



Joseph A. Grzybowski | W. Ross Silcock

As has been the case over the past few years, record-early and near-record early arrival dates dominated the spring season's reports. This was particularly notable for shorebirds, whose presence—from Snowy Plovers to Long-billed Dowitchers—built into noteworthy numbers on dates earlier than typical first arrival dates. This season's report also highlights the special narrow window of shorebird migration from 10-20 May for a series of Arctic-breeding species

Although the Region remains in a significant drought cycle, some waterbirds, such as White-faced Ibis and Black-necked Stilt, appear to be increasing. At the same time, several western Nebraska breeders, notably Western Grebe and Eared Grebes, are in a low cycle, and the California Gull presence at Lake McConaughy in Nebraska may be on the brink of extirpation.

Abbreviations: Crescent Lake (Crescent Lake N.W.R., Garden, NE); Hackberry (Hackberry Flat W.M.A., Tillman, OK); Harvard Marsh (Harvard Marsh Waterfowl Production Area); Hefner (L. Hefner, Oklahoma, OK); McConaughy (L. McConaughy, Keith, NE); Quivira (Quivira N.W.R., Stafford, KS); Red Slough (Red Slough W.M.A., McCurtain, OK); R.W.B. (Rainwater Basin, Filmore and Clay and adjacent counties, NE); Salt Plains (Salt Plains N.W.R., Alfalfa, OK); Sooner L. (Pawnee/Noble, OK); Tenkiller (L. Tenkiller, Sequoyah, OK).

WATERFOWL THROUGH IBISES

Four Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were noted in Alfalfa, OK 24 May (RSh), and a single was in McIntosh, OK 10 May (JDR, DGB)—the only ones found outside Red Slough, in extreme se. Oklahoma. Some

300,000 Snow Geese were estimated at Harvard Marsh 8 Mar (PD); a few lingered at Pawnee, NE 7-14 May (WRS, SJD) and Nuckolls, NE 14 May (SJD). Ross's Goose numbers, more modest, included 430 in Seward, NE 25 Mar (JGJ), with a straggler in Dixon, NE 11-21 May (LE, BFH, JJ, m.ob.). A neck-collared Ross's in Gage, NE 4 Mar was from Nunavut (SJD). Also rather late was a Cackling Goose in Scotts Bluff, NE 31 May (AK). Trumpeter Swans continue to appear at scattered locations in w. Nebraska, where small numbers of nesting birds occur. The last Tundra Swans leaving the Region were 5 at Quivira 4 Mar (PJ, CM, KG) and 2 in Lynn, KS 19 Mar (MC). Mottled Ducks (2-3) were documented 6-23 May at Red Slough (DA, BH, MW). A Gadwall × Mallard hybrid ("Brewer's Duck") was seen 30 Mar in the e. R.W.B. (JGJ). Noted most frequently in Nebraska, a male Eurasian Wigeon and possible female were in Scotts Bluff, NE 18 Mar (ph. KD). Cinnamon Teal were reported in better-than-average numbers this season, 60+ from Nebraska alone (fide WRS), with some noted to the e. boundaries of the Region in Lancaster, NE 5 May (LE) and Red Slough 4-8 Apr (DA, BH). A male Canvasback was at Crescent L. 28 May (LR, RH). Thirty-eight Greater Scaup were at Sooner L. 19 Mar (JWA) and 24 in Cedar/Knox, NE 22 Mar (RW); only scattered numbers appeared elsewhere. Tardy were the 2 Greaters in Sumner,



Irregular in migration across much of the southern Great Plains in spring, Bobolinks were abundant 10 May 2006 in Bixby, Tulsa County, Oklahoma. Photograph by Steve Metz.

KS 13 May (GY), one in Saunders, NE 14 May (CNK), and 4 at Sooner L. 18 May (JWA). A cooperative young male Harlequin Duck remained in Cedar, NE 27 Feb-7 May (D&CN, m.ob.; ph.). Among a handful of scoters were 3 Surfs and one Black in Sequoyah, OK 19 Mar (MMI), a Surf in Osage, KS 5 Mar (TH, LH), and a Black in Osage, KS 13 Mar (DG). Long-tailed Ducks were found in Harlan, NE through 8 Mar (SJD, PD), Osage, KS through 13 Mar (DS, MM, GP), and in Cedar/Knox, NE through 25 Mar (MB). Barrow's Goldeneyes, rare but more likely in Nebraska than elsewhere in the Region, were noted in Lincoln,

NE 28 Mar (TJW) and Lancaster, NE 10 Apr (†RE; female).

Seemingly threatened rangewide, 74 Sharp-tailed Grouse reported from Nebraska was good news (fide WRS), particularly the report of 36 on one lek (TJW). Greater Prairie-Chicken continues to be conspicuous in the e. R.W.B., with multiple leks of up to 30 birds (JGJ). In the core Sandhills range, large numbers of Greaters were found in McPherson 3 Apr, with some 60 leks located in a 32-km route (TJW); eight leks in the Tryon area had 65 males and a total of 78 birds 21 Apr (TJW). Additional high counts were 80 in Thomas 27 Mar (RW) and 70 more in n.-cen. Nebraska 9 Mar (JJ).

Tenkiller remains the loon hotspot in the Region: 2-8 Red-throated Loons were noted there through 20 Apr, 2-4 Pacific Loons through 6 May, and up to 3 Yellow-billed Loons through 8 Apr, among the ca. 263 Common Loons (the high noted 25 Mar; JWA, m.ob.). Other single Red-throateds were found at Hefner 8 Apr (JWA), Sooner L. 16 Mar (JWA), and McCurtain, OK 2 Mar (BH), with single Pacifics at Sooner L. 16 Mar (JWA), McCurtain, OK 2 Mar (BH), and L. Ogallala, Keith, NE 25 Apr (JGJ). Eared Grebes made an early showing at Harlan, NE 8 Mar (PD). Western Grebes continue in depressed numbers, e.g., just 629 at McConaughy 15 May (SJD); almost the only others were singles in Harper, OK 8 Apr (EB) and Pawnee, KS 9-24 May (SS, DKa), and 9 at Quivira 14 May (SS, DKa). Twelve Clark's Grebes were found in Nebraska, the first 29 Apr (KD), with 6 at McConaughy 15 May (SJD).

Quite rare in the Region was a Brown Pelican 11 May in Marion, KS (NW). Neotropical Cormorants appeared in Coffey, KS 12 Mar (ML), Hefner 28 Apr-9 May (JAG), Hackberry 5-17 May (BH, L&MT), and Sumner, KS 14 May (TH, LH). Little Blue Herons at the Nebraska edges included ads. in Adams 18 Apr (PD) and Freeman Lakes 21 Apr (JGJ) and a subad. in Adams 6 May (PD). Also at the Nebraska edge was an early ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron in Sarpy 7 Apr (EM), with an imm. appearing there 29 May (ph. AEK). Tricolored Herons away from Red Slough included singles at Hefner 2-9 May (JAG, R&LA, m.ob.) and in Tulsa 26 May (BC).

This was a good season for ibises. A White Ibis arrived 31 Mar at Red Slough (BH), where numbers built up to 1000 by 17 May (BH, BH III). Reports of Glossy Ibis continue to increase, and many observers commendably continue to check for hybrid characters. In Nebraska, at least 9 Glossies were reported, including one at Harvard Marsh 19 Apr (MS) and 5 there on 6 May (PD), and singles in



A nice flight of Short-billed Dowitchers occurred in the southern Great Plains in spring 2006, among them these seen 10 May at the Bixby sod farms, Tulsa County, Oklahoma. Photograph by James W. Arterburn.

Garden 3 May (JGJ, TJW), *Adams* 13 May (PD), and *McConaughy* 15 May (SJD). Oklahoma reports included singles 20 Apr–13 May at Hackberry (L&MT, m.ob.), 5 May in *Blaine* (JAG) and at Salt Plains (JAG), plus up to 6 at Red Slough 20–25 Apr (DA, BH et al.). Glossy Ibis × White-faced Ibis hybrids were reported from Harvard Marsh 6 May (PD) and Red Slough 20 & 23 May (DA), both singles. Numbers of White-faced Ibis were also high this season, exceeding 200 at Red Slough 22 Apr (BH, JSt, CT), 600+ at Salt Plains 5 May (JAG), 300 in *Garden*, NE, and “as many” in *Sheridan*, NE 3 May (TJW). A White-faced appeared on the exceptionally early date of 11 Mar at Hackberry (L&MT).

VULTURES THROUGH TERNS

Black Vultures continue to expand their range, with Oklahoma sightings in *Comanche* (EB), *Cleveland* (PV), and *Pawnee* (TJH), and Kansas reports from *Cherokee* (DH) and *Johnson* (DF). A real surprise was a White-tailed Kite spotted in *Osage*, OK 2 Apr (EBo, JW). Efforts to re-establish Bald Eagles in the Region have been ongoing for some time. Results from Nebraska (*vide* JGJ) and Oklahoma (AJ) show over 50 pairs in each state; over 100 young per year are fledged annually—not bad from the zero start in the DDT era. Northern Goshawks were observed 24 Mar in *Rooks*, KS (HA), 28 Mar in *Riley*, KS (LJ), and 1 Apr in *Sarpy*, NE (CNK). A Harris's Hawk wandered to *Cherokee*, OK in early Mar, exciting local birders (A&GH, JM et al.). Broad-winged Hawks drifted as far w. as *Scotts Bluff*, NE 30 Apr (KD) and *Garden*, NE 15 May (SJD). Tardy were Merlins in *Leavenworth*, KS 11 May (DWi) and in *Dixon*, NE 20 May (BFH). Peregrine Falcons have become more common in the Region as migrants, and some are now resident in urban areas such as Lin-

coln, NE, where a pair hatched 4 chicks 19 May (JGJ).

Rails normally have a hard time in droughts, but spring rains encouraged use of several marshes. A good find was a Yellow Rail 30 Apr–4 May in *Douglas*, KS (THo, m.ob.). King Rails were found at Red Slough (DA, BH) and Hackberry (L&MT, m.ob.). A high count of 27 Soras came from Red Slough 4 May (DA). Common Moorhens appeared at scattered locations, including pairs at Quivira 20 May (SS, MR, JR), *Kingfisher*, OK 16 May (GK), and *Tulsa*, OK 13–30 May (JC, TM), with up to 17 noted at Red Slough (DA, BH). Sandhill Crane migration is still a great event in the central Platte Valley, NE, with 200,000 noted 10 Mar (L&CF). A pair of likely resident Greater Sandhill Cranes was in *Clay*, NE 3 Apr (JGJ), and another Greater was in *Lincoln*, NE 16 May (TJW). A Common Crane was reported in a large group of roosting Sandhill Cranes near Rowe Sanctuary, *Buffalo*, NE 17 Mar (TKB).

A clear “zootie” was the Wilson's Plover documented 1 May in *Saline*, KS (RH, RP). Among the less common shorebirds, most Piping Plovers were at *McConaughy*—38 on 15 May (SJD). At other breeding locations in Nebraska, one Piping was in *Scotts Bluff* 30 Apr (KD), 3 at two locations in the Sandhills 7–9 May (JED), and one at *Crescent L.* 15 May (SJD). As many as 16 were noted in *Dixon*, NE 20 May (BFH, m.ob.), presumably displaced by rising water levels from Corps of Engineers' Missouri River management. Most migrant Pippings were noted in Nebraska, the earliest on 12 Apr (D&JP); the only other migrants reported were singles at *Hefner* 28 Apr (JAG) through 7 May (R&LA) and at *Quivira* 14 May (SS, DKa). A healthy 65 Mountain Plover nests were monitored in *Kimball*, NE (*vide* JGJ).

Whimbrel graced the Region from 20 Apr (Hackberry, L&MT) through 21 May, with high counts of 21 on 17 May at Hackberry (J&MT), 26 in *Coffey*, KS 19 May (MK), and 18 in *Washington*, OK 21 May (MD). All Ruddy Turnstones passed in a narrow window from 12–21 May, with high counts for each state the same day—18 May: 28 at *Sooner Lake* (JWA), 21 at *Freeman Lakes* (JGJ), and 100+ at *Quivira* (DV, WC, BB). Always exceptional in spring, a Red Knot was noted at *Quivira* 20 May (SS, MR, JR). For Buff-breasted Sandpiper, a species of concern, counts included: 627 in the e. R.W.B. 20 May, 522 of

SA This was clearly a season of early arrivals for shorebirds, and some of the arrivals set records.

By the end of Mar, birders had found:

- **Snowy Plover** 15 Mar at Hackberry (L&MT), 16 Mar in *Pawnee*, OK (JWA), and many at *Quivira* 19 Mar (GF);
- **Black-necked Stilt** 11 Mar at Hackberry (L&MT);
- **American Avocets** 11 Mar at Hackberry (3; L&MT);
- **Greater Yellowlegs** by 26 Feb at Hackberry (69 birds; L&MT), and singles 1 Mar in *Dodge*, NE (D&JP) and 4 Mar in *Douglas*, KS (MT);
- **Lesser Yellowlegs** by 26 Feb at Hackberry (4; L&MT) and at *Harvard Marsh* 8 Mar (PD);
- **Solitary Sandpiper** 21 Mar at *Red Slough* (DA);
- **Baird's Sandpipers** 9 Mar in *Douglas*, KS (3; MRo) and one at *Harvard Marsh* 10 Mar (PD);
- **Pectoral Sandpiper** 20 Feb at *Red Slough* (one; DA), 2 at *Harvard Marsh* 10 Mar (PD), and 3 on 11 Mar at Hackberry (L&MT);
- **Dunlin** 11 Mar at Hackberry (L&MT);
- **Stilt Sandpipers** 22 Mar at Hackberry (2; VF); and
- **Long-billed Dowitchers** 26 Feb at Hackberry (65 on that date; 866 by 11 Mar; L&MT), one in *Omaha* 5–12 Mar (RE, CNK, L&BP), 3 at *Harvard Marsh* 10 Mar (PD), and 2 in *Fillmore*, NE the same day (JGJ).

In addition to record-early arrivals, there were also some exceptional counts of shorebirds. For Black-bellied Plover, unprecedented were counts of 400 at *Quivira* 14 May (SS, DKa), 320 at *Sooner L.* 18 May (JWA), and 165 at *Freeman Lakes* 19 May (JGJ). Other high counts included over 1500 American Golden-Plovers in *Osage*, OK 2 Apr (JW, EBo) and 714 at *Freeman Lakes* 15 May (JGJ), 300 Semipalmated Plovers in *Omaha* 12 May (CNK), and 900 Baird's Sandpipers at *Harvard Marsh* 17 Apr (PD). Can one imagine counting 1322 Long-billed Curlews going to roost in *Finney*, KS 4 Apr (T&SS, MRo, AN)? Other good counts for the Region were 100+ Black-necked Stilts at Hackberry 8 May (JAG), 200 Willets in *Sequoyah*, OK 29 Apr (SB), 200+ Sanderlings at *Quivira* 14 May (SS, MR, JR), 2000 White-rumped Sandpipers 10 May in *Tulsa* (JWA), 600 Pectoral Sandpipers 10 May in *Tulsa* (JWA), and 1000+ Stilt Sandpipers at Salt Plains 5 May (JAG). High counts of Short-billed Dowitchers included 145 in *Tulsa* 10 May (JWA), 25 at *Quivira* 14 May (SS, DKa), 54 at *McConaughy* 15 May (SJD), and 53 at *Clear Creek Marshes*, *Keith*, NE the same day (SJD); our understanding of this species' status in the Region is clearly changing.

which were in two fields (JGJ); 600 there 14 May (JGJ); and 321 in *Antelope*, NE 15 May (MB); a strong count of 153 was made in *Tul-*

sa/Wagoner, OK sod farms 10 May (JWA). There were 6500 Wilson's Phalaropes with a whopping 388 Red-necked Phalaropes at Crescent L. 15 May (SJD), with 165 Red-neckeds in *Sheridan*, NE the same day (SJD). Much rarer e. and s. in the Region, 9 Red-neckeds were in *Saunders*, NE 19 May (CNK), 4 in *Sumner*, KS 12 May (NS), and 11 at *Quivira* 14 May (SS, DKa).

For many seasons, gulls were a dominant feature of the reports—less so recently. California Gull numbers appear down at McCortney; only 2 were there 15-19 May (SJD, DF); singles were at Crescent L. 13 May (*fide* AK) and in *Scotts Bluff*, NE 18 Mar (AK). Two Thayer's Gulls were reported: an ad. in *Hitchcock*, NE 3 Mar (SJD) and a second-year bird in *Lancaster*, NE 12 Mar (JGJ). Two Lesser Black-backed Gulls, a first-year bird in *Harlan*, NE 3 Mar (SJD) and an ad. in *Lancaster*, NE 11-24 Mar (JGJ, PEL), were reported. Glaucous Gulls were noted 3 Mar in *Hitchcock*, NE (one) and in *Harlan*, NE (2; both SJD) and until 16 Mar in *Tulsa* (JWA) and 30 Mar in *Sequoyah*, OK (SB); all were first-year birds. Somewhat exceptional were the 13 Common Terns reported in *Scotts Bluff*, NE 16 May (†SJD), with one near *Yankton*, *Cedar*, NE 10 May (NE) and 3 in *Seward*, NE 12 May (JGJ).

DOVES THROUGH WAXWINGS

White-winged Doves appear mostly in the w. part of the Region. They establish themselves in small towns and spread from these often widely separated outposts. A large group has established itself in Garden City, KS (TS), with reports from nine other Kansas locations (*fide* LM). Nebraska continues to add locations, three this spring: *Scotts Bluff* 4 Apr (RSg), *Dawson* 11 May (TJW), and *Boone* 23 Apr+ (D&CN). An Inca Dove wintering at *Sarpy*, NE was last reported 19 Mar (CNK); others still on the edge of this species' expanding range were noted in *Alfalfa*, OK 29 Mar (AW) and *Sedgwick*, KS 29 May (PJ). While a Yellow-billed Cuckoo made a record-early arrival in *Otoe*, NE 16 Apr (LB), the species made a generally late and weak showing in numbers this season. Black-billed Cuckoos, still hard to come by, were found in *Butler*, NE 20 May (LE) and *Otoe*, NE 21 May (L&CF), and in *Otoe* 31 May (5 birds; L&CF). Greater Roadrunners participating in the northward march were in *Rush*, KS 4 Apr (DW, BHa) and *Pawnee*, KS 25 Apr (GE).

The report of a calling *Flammulated Owl* at Valentine N.W.R. headquarters, *Cherry*, NE 24 May (TH) would make a remarkable record, one of few for the Region. Only the 2nd for Kansas was a *Broad-billed Hummingbird* photographed 26 Apr in *Johnson* (p.a.,



This Harris's Hawk in Cherokee County, eastern Oklahoma in early March represented a genuine vagrant so far north and east of typical range. Photograph by Jeri McMahon.

CH). Two *Selasphorus*, exceptional in spring, were a Broad-tailed and Rufous in *Finney*, KS 26 Apr (T&SS). Both *Archilochus* made early appearances—Black-chinned by 30 Mar in *Comanche*, OK (K&SM) and Ruby-throated by 31 Mar in *McCurtain*, OK (DA). Black-chinned numbers have increased substantially in sw. Oklahoma; a banding study showed it to be abundant in *Grady* and *Comanche*, where Ruby-throateds were common and rare, respectively (N&GB). More interestingly, a few apparent hybrids were captured in both of these counties (N&GB). Adding another data point for Red-naped Sapsucker was one in *Morton*, KS 26 Apr (BP, MP). An ex-



This Mottled Duck was carefully scrutinized for signs of hybrid derivation 23 May 2006 at Red Slough Wildlife Management Area, McCurtain County, Oklahoma. Photograph by Matt White.

tralimital Ladder-backed Woodpecker was located in *Grant*, KS 11-22 Mar (KH).

A Hammond's Flycatcher photographed at Crescent L. 13 May (KD, AK) provided Nebraska's 4th spring record. The only Cordilleran Flycatcher noted was in *Cherry*, NE 20 May (TH). The Black Phoebe that wintered in *McCurtain*, OK remained through 25 Mar (BH, m.ob.). An easterly Say's Phoebe was in *Linn*, KS 1 Apr (MM, GP, JS). Vermilion Flycatchers bred again at their outpost in *Cimarron*, OK, where 4-5 were seen 22 May (BP, MP, BH); a pair in *Morton* provided the first observed nesting effort for Kansas 8-26 Apr (KH, JRa), but the birds were gone by 6 May

(ph. M&EC, m.ob.). This, or another pair, was noted at a different *Morton* locality 2 May (KH, SG). Early for Oklahoma were single Western Kingbirds in *Payne* 8 Apr (TO) and *Pottawatomie* 11 Apr (DWn). An excellent tally for Eastern Kingbird was the 287 at sod farms in *Tulsa* and *Wagoner*, OK 6 May (JWA)

Numerous passerines made early arrivals this season. Among them were single White-eyed Vireos at Red Slough 16 & 30 Mar (DA) and a Yellow-throated Vireo in *McCurtain*, OK 25 Mar (DA, MW). A major easterly surprise was a well-documented Plumbeous Vireo in *Tulsa*, OK 27 Apr (PS, JL). A Steller's Jay in *Grant*, KS 1 Apr (KH) was unexpected; this species is a casual winter visitor to the w. edge of the Region. Fish Crows are gradually expanding their range in se. Kansas, with reports this season n. to *Linn* 8 Apr (AM, TSw) and w. to *Sedgwick* 6 & 14 Apr (PJ, TH, LH) While Chihuahuan Ravens are routine in *Morton*, KS, most unexpected was a pair of Common Ravens at the Point of Rocks area 4 Apr-11 May (MRo, AN, KG, TC).

Purple Martins arrived in *McCurtain*, OK by 16 Feb (*fide* BH). Tree Swallows were n. to *Douglas*, KS by 1 Mar (GPa). All three states in the Region had very early Northern Rough-winged Swallows: 4 Mar in *McCurtain*, OK (DA), 13 Mar in *Douglas*, KS (BA), and 2 Apr in *Cass*, NE (TJW). A Barn Swallow 22 Mar in *Lancaster*, NE (LE) was also quite early. Unexpectedly far n. and w. was a singing Tufted Titmouse in *Cherry*, NE 25 May (CSp, TH) Very early was a Rock Wren in *Dundy*, NE 5 Apr (TJW), and another was well e. of normal in *Pushmataha*, OK 14 Mar (C&BG). A Ruby-crowned Kinglet wintering in *Scotts Bluff*, NE remained until 15 Mar (P&DD). Record early was a Swainson's Thrush in *Sarpy*, NE 18 Apr (EBd). The 40+ Hermit Thrushes in a *Morton*, KS shelterbelt 22 Apr would have been a sight; associating with them was a male Varied Thrush (SS, DKa). Extralimital Curve-billed Thrashers included one in *Scott*, KS 16 Mar (*fide* TS) and another in *Custer*, OK 9 Mar (BL). Three American Pipits in *Clay*, NE 10 Mar (PD) were very early, while one in *Tulsa*, OK 13 May (JC et al.) and 2 in *Dixon*, NE 20 May (JJ) were rather late. A Sprague's Pipit in *Pawnee* 21 Mar (SS) was record early for Kansas.

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

A Blue-winged Warbler appeared far w. in *Morton*, KS 6 May (MT, CH, SP, MRo), with another, still exceptional, in *Sedgwick*, KS 7 May (PG). Among the seasonal handful of Golden-winged Warblers were 2 in *Richardson*, NE 14 May (SJD, WRS) and singles in *Douglas* 9 May (EW), at Red Slough 25 Apr

(DA), and in *Johnson*, KS 10 May (JS). More Tennessee Warblers pushed westward, with 6 in *Cherry*, NE 20 May (TH) and 7 at McConaughy 15 May (SJD). Northern Parulas numbered 15+ out w. in *Kay*, OK 9 & 13 Apr (C&DO, GL); another was well w. of normal 21 Apr (K&SM) in *Comanche*, OK, where a Magnolia Warbler was noted 12 May (JAG, SH). The only Cape May Warbler reported was in *Washington*, NE 21 May (JJo). A Regional rarity was a Black-throated Gray Warbler in *Morton*, KS 26 Apr (BP, MP). Only a few Blackburnian Warblers were reported, 2 each for Nebraska (*fide* WRS) and Oklahoma (*fide* JAG), one being quite westerly at Crescent L. 15 May (SJD). Yellow-throated Warblers also arrived earlier than usual, with 2 at Red Slough 13 Mar (DA), 6 in *Cherokee* and *Labette*, KS 31 Mar (JS, GP), and 4 in *Sarpy*, NE by 8 Apr (RS). Palm Warbler, a rare migrant, was reported 19 Apr–10 May in Oklahoma and 27 Apr–21 May in Nebraska, including one w. to *Cherry* 20 May (TH). This was “a great spring” for Blackpoll Warblers in w. Nebraska, with 37 counted in the Panhandle 15-16 May (SJD). Black-and-white Warblers popped up very early in *Cleveland* (DK) and *McClain*, OK (P&BM) 11 Mar. Prothonotary Warblers also showed up early, with one in *Delaware*, OK 29 Mar (VH); one at McConaughy 27 May (DF) was well w. of usual. A Worm-eating Warbler in *Morton*, KS 6 May (MT, CH, SP, MRo) wandered w. of the expected range. Occurring in the Region only in *McCurtain*, OK, as many as 8 Swainson’s Warblers were on territory at Little River N.W.R. 7-14 Apr (MRe). Two Ovenbirds in *Richardson*, NE 23 Apr (WRS) were very early. Record early were Louisiana Waterthrushes in *LeFlore*, OK 15 Mar (JAG et al.) and *Cass*, NE 29 Mar (RW). Also pushing the season were Hooded Warblers 31 Mar in *McCurtain*, OK (BH) and 8 Apr in *Sarpy*, NE (EM, CNK), with westerly birds at Crescent L. 15 May (SJD) and *Coffey*, KS 8 May (TMA).

The Region’s 2nd Hepatic Tanager was in a shelter belt in *Morton*, KS 21 Apr (PJ). An easterly Western Tanager was in *Cowley*, KS 14 May (TH, LH). An Eastern Towhee was a rare find as far w. as *Custer*, OK 9 Mar (BL). A Brewer’s Sparrow as far e. as McConaughy 24 Apr (JGJ) was unusual, as were 2 in *Morton*, KS 5-7 May (MT, CH, SP, MRo). Lark Sparrows that appeared at two locations in *McClain*, OK 12 Mar (P&BM, LMa) were very early. Two male Lark Buntings were unexpected as far ne. as *Dixon*, NE 25 May (JJ). A singing Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Valentine N.W.R., *Cherry*, NE 29 May (TH) was the westernmost spring record and added to our limited understanding of the species’

spring migration in the Region. Six single Fox Sparrows arrived across Nebraska 4-5 Mar (SJD, LE, NE), rather early. Probably wintering were Lincoln’s Sparrows in Omaha 28 Feb–2 Mar (PS) and *Kearney*, NE 3 Mar (NE); quite late were 2-3 in *Comanche*, OK 30 May (VF). A Smith’s Longspur in *Pawnee*, KS 21 Mar (SS) was a tardy and westerly surprise.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks occur in the w. parts of the Region with some regularity in spring; singles were as far w. as Valentine N.W.R., *Cherry*, NE 21 May (TH) and *Lincoln*, NE 15 May (TJW). Lazuli Buntings are becoming rather regular in the e. parts of the Region in recent years; 15 were reported in the e. third this spring, including rather early sightings in *Washington*, OK 18 Apr (DR) and



This cooperative Harlequin Duck, the fourth for Nebraska, delighted many through 7 May (here 4 March) 2006 above Gavin’s Point Dam, Cedar County, Nebraska. Photograph Paul Roisen.

Buffalo, NE 26 Apr (EH). The 10th Nebraska record of Painted Bunting was a second-year male in *Phelps* 2 May (RG, EV); others farther n. and w. than usual were in *Russell*, KS 18-27 May (MR) and *Stafford*, KS 18 May (DV, WC, BB). Bobolinks made a real show in the Region this spring, but in a narrow window (2-12 May); an estimated 2000-3000 were in *Sumner*, KS 12 May, with only a few still present two days later (NS, KG, GY, TH, LH). A Bronzed Cowbird at Hackberry Flat 6 Mar (KM) was the Region’s 2nd acceptably documented. Perhaps the rarest bird of the season was a second-year male **Brambling** in *Buffalo*, NE 8 Apr (KS); if acceptably documented, it is the 2nd for Nebraska. Pine Siskins with a dependent fledgling in *Finney*, KS 10 May (T&SS) had probably nested locally; a nest with 2 young was found in *Cheyenne*, NE 14 May (AS). A Lesser Goldfinch was in *Comanche*, OK 19 May (VF), and 2 were located in *Finney*, KS 26 Apr+ (T&SS).

Cited observers (subregional and state compilers in boldface): NEBRASKA: Laurel Badura, Kevin Bard, Elliott Bedows (EBD), Mark Brogie, Kathy DeLara, Stephen J. Dinsmore,

Phyllis & Dean Drawbaugh, James E. Ducey, Paul Dunbar, Rick Eades, Larry Einemann, Nathaniel Emery, Laurence & Carol Falk, Doug Faulkner, Ruth Green, Robin Harding, Eric Harrold, Tyler Hicks, Bill F. Huser, Jan Johnson, Jerry Jorgensen (JJo), Joel G. Jorgensen, Alice Kenitz, Clem N. Klaphake, Allen E. Kurth, Paul E. Lehman, Eric McFadden, Don & Colleen Noecker, Loren & Babs Padelford, Don & Jan Paseka, Lanny Randolph, Rick Schmid, Rueben Siegfried (RSg), **W. Ross Silcock**, Kent Skaggs, Carolyn Spilman, Audrey Sterkel, Michael Stromer, Phil Swanson, T.J. Walker, Eric Volden, Emily Whithan, Rick Wright. KANSAS: Bob Antonio, Henry Armknecht, Bruce Bittle, Ted Cable, Mark Corder, Mark & Elaine Corder (M&EC), Wally Champeny, George Elmore, Dave Fischer, Gregg Friesen, Kevin Groeneweg, Paul Griffin, Dan Gish, Sam Guy, Kelye Hart, Dave Henness, Brenda Hagerman (BHa), Robert Highgate (RHi), Chris Hobbs, Thor Holmes (THo), Tyler Hicks, Leon Hicks, Pete Janzen, Lowell Johnson, Don Kazmaier (DKa), Marvin Kuehn, Mark Land, Terry Mannell (TMA), Mick McHugh, Cheryl Miller, Aaron Mitchell, Lloyd Moore, Arpi Nyari, Gerry Parkinson (GPa), Sebastian Patti, Galen Pittman, Brandon Percival, Mark Peterson, Roger Plankenhorn, Mike Rader, Jennifer Rader, Mark Robbins (MRo), John Rakestraw (JRa), Scott Seltman, David Seibel, Tom & Sara Shane (T&SS), Tom Shane, Terry Swope (TSw), John Schukman, Norm Smith, Max Thompson, Don Vannoy, Dale West, Neal Whitaker, Dave Williams (DWi), Gene Young. OKLAHOMA: Randy & Lisa Anderson, Dave Arbour, James W. Arterburn, Ned & Gigi Batchelder, Eric Beck, D.G. Belcher, Jr., Sandy Berger, Ed Boyd (EBo), Bill Carroll, Jeff Cox, Melinda Droege, Vic Fazio, Cameron & Billy Graham, Joseph A. Grzybowski, Albert & Gail Harris, T.J. Hatchcock, Vicki Hatfield, Berlin Heck, Berlin Heck, III (BH III), Steve Hodges, Alan Jenkins, George Kamp, Debbie Kaspari, Glenda Leslie, Brian Lockwood, Jo Loyd, Larry Mays (LMA), Jeri McMahon, Kurt Meisenzahl, Kurt & Sharon Meisenzahl, Terry Mitchell, Mike Mlodinow (MMI), Patti & Brian Muzny, Tim O’Connell, Cindy & Don Odor, Brandon Percival, Mark Peterson, Dan Reinking, Mia Revels (MRe), J.D. Ridge, Pat Seibert, Ron Shepperd (RSh), John Sterling (JSt), Constance Taylor, Lou & Mary Truex, Pat Velte, Matt White, Ann Wilber, Donald Winslow (DWn), Jimmy Woodard. 🍷

Joseph A. Grzybowski, 715 Elmwood Drive, Norman, Oklahoma 73072, (j_grzybowski@sbcglobal.net); **W. Ross Silcock**, P. O. Box 57, Tabor, Iowa 51653, (silcock@rosssilcock.com)