manitowoc harbor, as did Sontag.)*

## Mississippi Kite in Dane County

Our bird -- which I first had thought was a Northern Harrier -- was first seen several hundred yards southeast of where we were standing, flying straight toward us at an elevation of 100 to 150 feet. The bird was clearly bent on going somewhere, for it continued the same straight-line direction and an even, unbroken pattern of wingbeats throughout the minute or so we had the bird under observation.

Shortly before the bird passed directly over us at the elevation of 100 feet or so, I had changed my judgment and shouted that "It's not a Marsh Hawk. It's a Mississippi Kite!"

And so it was. Basically, a falcon shape but the pointed wings were not swept back as markedly as usual with falcons. The long tail -- clearly black --was not spread and appeared essentially square at the tip. We saw only the under side of the wings, which appeared dark: primaries and trailing edge seemed black or almost so, while the remainder of the wing-linings appeared a bit lighter but decidedly a dark blue-gray. The bird's body --lightest, almost white at the head and neck and shading to a darker bluish gray to the rest of the underparts -- was lighter in contrast to the dark underwings.

While no other bird was close enough at hand for size comparison, the bird seemed clearly too small for a Northern Harrier (and the underwing pattern was strikingly different, as was also the under tail). But it seemed clearly larger than a female Kestrel and -- I thought -- a slower and perhaps more shallow wingbeat than a Kestrel. Too, I thought it looked more slight, less bulky than White-tailed Kites I have seen recently in California and Texas.

Until today, I haven't had a good look at a Mississippi Kite in the past 25 years. Earlier, I knew the bird tolerably well in the South, where I had not infrequently watched it hawking for insects shortly after sunrise or before sunset. On those occasions, its flight was quite erratic and sometimes striking in its swiftness and maneuverable character. The flight of today's bird was quite different: it was steady, purposeful and direct, with on interruption for sailing. And nothing I have found in checking the literature at the house upon my return describes the flight as we saw it.

My first reaction that the bird had been a Harrier reflected my response to its blue-gray color at the distance at which I first saw it. Only a Marsh Hawk around here is gray-blue. But, as I have described, nothing else fitted a Marsh Hawk. And everything did fit a Mississippi Kite. Johnny Emlen fully concurred while we were watching the bird.

Bill Foster

## Chuck-will's-widow in Adams County

A letter received from Joan Humphrey, rural Friendship (outdoor writer for the Wisconsin Rapids Tribune), on July 2, told of a mysterious different sound, heard in company with Whip-poor-wills. Possibly it was a Chuck-will's-widow. I agreed to meet her at her home at 4:00 the next morning.

Ken Luepke and I arrived at the Humphrey home as scheduled. As Joan Humphrey led us down a lane that led through some pines and oaks toward a creek, she told us about hearing a similar song the previous summer, but never could determine the song's author. Now she had been hearing it again nightly since early May. The song resembled that of the Whip-poor-will in terms of frequent repetition, but the phrasing was quite different.

At first all we heard were Whip-poor-wills. There must have been six or eight singers all going at once. I walked back to my car to get my tape recorder and Peterson Field Guide tapes. When I rejoined Ken and Joan, some of the Whip-poor-wills had ceased singing. Now in the distance we were able to hear the song of the stranger. Repeated frequently was a distinctive three-syllable song: the second and third notes heavily accented and slurred radically downward. If I were to "verbalize" the song, I would say "chip, wee-oh, wee-oh". Over and over I played the Peterson tape of the Chuck-will's-widow song. Although the bird was too distant to respond to the taped song, the three of us were assured that the song we were hearing matched perfectly the song on the tape.

After listening to the Chuck-will's-widow for a leisurely 15 minutes, we drove a half-mile to a different area where a neighbor had been hearing what was thought to be a second Chuck-will's-widow. We continued to hear the first bird, but were not sure of a second. Soon after 4:30 the Whip-poor-wills and Chuck-will's-widow stopped singing. Because the Chuck-will's-widow was a considerable distance from us throughout the listening period, we made no attempt to see or record the bird.

Sam Robbins

*(Editor's Note: See Letter to the Editor)*

## Some Wisconsin Observations near Interesting Illinois Territory

Took a canoe trip, as planned, on June 2 down the Sugar River, in Rock County, from Nelson Road Bridge to Yale Bridge Road in northern Illinois. Because of limited time, we weren't able to do much on foot. Virtually all our observations were seen or heard from the canoes. Started at 6 a.m. and finished at noon.

Species of note, with numbers of individuals, were as follows: Prothonotary Warbler (8), Cerulean Warbler (10), Wood Thrush (11), Veery (4), Eastern Wood Pewee (8), Acadian Flycatcher (5), Least Flycatcher (6), Louisiana Waterthrush (1), Yellow throated Vireo (4), Yellow-billed Cuckoo (4), Black-billed Cuckoo (3).

In addition there were many, uncounted numbers, of the following: Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Oriole, Red-eyed Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Common Yellowthroat, Indigo Bunting, American Redstart, Great Crested Flycatcher, Downy

Woodpecker, and usual resident birds such as Black-capped Chickadee, Hairy Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Barred Owl, White-breasted Nuthatch, etc.

I was disappointed in not finding Yellow-throated Warblers or White-eyed Vireos or Kentucky Warblers. The Yellow-throated Warbler nests along the river bluffs just south of the Wisconsin state line in the Sugar River Forest Preserve, and has done so for 3 years now. We have 4 males on territory at the moment. We have 2 White-eyed Vireos in the northern part of Winnebago County, plus chats. Last year, we banded a Blue Grosbeak along the river 2 miles south of the line. Banded a Kentucky Warbler on May 4.

It would be fun, and interesting, to set up some nets and do some banding further up the river, between New Glarus and Brodhead. Later in the summer I want to do that segment of the river to see what's there. I was surprised by the high number of Acadian Flycatchers and Prothonotary Warblers. I expected the Louisiana Waterthrush.

Dan Williams

# Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir:

Just wanted to commend Noel Cutright on piece (article, paper?) in P.P. on the House Finch. I learned much that I hadn't known, in some measure because, of the literature cited. I've access only to Am. Birds and am unable to keep up with that. Having been a W.S.O member since '72 and having read most published pigeons, I haven't heretofore said so when it's been an enjoyable read, as it often has. Perhaps I should do so, at least occasionally — whether or not Oshkosh ever gets House Finches.

Nice and thanks.

Clark Schultz
448 Jefferson St., Apt. 204
Oshkosh, WI 54091

Dear Editor:

In regard to the article in the "Passenger Pigeon" 'Great Blue Heron Killed by Kite String", I must tell you about the duck killed by becoming entangled in the light wire between poles. It was seen on Dec. 29, 1985 as we were on the way to Clintonville. It was on the Butte de Mort bridge near Oshkosh.

Has Ed Peartree told you about the kinglet he released from a spider web tangled in a low bush. It was on the WSO Fall Hawk Watch in 1984 at Harrington Beach State Park. The bird immediately flew away.

We, on Dec. 26, 1985 had the pleasure of alerting the DNR at Pike Lake State Park to a hawk which could not fly after probably hitting an electric

wire on the edge of Pike Lake. We thought of you but he took it to a woman in West Bend who is a nurse for injured birds. It had been hiding and probably spending two nights in the bottom of several pine trees these people have on their lawn on the edge of the State Park.

By the way, is there a simple reason for the lack of interesting and "winter" birds at our feeder? In Dec. 1985 we saw one adult and three immature Mute Swans on the edge of Big Cedar Lake in the bay across the road from Barths Supper Club. There were about 75 feet from me as they ate off the bottom. I had binoculars and they had no visible bands. This is a "first" for this area. Of course, they disappeared after the lake was covered with ice. They were there for at least ten days. My friend phones whenever she sees something different.

Hope you and your family have a happy New Year (with the birds, etc.)

Sincerely,
Norma Schmidt
450 Seventh Street
Hartford, WI 53027

*(Editor's Note: Interesting letter. The scarcity of birds at your feeder this winter was noted by many others too. Reason — I don't really know.)*

Dear Editor:

Due to my long-standing case of multiple sclerosis, my birding has been pretty well confined to my back yard and to banding there. Only recently I rejoined the W.S.O. after thirty years to catch up on Wisconsin birds.

Two of my encounters may be of interest.

1. Bell's Vireo
On May 15, 1986 this one was in my net and with two of my sub-permittees we found it in Peterson, keyed it in Roberts and found a picture of its twin in the Encyclopedia of North American Birds, It was then banded with 2000-99838 and released.

On May 15 I had another one in a net, again checked with one of my subpermittees, banded with 1760-63923 and released.

Perhaps this is the first Milwaukee County record and with Hoffman's Ozaukee County sighting shows the extension of this bird's range.

2. House Finch
When I saw this sparrow-like bird with streaked breast at my thistle feeder, I first thought it was a Pine Siskin which I had seen two years ago in July, but this bird was joined by two reddish companions with streaked flanks and belly, on July 14. A look at the field guide identified them as House Finches and they have been here on four successive days.

After fifty-five years of bird watching its still a thrill to add two species to the life list.

Sincerely,
Carl L. Strelitzer
3266 S. 91st St.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

P.S. Still trying to catch and band a house finch.

Dear Editor:

For the first time in the 6 years we've been here, House Sparrows attacked our tall snap peas in June, eating off the tops, flowers and young peas. Our neighbor, here 40 years and more, said they were after his raspberries the worst this year. Did they go after them for needed moisture or nutrition? Another friend had several broccoli plants ripped to shreds by House Sparrows, twice. Water was available in bird baths.

Karen Etter Hale
517 Tower Street
Lake Mills, WI 53551

Dear Editor:

Exciting news from Peaceful Pines -- our small plot of land we call home --in Trout Valley East, town of Big Flats, Friendship, in Adams County.

In 1984, while listening to the whip-poor-wills, my husband and I heard a strange song. Insistant like the whips' song, but definitely different. We decided it was a young whip learning to sing or a whip with a cold, and we even made jokes to our family and friends about our whip singing off-key.

However, when in 1986 the same strange songster began its nightly song, I decided we had something different in our woodlands. I turned to my field guide to see what member of that family of birds could have joined the whips on their journey north.

The only possibility was the Chuck Will's Widow. Also while talking with a neighbor, I found that she also had a bird with the same song singing in her woodlot.

Not wanting to trust only my judgement, I contacted Sam Robbins of Medford, and he along with Ken Luepke of Spencer, confirmed my theory that we indeed did have a Chuck Will's Widow in Adams County.

This spring I was carefully checking each night throughout April to see if they would again visit our area. The first whips began singing the evening of April 26 and the first chuck the evening of May 8. For the third year the Chuck Will's Widows have returned.

I was determined to get a recording of their song and so, on June 10, with my tape recorder, I slowly moved towards its song. To my absolute amazement, I was able to get to within five feet of the tree where it was singing, and not only do I have an excellent recording, when it finally discovered me and flew off to another near-by tree, the recorder faintly picked up the frog-like croak it emits when startled.

In the waning light, I was able to see it very distinctly, but only as a silhouette.

Then on June 12, I went earlier, but this time I had my binoculars and a flashlight. It was again getting dark before I saw it, but with my flashlight I got a better look at it, and its red eyes sparkled in the light.

My theory is, if there is one, there has to be more, so last night, June 16, I did a transect of the area and indeed we have at least four Chuck Will's Widows singing, and the way I did the survey, it's not probable that any time was I hearing the same bird.

If anyone in WSO is interested in confirming this report and adding this bird to their life list, they need only contact me, and I will guide them, but if

they want to see the bird because it is on private property, I will have to make arrangements so we aren't trespassing.

Although, when it first arrived, it was only singing for a short time in the evening, it is now singing most of the night.

I have been keeping bird records for about 35 to 40 years, and since 1978 I have been the outdoors writer for *The Daily Tribune,* Wis. Rapids.

I am joining WSO and I'm looking forward to being a member of your organization and attending your field trips and convention.

Sincerely,
Joan E. Humphrey
Route 1
1079 Blackhawk Lane
Friendship, Wisconsin 53934



## North American Loon Fund Grants

The North American Loon Fund (NALF) announces the availability of two grant programs for support of new or current research, management, or education projects that may yield useful information for Common Loon conservation in North America.

The first of these programs, the Robert J. Lurtsema Research Award, consists of a $1,000 stipend available annually for a suitable research project focused on a member of the Family Gaviidae. Preference will be given to students and independent researchers with limited availability of other funding.

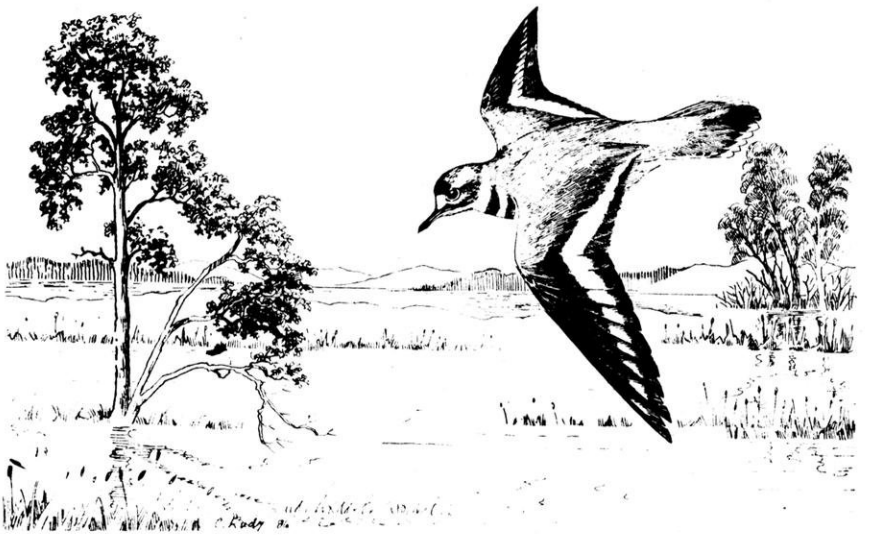
The second program offers modest grants in support of research, management, or educational projects directly related to the conservation of Common Loons as a breeding species. Proposals in the range of $500 to $3,000 are most likely to be considered for funding.

Further guidelines for prospective applicants are available upon request from the NALF Grants Committee. Deadline for submission of proposals is January 31, 1987. Funding awards will be announced by March 15th.

Please submit guideline requests to:

North American Loon Fund Grants Committee
North American Loon Fund
Main Street
Meredith, NH 03253

The bird on the inside of the back cover is a White-rumped Sandpiper.



(Drawing by Carol Rudy)

## KILLDEER IN THE NIGHT

*Killdeer calling in the night --*
*a marsh-bound cry, staccato*
*and unlike the daytime trill*
*so distinctive, bound up*
*in memory of summer days*
*with green leaves over water,*
*blue sky and brilliant sun,*
*the call like many others*
*intimately linking nature,*
*time,*
*and me.*

Joe Trueblood
6320 Pheasant Lane #D8
Middleton, WI 53562

## CORRECTIONS

Two key corrections in the Spring Seasonal article for 1985. The Snowy Egrets reported should be May 24 (Robbins) and May 30 (Tessen). The Palm Warbler arrival date is April 20 not May..

# Sandhill Crane Count — 1986

**By Marion Hill**

Over 1,000 alarm clocks rang simultaneously at 4 a.m. on April 19th, 1986. The weather throughout most of the state was cold, dark, and very windy with some scattered rain. Undaunted, observers, from scout troops to ornithologists, stationed themselves at their chosen sites to count the resident Sandhill Cranes of Wisconsin. This year's 12th annual Crane Count was the largest ever. Two new counties not previously censused joined the ranks to complete the statewide count. (Sawyer County reported no cranes, but LaFayette County found two.)

The value of the Crane Count lies not only in censusing the crane population. Each participant fills out the data form which requires an evaluation of the wetland site and also a list of other birds and wildlife seen. This year everything from a buffalo in Marquette County to an anthill in Marathon County was listed by participants. The enthusiasm of all the participants is evident on the returned forms. One person wrote, "We look forward each year to the Crane Count as our favorite family outing." From Rock County -- "Ag drainage could affect this area, but local owners have much respect." From an Orfordville scout troop - "The Crane Count is a fantastic excuse to visit nature and teach the scouts about their environment."

Participation and the number of cranes counted each year depend somewhat upon the weather. The count date is set to take place after the major Sandhill migration has passed through the state, but before the resident cranes begin nesting and become less visible and audible. Both of these factors are extremely variable according to weather.

The date is also set with Easter in mind, since my counters would not be available during that week-end.

Unfortunately, this year two counties which normally have large crane populations had quite poor participation. This means the final count is somewhat skewed, simply because many cranes were missed. Although the count is not totally accurate, we can see the cranes are holding their own in the state. This in turn indicates fairly healthy wetland ecosystems in Wisconsin.

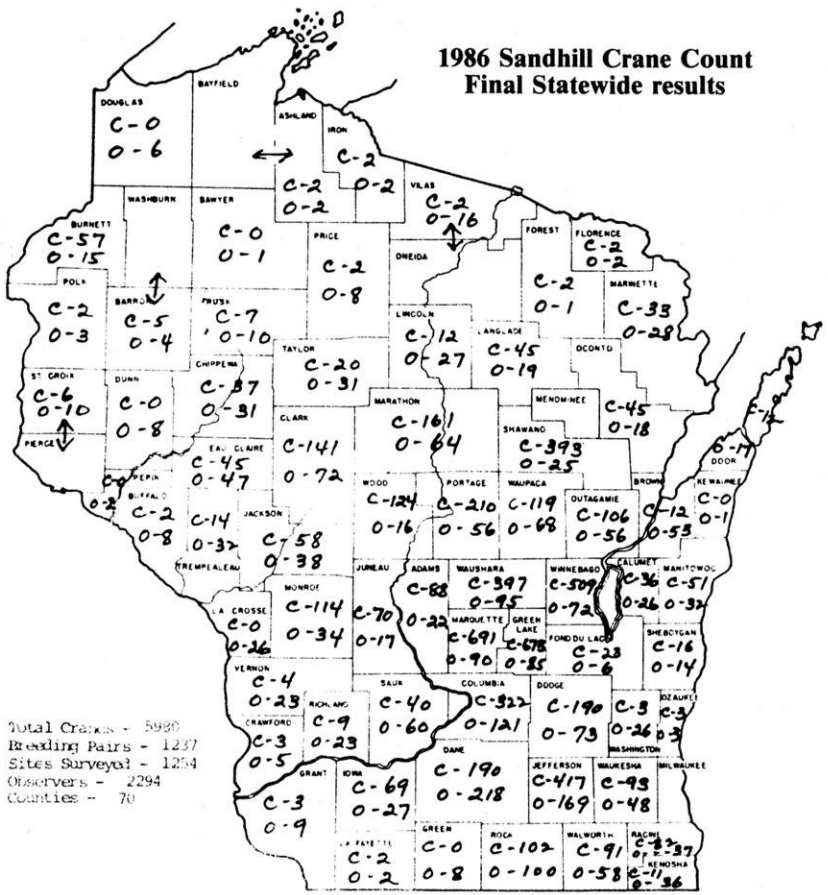
This year there were 2294 participants who observed on 1254 sites, as compared to 2300 observers on 1250 sites in 1985. Total cranes in the state tallied 5980 with 1237 breeding pairs, while 1985 showed 6040 cranes and 1768 breeding pairs. Perhaps because of the bad weather this year the breeding pairs were not unison calling as much as during the warm 1985

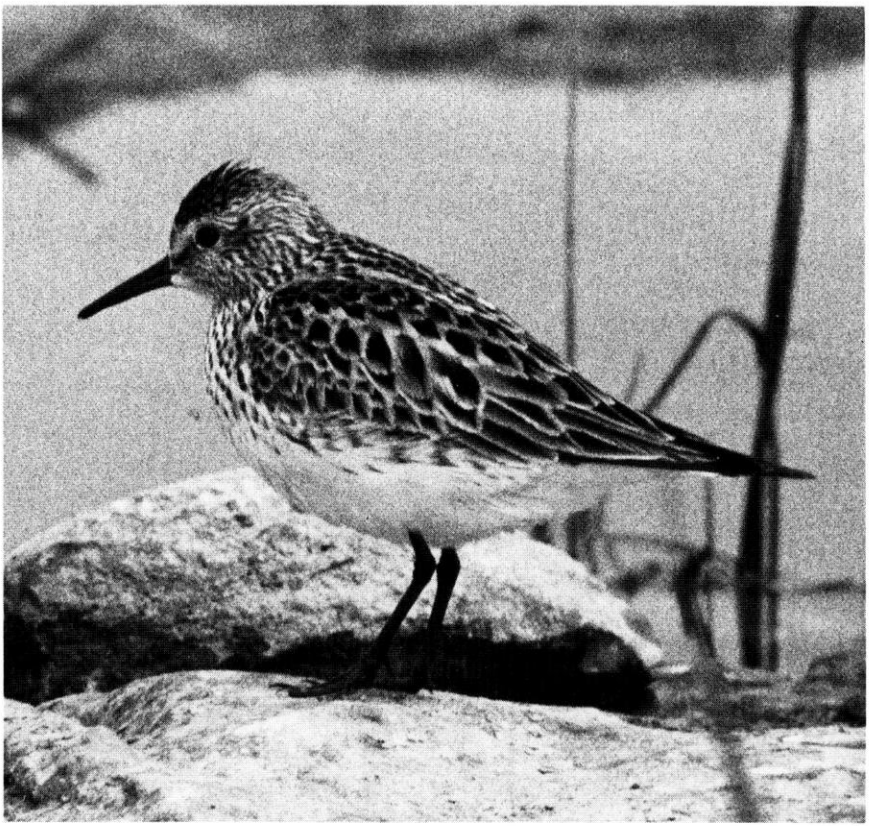
count. Two banded cranes were sighted in Clark and Winnebago Counties this year.

There is a small number of people who are not as enthused as most of us are with the Crane Count. Mary Butterbrodt, a WSO member who lives in Iron County, reports one young man referred to the cranes as "those dumb brown birds." She says a good number of people like to shoot hawks and other large birds, so publicity about cranes is not the best policy in her area. An observer in Trempeleau County was told by a landowner that he "hates cranes because he is a trout fisherman, and the cranes threaten the trout." But by and large most people are cooperative and interested, if not enthusiastic enough to take part.

The International Crane Foundation wishes to thank WSO for its continued support of this important project. With crane watchers on the alert each year, our wetlands will probably continue hosting the varied bird species that we all enjoy.

State Coordinator,
Sandhill Crane Count





**CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS BIRD?**
**(See page 98 for answer — Photo by Roy Lukes)**

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