

Middlewestern prairie region



A second state record was provided by this immature Roseate Spoonbill at the Waubonsie Wildlife Management Area, extreme southwestern Iowa, on August 13, 1997. Photograph/Stephen J. Dinsmore

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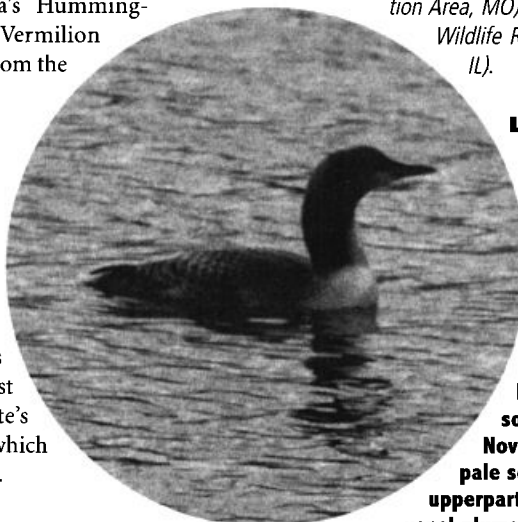
The weather in August, September, and October was generally mild, with few pronounced fronts. These mild conditions caused several correspondents to suggest that the dearth of storm systems allowed many species to overfly the Region. Although cause and effect cannot be established with certainty, the numbers of several bird groups were certainly below expectations. Foremost in the disappointment category was a predicted banner duck flight that never materialized. In addition, counts of Neotropical migrants were down. In Iowa, Dennis Carter characterized the fall flight as the most uneventful of the last eight years, and in northeast Indiana Jim Haw reckoned that only six Neotropical songbird migrants were above their 17-year annual fall means at Fox Island Park, with 29 below the mean.

In contrast, it was a marvelous fall for several seemingly unrelated species, such as Red-throated Loons, Red-necked Grebes, Swallow-tailed Kites, Merlins, Sabine's

Gulls, Red-breasted Nuthatches, American Pipits, most sparrows, and winter finches.

Flavor was added to the season by a fine array of rarities. These included Reddish Egret, Roseate Spoonbill, and Eurasian Collared-Doves from the southeast, and White-winged Dove, Common Ground-Dove, Anna's Hummingbird, and Vermilion Flycatcher from the southwest.

The Missouri summary arrived too late for inclusion in this report; fortunately, Chris Hobbs e-mailed a list of the state's highlights, which are included.



Abbreviations: Carl.L. (Carlyle Lake in Clinton, Fayette, and Bond Counties, IL); Jax.P. (Jackson Park on the Chicago lakefront); H.B.S.P. (Headlands Beach S.P., OH); L. Cal. (Lake Calumet, Chicago); L. Chau. (Lake Chataqua N.W.R., IL); O.N.W.R. (Ottawa Nat'l Wildlife Ref., OH); R.E.D.A. (Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, MO); S.C.R. (Squaw Creek Nat'l Wildlife Ref., MO); Spfld. (Springfield, IL).

LOONS TO SPOONBILL

The Red-throated Loon migration exceeded even last year's extra-

A scattering of Pacific Loons across the upper Midwest included this bird on Lake Monroe, southern Indiana, on November 11, 1997. The pale scalloping visible on the upperparts is an indication of juvenile plumage. Photograph/Don Whitehead



American White Pelican at Whiting Park, Indiana, on October 4, 1997. Photograph/Michael Ray Brown



At least two Swallow-tailed Kites reached the upper Midwest this season. This bird in Holmes County, Ohio, in mid-September 1997, provided the first state record in more than twenty years. Photograph/Bruce Glick

ordinary flight with the following state totals: Indiana 48, Illinois nine, Kentucky three, Ohio four, Missouri two, and Iowa one. Following the pattern of recent autumns, the Region's Pacific Loon count remained high; this fall eight birds were distributed across Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Missouri. Red-necked Grebes were also pleasantly common, with 21 birds scattered across every state except Iowa. It was also a fine fall for Eared Grebes, recorded in all 4 states e. of the Mississippi R. An ad. Neotropic Cormorant, recorded on the Mississippi R., *Alexander*, IL, Sept. 6 (†DBo, MD, DK, BDy), provided one of few fall records for the Region.

American Bittern reports were encouraging, with 11 birds reported in 4 states. The following extraordinary counts were made by Brainard Palmer-Ball in Kentucky: 1500+ Great Egrets at Swan Lake W.M.A. Sept. 1; 500+ Snowy Egrets at Lake No. 9, *Fulton*, Sept. 1; 1000+ Cattle Egrets flying over Lake No. 9 to a roost in Missouri Aug. 30; and 100+ Little Blue Herons at Lake No. 9 Sept. 1. The Region's only Tricolored

Heron was an immature, also at Lake No. 9, Sept. 1 (BPB). Most surprising for a few fortunate observers was Illinois' 2nd **Reddish Egret**, a juvenile that landed for 5 minutes on the rocks at Montrose Harbor, Chicago, Sept. 6 (†RHu, JPu, KH, ph.). The Region's birders enjoyed a fine selection of ibises, which was highlighted by three imm. White Ibises at Lake No. 9, KY, on the evening of Aug. 30 (BPB, DRo). In addition, a White-faced Ibis was carefully identified at Harrier Marsh, IA, Aug. 15 (†ET), and two other *Plegadis* ibises were reported in the Region. Vying for the Region's most colorful bird award was Iowa's 2nd **Roseate Spoonbill**, an immature that lingered at Waubonsie W.M.A. from Aug. 5 through Aug. 13 (†MPPr, †TK, †JFu, SDm, m.ob. ph.).

WATERFOWL TO CRANES

Reports of Greater White-fronted Geese increased substantially this fall with a peak count of 200 at Carl.L. Oct. 31 (DK), plus multiple reports from Indiana. Ross's Goose was also encountered more fre-

quently than normal, with five reported in Illinois and four in Iowa. The Region's only Brant was seen at Stockton L., MO, Oct. 24–Nov. 8 (KMyl, m.ob.).

In assessing the predicted massive duck migration, Alan W. Hancock aptly captured the season, "it was the record fall flight that didn't happen." Instead, duck numbers were similar to those recorded in recent years. One highlight for birders was the appearance of two ad. male King Eiders in the Region. The first flew in with a flock of Red-breasted Mergansers and landed briefly at Miller Beach, IN, Nov. 10 (JDu, BPB, BE, JMc, †KB, et al.). The 2nd (perhaps the same?) bird was discovered at Fairport Harbor, OH, Nov. 27 (RHn) and remained through Nov. 30. It was another good fall for scoters, with good numbers on the Great Lakes and numerous reports of all 3 species at inland sites. The 110 Black Scoters seen along the Indiana lakefront Nov. 7 (JMc) established an all-time high count for the state.

Mississippi Kites were also remarkably widespread, with seven in Kentucky, six in

SA Accidental at any time in the Region, the appearance of two, and perhaps three, **Swallow-tailed Kites** this fall was unprecedented. The first bird was discovered just n. of the Ohio R. in Lawrenceburg, IN, Aug. 16 (CHa, *fide* NK, MBw, m.ob., ph.); it remained in the area for more than a week, before moving southward across the river into Boone, KY, where it lingered through Sept. 8 (BPB, JHo, DO, LMc, JPo, m.ob.). During this period, a 2nd bird was found, soaring with Mississippi Kites, at Lincoln S.P., in s.w. Indiana, Aug. 25 (†DD). The 3rd kite, which might possibly have been one of the Indiana birds, was discovered Sept. 12–13 about 200 mi n.e. of Lawrenceburg in Holmes, OH (LY, BG, ph., m.ob.). This individual provided Ohio's first Swallow-tailed Kite in more than 2 decades. A broader perspective is afforded by noting that prior to 1997, only two fall-period Swallow-tailed Kites were recorded in the Region since early this century; these occurred Aug. 24, 1975, in Greene, MO, and Aug. 29, 1983, at Muskatatuck N.W.R., IN.

Indiana, two in Illinois, and two in Iowa. One Illinois kite lingered at Carl. L. until Sept. 24 (KMc). The only sizable Broad-winged Hawk movement consisted of 1500 at Coralville Res., IA, Sept. 20 (BP, m.ob.). A first-year, light-morph Swainson's Hawk wandered E of normal, where it was seen on the shores of L. Michigan at Illinois Beach S.P. Oct. 14 (†RHu, RE, SHi). It was an outstanding fall for Merlins, with 68 reported in 5 states. Both of the Region's Prairie Falcons were seen in Illinois Nov. 16, one in *DeWitt* (RS) and the other in Woodson (*fide* DBo).

Single Yellow Rails were seen at Sedan Bottoms, IA, Sept. 28 (RCu) and at Clinton L., IL, Oct. 18 (RCh, ASt). In *Vermilion*, IL, a phenomenal five Black Rails were flushed by a hay mower (alfalfa and annual grasses): two Sept. 14, two Sept. 15, and a singleton Sept. 16 (†JSm). The season's only King Rail was at Spring Run, IA, Aug. 27 (LS). Excellent fall Sora tallies included 35+ at Fishhook W.M.A., IL, Sept. 27 (RCh); 29 at Sloughs W.M.A., KY, Oct. 12 (MBe); and 22 at Union Slough W.M.A., IA, Sept. 14 (MK). Small numbers of Com. Moorhens were reported in 5 states; the peak count was 10 at Pigeon River W.M.A., IN, Sept. 23 (Haw et al.). The Region's Sandhill Crane population continues to flourish; Sandhills

were reported in all 6 states, and numbers peaked at the Jasper-Pulaski W.M.A., IN, staging area at 27,642 Nov. 19 (*fide* JCs).

SHOREBIRDS

Most correspondents deemed the fall shorebird flight below par. Indeed, Landing's experience at L. Cal, where he observed the poorest numbers since 1978, was echoed by many. In contrast, L. Chau. in c. Illinois attracted excellent shorebird numbers, yielding some of the Region's best counts in recent years.

Piping Plovers were widespread, with four in Iowa, three in Illinois, two in Kentucky, plus singletons in Indiana and Ohio; all were reported in the first half of August. A fine Killdeer tally was logged at L. Chau. Oct. 17, when 614 were counted (RBj, SBj).

Four Black-necked Stilts were seen at the Pemiscot, MO, sewage ponds Aug. 24 (EPr). The Am. Avocet flight was typical, with small numbers scattered across the 4 n. states; the peak count was 12 at Union Slough N.W.R., IA, Oct. 12–Nov. 2 (MK). By far the largest yellowlegs concentrations occurred at L. Chau., where 200 Greater Yellowlegs were counted Aug. 29 (KMc) and 5000 Lessers were counted July 28 (RCh, KR, TP). The latter constitutes the Region's highest fall total in 3 years. The 11 Upland Sandpipers seen at the Red Hen Turf Farm, IN, Sept. 23 (DSt) was an exceptional count for this late date. Peak counts for the large shorebirds included 12 Whimbrels at Lincoln Park, Chicago, Aug. 8 (JL); a flock of 26 Hudsonian Godwits at Saylorville Res., IA, Aug. 9 (†SDm, ph.); and three Marbled Godwits at L. Chau. Aug. 30 (MD). The usual small numbers of Red Knots appeared on Great Lakes beaches; inland records included singletons at L. Chau. Aug. 17 (DK, RCh); at Horseshoe L., *Madison*, IL, Aug. 26 (KMc); at Barkley L., KY, Sept. 12 (BPB); and at L. Chau. Sept. 20–21 (MRe, KMc).

Other impressive sandpiper counts at L. Chau. included: 3000 Semipalmateds Aug. 2 (RCh), 5000 Least July 28 (KR, RCh), 8500 Pectorals Aug. 8–9 (MRe, JEn), and 500+ Stilt Sandpipers July 28 (RCh, KR, TP). A late White-rumped Sandpiper lingered at Lorain, OH, until Nov. 9 (CHo). Surprisingly, the season's only Purple Sandpiper appeared at an inland site, rather than on the Great Lakes. This bird, which was seen at Rock Cut S.P., *Winnebago*, IL, Nov. 22 (†BW, †DWi, m.ob.), provided Illinois' first inland record.

Most interesting was a carefully described juv. Dunlin at the Calumet Sewage

Pond, Chicago, Aug. 31 (†RHu, ASt, GR); this species is extremely rare in August and the juvenal plumage is almost never encountered. Another extraordinary Dunlin, an individual in full alternate plumage, was seen at Big Pine Creek W.M.A., IN, July 25 (BDu). The season's only Ruff, a female, was at L. Chau. Oct. 20–21 (KR, RS). Long-billed Dowitchers were unusually widespread, with reports from every state except Kentucky; the peak count was 82 at Runnells W.M.A., IA, Oct. 19 (JSi). Wilson's Phalaropes peaked at L. Chau. Aug. 21, when 12 were seen (DBo, VK, MBr), and one lingered at Coralville Res., IA, until Oct. 17 (†TK, †RGo).

It was an above-average season for Red-necked Phalaropes, with reports from 4 states and a maximum count of 15 at L. Chau. Aug. 23 (KR, m.ob.). Red Phalaropes were reported only in Illinois, and most of these were inland; records included one at L. Chau. Aug. 21 (DBo, VK, MBr), two there Aug. 29 (RBj, SBj), one at L. Chau. Sept. 7 (RCh), one at Carl. L. Oct. 5 (DK), and one at Evanston Oct. 30 (EWt).

JAEGER TO TERNS

Following last fall's widespread Pomarine Jaeger invasion, this year's reports were restricted to L. Michigan. Documented Pomarine reports included a light-morph bird, believed to be in the rarely observed 2nd-year plumage, at Gilson Park, IL, Nov. 21 (†RHu), and a juvenile at Miller Beach, IN, Nov. 24 (†JMc, JWh). Parasitic Jaegers were restricted to the Great Lakes, where 14 were reported at Miller Beach, IN, and two along the Ohio lakefront. An additional 29 additional jaegers were seen, but not identified, in s. L. Michigan.

Laughing Gulls continue to appear regularly across the Region. This fall one-seven were reported in every state except Iowa. It was a better-than-normal autumn for Franklin's Gulls, with 40,000 counted within the main flyway at Red Rock Res., IA, Oct. 16 (ABe) and stragglers wandering E to Ohio. Little Gulls were restricted to Ohio, where eight were seen on L. Erie, and Indiana, where two were reported on L. Michigan and a first-winter bird was at L. Monroe Nov. 16 (†DWh). An early ad. **Mew Gull** arrived at Michigan City Harbor Oct. 18 (†KB, †JCD, m.ob.), to provide Indiana's 6th record. Thayer's Gulls were unusually widespread, with reports from every state except Ohio; inland reports included a first-winter bird at Spirit L., IA, Nov. 9 (†LS); a first-winter bird at R.E.D.A. Nov. 17 (JVB); and two at Kentucky Dam Nov.

23 (HC, CP). The Region's only Iceland Gull, a first-year bird, appeared at the unlikely location of Meldahl Dam, KY, where it was seen Nov. 1-3 (BPB, FR, JDu).

Lesser Black-backed Gulls were also plentiful; a 2nd-year bird wandered W to Coralville Res., IA, where it lingered Oct. 8-17 (†JFu, †TK, †CE). Glaucous Gulls were conspicuously scarce this fall, with only "a few" reported in Ohio (*fide* LRo), and one in Indiana. The Regionwide Great Black-backed Gull expansion continued, with multiple sightings in Indiana and Illinois, plus a first-year bird at West Okoboji, IA, Nov. 8 (†LS). An early juv. Black-legged Kittiwake at Miller Beach, IN, Sept. 20 (RHu, DM, JMc et al.) proved to be the vanguard of a strong flight that produced 10 sightings on s. Lake Michigan. In addition, inland immatures appeared at Clinton L., IL, Nov. 22 (RCh), and on the Ohio R. at Markland Dam, KY, Nov. 23, 28, & 29 (FR, DRo, BPB, JEL, MBe).

It was also an exceptional year for Sabine's Gull, with 41 reported in the four n. states. This eclipses the Region's previous maximum fall tally of 26, which was set in 1995. The Sabine's tally by state was 23 in Indiana (all at Miller Beach), 14 in Illinois, two in Iowa, and two in Ohio. Noteworthy aspects of the flight included an exceptionally early immature that arrived in Decatur, IL, Aug. 19 (MD), plus peak counts of eight at Miller Beach, IN, Sept. 10 (RHu, DM, JWh et al.) and five at Carl L. Oct. 5 (DK).

Excellent Caspian Tern numbers built up on L. Michigan, with counts of 150 at Evanston, IL, Aug. 20 (EWt) and 110 at Miller Beach, IN, Sept. 17 (KB). The only Com. Tern concentration was also recorded at Miller Beach, IN, where 2403 migrating terns were counted Sept. 23 (JMc). Forster's Tern numbers were near normal; one lingered at Fairport Harbor, OH, until Nov. 11 (LRo, RHn, NB). Least Terns continue to prosper in the Region, with 50 seen feeding over the Pemiscot, MO, sewage pond Aug. 19 (EPr), 40+ reported in Kentucky, 10 in Illinois, nine in Iowa, and five in Indiana. Unfortunately, the same optimism cannot be reported for Black Terns; the peak fall count e. of the Mississippi R. was only 25 at McGinnis Slough, IL, Aug. 16 (EWt).

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS

The Region experienced an exceptional influx of fall doves, with the appearance of 3 accidental members of this group in the Region. Expansion of **Eurasian Collared-Doves** across the continent moved into the heartland with the discovery of Iowa's first

record on the n. side of Grinnell Aug. 29. Fritz Brock, an out-of-state golfer, heard the birds calling at a golf course and summoned local birders, who descended upon the site the following day and counted up to five birds (†JFu, †TK, †MP, †CE, †RCe). The doves were still present at the end of the period. Indiana's first **White-winged Dove** was seen briefly in Newton Oct. 5 (†JO, ASi), and Iowa's 3rd record was photographed at a Ft. Dodge feeder Sept. 21-24 (D.J. Hultine). In *Moniteau*, MO, a dead **Common Ground-Dove**, found by Rick Thom Oct. 16, was submitted as a specimen at Kansas University (*fide* MRO). A Black-billed Cuckoo, seen in *Gibson*, IN, Nov. 16 (G&LB), was exceptionally late.

Late breeding Barn Owls, with five young in the nest, were discovered near Nevada, MO, Nov. 20 (LW). Snowy Owls virtually boycotted the Region this fall; the only report came from Michigan City Harbor, IN, where one appeared Nov. 22 (JMc, m.ob.). Short-eared Owl numbers were also down; the seven reported constituted the lowest Regional total in 4 years. The only large Chimney Swift accumulation consisted of 3200 at Fairfield, IA, Sept. 8 (DPo).

This fall's list of out-of-range hummingbirds included an ad. female **Anna's Hummingbird** in Lee's Summit, MO, Nov. 3-10 (JG, †CHb, m.ob.), and an ad. male Rufous in Edwardsville, IL, Nov. 7 through the period (VK, DBo, MD, m.ob.). Several contributors commented that Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were more common than normal; the peak tally was 30 at Fox I. Park, IN, Sept. 4 (Haw et al.). A remarkable 18 Belted Kingfishers were reported at Waubonsie W.M.A., IA, Aug. 4 (SDm).

FLYCATCHERS TO WARBLERS

Tardy E. Wood-Pewees lingered at Salamonie River S.F., IN, until Oct. 16 (Haw, SS) and in *Tuscarawas*, OH, until Oct. 24 (†ES). Acadian Flycatchers were reportedly still in full song Sept. 13 at Shades S.P., IN (AB), and an Alder Flycatcher was heard calling at Swan Lake W.M.A., KY, Sept. 12 (BPB). Indiana's first **Vermilion Flycatcher**, an ad. female, was discovered in Forsythe Park, Hammond, Sept. 27 (†Jcd, JMc, †SBa, †CE, †KB, m.ob., ph.). The bird settled in and remained in the park until mid-November (m.ob.). Western Kingbirds appeared in Chicago's Lincoln Park Aug. 8 (JL), in *St. Clair*, IL, Aug. 13 (KMc), and in *Fulton*, KY, Sept. 30-31 (DRo, BPB et al.).

The peak Purple Martin tally of 1500 was logged in both Lincoln Park, Chicago, Aug. 17 (JL) and at Lorain, OH, Aug. 17-29 (RHu, SW, TL). A spectacular concentration of one million swallows, reported in Pershing S.P., MO, Oct. 9-11, was estimated to consist of 85% Tree Swallows and 15% Barn Swallows (D. Fitch, m.ob.). Other swallow accumulations included 500 N. Rough-winged at L.Chau. Aug. 6 (VK, MBr) and 700 Cliffs at the Russellville stone quarry, IN, Aug. 11-21 (AB). Following last fall's dearth, Red-breasted Nuthatches invaded the Region in good numbers; the peak count among scores of reports was 35 at Sand Ridge S.E., IL, Nov. 28 (KMc). Sedge Wrens likely nested in *Jefferson*, KY, where 10+ were counted Aug. 11 (BPB).

Townsend's Solitaires appeared at the Northwestern University Landfill, IL, Nov. 10-18 (EWt, †DJ, m.ob.) and in *Cerro Gordo*, IA, Nov. 10 (CN). In Evanston, IL, a Sept. 10 nighttime thrush survey, based on

Present for more than a month in Hammond, Indiana, was this adult female Vermilion Flycatcher, photographed on October 14, 1997. It provided a first state record. Photograph/ Michael Ray Brown



call notes, yielded the following: 440+ Veerys, 130+ Gray-cheeked Thrushes, and 1800+ Swainson's Thrushes (EWt). Several other observers, employing more traditional methods, believed that Swainson's Thrush numbers were down this fall. In contrast, the Hermit Thrush flight was deemed excellent in Ohio (*vide* LRo); this contentment was supported by a peak count of 56 Hermits logged at Illinois Beach S.P. Oct. 10 (EWt, IM).

American Pipits staged a strong flight with good numbers reported in every state except Missouri. Unusually early pipits were recorded at the Red Hen Turf Farm, IN, where two were found Aug. 21 (M&VR), and at Miller Beach, IN, where a singleton appeared Aug. 30 (JMc). The flight peaked Oct. 30 when 1000 were counted in *McHenry* and *Kane*, IL (EWt). Single Bohemian Waxwings were reported in n.e. *Allamakee*, IA, Nov. 8 (RA); at West Beach, IN, Nov. 16 (JMc, m.ob.); and in *Dickinson*, IA, Nov. 19 (ET), providing the Region's best flight is almost a decade. The N. Shrike flight was feeble, with only six birds scattered across Indiana, Iowa, and Illinois. Nesting Loggerhead Shrikes were reported in *Licking*, OH, Aug. 8 (RH, SW).

Philadelphia Vireos were more numerous than normal, with several daily totals exceeding four birds; the highest single count was a phenomenal 22 at Ottawa N.W.R., OH, Sept. 7 (EPi et al.). The warbler flight was judged below average by virtually all correspondents. This conclusion was supported by rather mediocre peak counts for most species. Out-of-range warblers included two Black-throated Blues at Tower Grove Park, MO, Oct. 1 (JZ) and a Yellow-throated at Red Rock Res., IA, Sept. 11 (ABe). At the cusps of the migration envelope were an over-eager Wilson's Warbler at Spirit L., IA, Aug. 6 (SDm); an early Mourning Warbler at Huntington Res., IN, Aug. 7 (†Haw); a somewhat early Magnolia Warbler at Zander Woods, *Cook*, IL, Aug. 23 (WM); an incredibly tardy Blue-winged Warbler at Oak Ridge Cemetery, *Sangamon*, IL, Nov. 13 (†DBo); a lingering Palm Warbler at Shenandoah, IA, Nov. 17 (JBr, MT); and a very late male Wilson's Warbler at L. Spfld., Nov. 25 (†DBo).

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

A Summer Tanager lingered in Madisonville, KY, Oct. 9 (JHc). A remarkable 100+ Rose-breasted Grosbeaks reported Sept. 20 in Urbana, IL (RCh), established a record fall tally for the state. A late Blue Grosbeak nest, with adults feeding young,

was found near Wilder, KY, Aug. 14 (FR). Other tardy migrants included an Indigo Bunting in *Davis*, IA, Nov. 30 (PA, RA), and a Dickcissel in Gordon Park, OH, Oct. 17 (KMt). The only Spotted Towhee reported e. of the Mississippi R. was in Spfld. Nov. 8 (DBo). Clay-colored Sparrows staged another strong flight, with five in Indiana, four in Illinois, and a singleton in *Holmes*, OH, Sept. 17 (†ES).

Recent concern has been expressed about the status of Vesper Sparrows in the Region; encouragingly, the following excellent counts were logged this fall: 100 migrating with Horned Larks in *Sioux*, IA, Sept. 12 (JV); 30 in *Putnam*, IL, Sept. 20 (DSh); and a flock of 20 near Hollandsburg, IN, Oct. 29 (AB). Two late-departing Lark Sparrows were seen in *Marion*, IA, Sept. 14 (RCu). Rarely encountered in migration, a Henslow's Sparrow at Lincoln Park, Chicago, Oct. 7-8 (RHu, m.ob.) was noteworthy. Le Conte's Sparrows were reported in every state except Missouri; an amazing four Le Conte's were reported in Ohio, where this species is quite rare. The latter total included two at Lorain Oct. 8 (TL).

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were even more widespread, with reports in every state; the peak count was 11 at 3 *Kosuth*, IA, locations, Sept. 14 (MK). Notable reports on the Region's long Sharp-tailed list were singletons at Eagle Bluffs W.M.A., MO, Oct. 12 (SDI), and at Duck Creek W.M.A., MO, Oct. 22 (JG). A fine count of 275 Swamp Sparrows was recorded at Sloughs W.M.A., KY, Oct. 14 (MBe). The only substantial Lapland Longspur accumulation consisted of 15,000 in *McLean*, IL, Nov. 15-17 (MRe). Reports of rare longspurs were restricted to Missouri, where a Smith's was seen at Rosecrans Airport in n.w. Missouri Oct. 20 (MRo), and an ad. male Chestnut-collared was found near Montrose Oct. 26 (SHa, EWd). Snow Bunting numbers were somewhat lower than normal; however, a nomadic singleton wandered S to Slater, MO, where it was seen Nov. 26 (JWl).

Bobolinks tarried in the Region, providing late records of Sept. 18 in Shallow Spring, KY (BPB), and Oct. 19 in *Apanoose*, IA (RCu). Eighteen Yellow-headed Blackbirds, seen in Hammond, IN, Aug. 9 (JBo et al.), provided an all-time high count for the state. Better than normal Rusty Blackbird counts were reported, with 160 at Nelson L. Marsh, IL, in November (EWt) and 50+ in *Ohio*, KY, Nov. 29 (BPB). Brewer's Blackbirds have become regular fall visitors at n.w. Indiana sod farms; this

fall 40 were at the Shamrock Sod Farm, LaPorte, IN, Sept. 9 (Haw) and 17 were at the Red Hen Turf Farm, *St. Joseph*, IN, Aug. 21 (DSt et al.). Most unusual was a flock of seven imm. Orchard Orioles at Clinton L., IL, Aug. 16 (RCh); another Orchard lingered in *Fulton*, KY, until Sept. 11 (BPB).

The Region enjoyed the best winter finch autumn in several years, with small to modest numbers of every species except Hoary Redpoll. Single Pine Grosbeaks were seen at Holstein, IA, Nov. 5 (*vide* TK), and flying with a flock of Cedar Waxwings at West Beach, IN, Nov. 15 (JMc). One-four Red Crossbills were reported in all 4 n states; the peak count was four at Burlington, IA, Oct. 9 (JV). White-winged Crossbills staged their strongest flight since the early 1980s, with reports from every state except Kentucky. The main flight occurred in mid-November, but one bird appeared at Jerseyville, IL, Oct. 13 (HW). The peak count was 120 in Lake Park, IA, Nov. 16 (LS). The southernmost White-winged Crossbills were seen in *Jefferson*, MO, Nov. 13 (PH), and at the Shaw Arboretum, St Louis, Nov. 29 (DPi).

Small numbers of Com. Redpolls were equally widespread. The peak count was eight in Lincoln Park, Chicago, Oct. 8 (JL, m.ob.), and the southernmost birds appeared in Missouri at St. Joseph Nov. 2 (JHi) and near Smithville L. Nov. 26 (JFa). A typical Pine Siskin flight occurred in the w. states, with daily counts exceeding 100 birds in Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa, no siskins were reported in Ohio. Evening Grosbeaks appeared in every state except Missouri. The largest count, by far, was 39 at Beverly Shores, IN, Nov. 15 (RGr), and a singleton wandered S to *Warren*, KY, Nov. 23 (DRo). A report of 500+ Eur. Tree Sparrows at L. Glenn Shoals, *Montgomery*, IL (MRe), suggests that this species is extremely well established in c. Illinois.

Contributors cited (subregional editors in boldface):

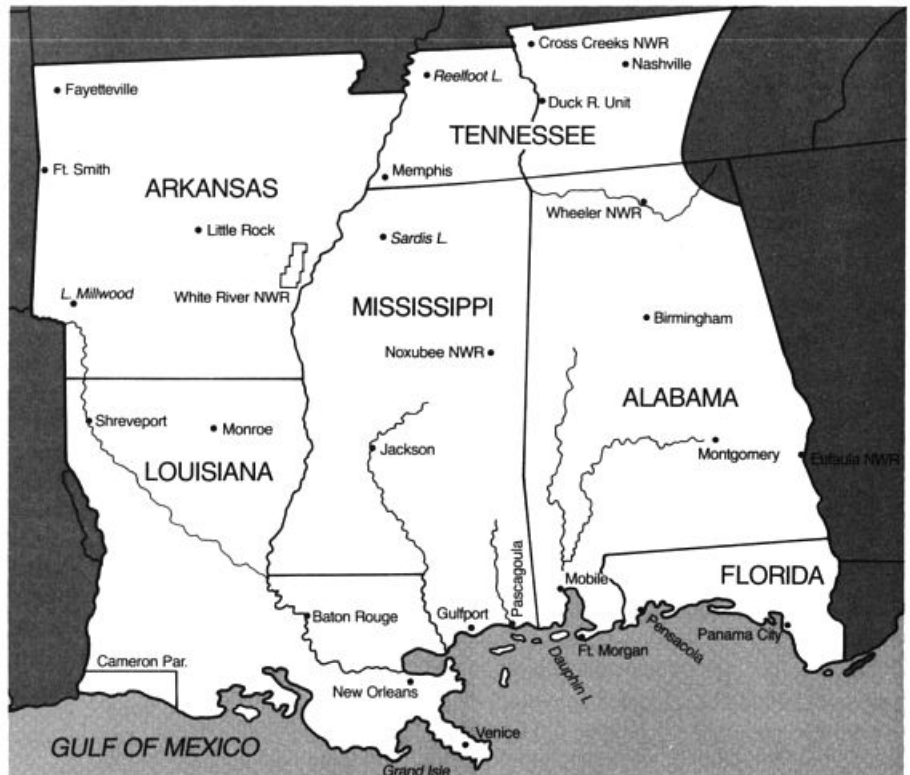
The following 125 individuals are cited in this report. An additional 95 observers contributed information to the various state lists, but could not be personally acknowledged. Pam Allen, Reid Allen, Don Andrews, Susan Bagby (Sba) Nick Barber, Mark Bennett (MBe), Richard Bjorklund (RBj), Sigurd Bjorklund (SBj), David Bohlen (DBo), Joy Bower (JBo), Gary & Lisa Bowman (G & LB), Jean Braley (JBr), Aaron Brees (ABe), Ken Brock, Melissa Brookens (MBr), Michael Brown (MBw), **Alan Bruner** (AB) (Indiana), **Fred Busroe** (Kentucky), John Cassady (JCd), John Cas-

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central southern region



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The fall period was difficult to categorize. Though birding was excellent in many areas, coastal observers were disappointed during the usual peak of early October. Generally it was considered a good season, with moderate numbers of vagrants, particularly from the West. Diving birds, large waders, geese, and rare flycatchers were prominent; many lingering passerines were recorded.

No extraordinary weather events occurred this autumn in the Region. The Alabama coast was recovering from the near-Biblical deluge in late July from hurricane *Danny*; numbers of resident birds seem to have been adversely affected. Temperatures were close to normal in most areas, though a little cool in November. Rainfall was higher than usual in the north and about average elsewhere. The largest passerine concentration on the Alabama coast followed the frontal passage of October 14. In the

five preceding days, Cimprich and associates banded only 67 birds; the next five days yielded 1573!

Reports of significant rarities not accompanied by convincing documentation have been excluded, excepting processed specimens. I appreciate the efforts by observers and subregional editors to provide this material.

Abbreviations: acc. (accepted by the state bird records committee); b. (banded); C.P. (Cameron Parish, s.w. LA); F.W.B.S.F. (Ft. Walton Beach spray field, Okaloosa Co., FL); L.S.U. (Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science, Baton Rouge); M.L. (Millwood Lake, s.w. AR); N.N.W.R. (Noxubee Nat'l. Wildlife Ref., e.c. MS); p.a. (Pending acceptance by the state bird records committee); S.G. (St. Gabriel, Iberville Parish, s.e. Louisiana); T.E.C. (The Earth Complex, a.k.a. Ensley Bottoms, Shelby Co., s.w. TN); T.N.W.R. (Tallahatchie Nat'l Wildlife Ref., n.w. MS); W.P. (western Panhandle—westernmost three counties—FL).