

of 19 at Mt Nebo W.M.A. (Csk, FP), 12 at T.R.M.O. 12 Sep–17 Oct and about 20 were at Hooper Lane during late Oct (WF). The White-crowned Sparrow migration was widely reported as average. There were two reports, however, by experienced observers, of imm. Gambel's White-crowned Sparrows, in Butler Twsp., Butler, PA, 28 Oct (DY) and at Shelocta, Indiana, PA 14 Oct–30 Nov (MH, RH). A late Rose-breasted Grosbeak was at Natrona Heights, PA, 14 Nov (PH) and an Indigo Bunting frequented a feeder in E. Brainerd, TN, through Nov (*fide* KC). The only Dickcissel reports were of birds at McDonough W.R., WV, 4 Sep (JBe) and Brainerd Levee, TN, 21 Oct (KC).

Two Brewer's Blackbirds were at Moraine S.P., PA, 24 Oct (PH, v.o.), two were near Volant, Lawrence, 13 Nov (RSt), and over 20 were at Darlington, Beaver, 19–21 Nov (BH). Large flocks of Purple Finches passed through the n. half of the Region, especially in Oct; 525 were banded at P.N.R. (RCL, RM) and 101 at Mt. Nebo W.M.A. (Csk, FP). Just a scattering remained in Pennsylvania by season's end. Four Red Crossbills were on Mt. Mitchell, NC, 5 Aug (SS, MC); in the north, the first arrival was reported at Delmont, Westmoreland, PA, 9 Sep (KB) and they were widely reported in small numbers by mid-Nov. At least six White-winged Crossbills were at W. Salisbury, Somerset, PA, 9 Nov (JPa) and like Red Crossbills, they, too, were well distributed across the state by mid-month. Flocks of up to 100 Com. Redpolls frequented P.I.S.P. by 10 Nov, and smaller numbers were seen at a few other Pennsylvania localities; one had reached Shenandoah, VA, by the last week of Nov (DDa). Pine Siskins staged a heavy invasion throughout the Region; an exceptional total of 706 was banded at T.R.M.O. 13 Oct–20 Nov (RC); however, only 61 were banded at P.N.R. during the same period. Flocks of "migrating" Evening Grosbeaks appeared in the n. by mid-Oct, but few lingered at feeding stations; over 20 were on Roan Mt., TN, 28 Nov (RKn).

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western great lakes



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While mild summer weather continued unabated, abundant rainfall that characterized preceding months suddenly stopped in mid-August. Most of the Region recorded little precipitation: by early December many areas were 5–10 inches below normal. Results were dramatic, especially on the Great Lakes. Levels dropped two to four feet, placing them dangerously close to record lows. For example Squaw Bay in Michigan's Alpena was characterized as a marshy field, while the s. end of Green Bay in Wisconsin's Brown became one large mudflat. Inland lakes saw similar reductions. If the upcoming winter and spring do not have ample precipitation the Region will approach summer under drought conditions, which would impact many nesting species.

Abnormally mild weather affected the waterfowl flight. Birds did not need to depart the north so many species trickled into the Region. The raptor flight was better than last fall, spectacular in a few instances, but still variable between the three states. Shorebirds were found in excellent numbers when suitable habitat was present. The thrush flight was without doubt one of the poorest on record. Most species were seen

in exceptionally low numbers or totally missed. Warblers commenced migrating early, undoubtedly due to yet another early nesting season, with most exiting by mid-Sep (extremely early). A few individuals lingered, some record late. The sparrow flight also was poor. Thankfully, winter finches appeared in fair to good numbers; however, the pattern proved irregular.

What the "standard" migrants lacked the rarities had. This was an excellent season for the unexpected, resulting in quality birding in all three states. Especially gratifying was the fact that many rarities lingered, allowing many birders to enjoy them. Headliners for Minnesota were Black-headed and Glaucous-winged Gulls, Ancient Murrelet, Band-tailed Pigeon, Williamson's Sapsucker, Painted Bunting, and Great-tailed Grackle. Michigan's contributions included Black Vulture, Gyrfalcon, White-winged Dove, Rufous Hummingbird, Cave Swallow, Lark Bunting, and Chestnut-collared Longspur.

Wisconsin birders were excited about Pacific Loon, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Mew and Glaucous-winged Gulls, White-winged Dove, and Green-tailed and Spotted Towhees.

And last, this autumn season completes my 24th year as the summer and fall Western Great Lakes editor. I have enjoyed these years getting to "know" many of you, at least as names on state summaries and more so in many instances. However it is time to step down. A big thanks to all of you for your contributions during these years. While I am retiring from all the writing and deadlines, I am not retiring from birding. It is too much fun, so here is hoping we meet in the field. Good birding, everyone!

Abbreviations: M.W.S. (*Muskegon Wastewater System, MI*); P.M.S.G.A. (*Pt. Moullee State Game Area, MI*); S.M.R.R. (*Southeast Michigan Raptor Research [includes Lake Erie Metropark and P.M.S.G.A.]*); U.M.R. (*Upper Mississippi River N.W.R., MN/WI*); WPBO (*Whitefish Pt. Bird Observatory, MI*).

LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

Red-throated Loon migration was poor at WPBO, with only 128 tallied 22 Aug–6 Nov (*fide* AB, JG). In Wisconsin sightings occurred in six counties with birds still present into Dec at Sheboygan (D&MB). Minnesota had one 17–20 Nov on French L., *Rice* (TB). Two **Pacific Loons** were found in Wisconsin. Putz had one at Wisconsin Pt., Superior, 8 Nov and Hutcheson found one on L. Mendota, *Madison/Middleton*, 14 Nov+ (m.ob.). Minnesota also had two, on L. Superior, *St. Louis*, 13 Sep–17 Oct (MH et al) and on L. Calhoun, *Hennepin*, 12–20 Nov (BB). Com. Loons commenced migrating early, with an Aug 3 sighting at WPBO and two on 21 Aug at P.M.S.G.A. (AB). Peaks included 1,153 on L. Winnibigoshish, MN, 15 Oct (PS) and 750 in *Benzie*, MI, 29 Oct (KW, CF). Due to the abnormally mild weather, individuals lingered well into Dec. Horned Grebes appeared early, such as a 14 Aug sighting at WPBO. Individuals also lingered into the winter period. The WPBO staff tallied 16,645 Red-necked Grebes 3 Aug–14 Nov. Tardy were nine at Baraga, MI, 30 Nov (JY). Up to three Eared Grebes were at M.W.S. 8 Aug–7 Oct (m.ob.) while one was at the Metrobeach Metropark, MI, 3–9 Oct (AR). Singles were found at two Wisconsin sites: Racine 4 Nov (KD) and Madison 6–7 Nov (KB). A Western Grebe was observed by Grigg 1 Sep in *Presque Isle*. Putz had two 24 Sep and one 9 Oct at Wisconsin Pt., Superior. Clark's Grebes were present in Minnesota, with two at Thielke

L., *Big Stone*, until 29 Aug and Clear L., *Stevens*, 29 Aug (KE et al). Four hundred Am. White Pelicans were at Horicon N.W.R. 30 Sep (DT), while an injured bird was at Green Bay until 18 Nov (JH). The Great White Heron present during the summer in *Macomb*, MI, lingered until 29 Oct (KT, AR, MM). The Upper Peninsula recorded more Great Egrets than normal, including one 18–20 Sep at Calumet, only the second for the Keweenaw Peninsula (LB).

Snowy Egrets were in Minnesota near Morris 23 Sep (JS) and in *Lac Qui Parle* 1–3 Oct (WM). In Wisconsin, three lingered in *Brown*, the last 2 Oct (JR, DT et al), and one was in Milwaukee 16 Oct (WMu). Little Blue Herons appeared in all three states. Wisconsin had singles in *Winnebago* 4–10 Aug (DK et al) and Horicon N.W.R. 8 Aug (TW), with two near Port Washington 5–7 Aug (JE, TW). In Michigan, one seen during the summer at Thorn L., *Jackson*, lingered until 4 Aug (KT, JC) and an imm. was at Arcadia Marsh, *Manistee*, 2 Aug (ph., BA, KW). Minnesota had an imm. at Rochester 1–6 Aug (CW et al). The **Tricolored Heron** summering at Michigan's Nayanquing Pt. WA was seen 2 and 17 Aug (KT, JSc). Cattle Egrets were scarce Regionwide, with the notable exception of 50 to 60 at Horicon NWR until early Sep (DT et al). Late sightings included 10–12 Nov in *Aitkin*, MN (WN), and 25–28 Nov in *Door*, WI (R&CL). Also tardy was a Black-crowned Night-Heron at Milwaukee 20 Nov (MK). Christensen watched a *Plegadis* ibis flying with several Double-crested Cormorants over L. Puckaway, *Green Lake*, WI, 22 Oct. A **Black Vulture** at WPBO 22–23 Oct (PC, AB, LD, DJ, KM, ph.) provided only the second Michigan record.

WATERFOWL

A real surprise was a family (two ad., eight imm.) of **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** discovered on a Galesville lake, *Trempealeau*, by Spencer about 10 Oct. They were identified a week later, at which time word spread. On 21–22 Oct several birders enjoyed and photographed the group. The birds were extremely wary, moving about the lake when approached closely. Passage of a strong cold front 22 Oct caused nine to migrate; an imm. with an injured wing remained until 27 Oct. This group provided only the third Wisconsin record, the two previous from spring 1998. Gr. White-fronted Geese migrated through Michigan in above normal numbers; the total of 15 included ten late in *Genesee* 26 Nov (TP). Ross's Geese appeared in four Minnesota counties, six in *Big Stone* (KB, BO) and sin-

gles in *Lake of the Woods* 19 Oct (PS), *Chippewa* 4 Nov (AH) and *Kanabec* 22 Nov (AH). In Wisconsin singles were in *Chippewa* 9–21 Oct (JP) and *St. Croix* 13 Nov (LP). A **Brant** was watched by Links at the Whiting Plant, *Monroe*, MI, 10 Nov. Unsettling were 125 Mute Swans in *Muskegon*, MI, 27 Nov (AB). A Tundra Swan 17 Sep in *Macomb*, MI (AR), was early. Tundras peaked 23,000 at UMR 22 Nov (WN). The mild early Dec induced many to linger in all three states; the maximum was 13,000 at UMR.

A Gadwall family at L. Linden Sewage Ponds represented the first breeding record for the Keweenaw Peninsula (LB). Peak waterfowl concentrations for Michigan included 31,205 Mallards 23 Nov at Shiawassee NWR (*fide* JSo) and 3,000 N Shovelers 28 Sept at MWS (JPo). At UMR, a 1 Nov diving duck peak of 561,526 included 422,710 Canvasbacks, 7,000 Ring-necked Ducks and 116,000 scaup (WN). Minnesota had two King Eiders, one shot by a hunter 22 Oct in *Chippewa* and the other at Grand Marais 22 Nov, relocated several miles e. 27 Nov+ (K&MH et al). An eider species was watched off Harrington Beach S.P., WI, 19 Nov (DT). Harlequin Ducks were recorded in excellent numbers, with 13 in Minnesota, 11 in Michigan, and two in Wisconsin. Scoters had a sub-par migration, especially on the Great Lakes. All were recorded on inland lakes in the three states. Surfs and White-wingeds appeared early at WPBO, with birds 29 Aug and 21 Aug, respectively. The Long-tailed Duck period at WPBO extended 30 Sep–15 Nov, with 13,944 tallied. The Presque Isle Lighthouse, MI, had 8,033 passing in 15 hours 24 Oct (JG). Off Point Beach State Forest, *Manitowoc*, WI, 3,000+ were noted 17 Nov (DT). Mid-Aug Bufflehead sightings occurred in MI and WI. The male **Barrow's Goldeneye** returned in early Nov to Virmond Park, *Ozaukee*, WI, for the sixth year. Peak Ruddy Duck concentrations included 1,000–3,000 in each state.

RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

The Broad-winged Hawk flight varied between good to excellent; note Michigan's numbers (Table 1)! Likewise, the Swainson's Hawk flight was excellent, but only in Michigan and Minnesota (Tables 1, 2). Wisconsin had one in *Dodge* 30 Sep (DT). Ferruginous Hawks were found by Svingen in *Polk* 21 Aug and Hertzell in *Big Stone* 25 Sep, both MN. The Golden Eagle flight was excellent. Three Prairie Falcons appeared in Minnesota, 2 Aug in *Clay* (PS) and *St. Louis* (JGr) and the overwintering individual

returning to s. Minneapolis 13 Nov+ (BF et al). Minnesota birders found Yellow Rails at four sites: *St. Louis* 13 Aug (PW), *Jackson* 22 Sept (BBo), *Cook* 6 Oct (K&MH), and *Hennepin* 10 Oct (SC). Three Virginia Rails lingered at Madison into Dec (PA). Very late was a Sora in *Kandiyohi*, MN, 28 Nov (R&JF). On 18 Oct 122,700 Am. Coots were counted at UMR (WN). Sandhill Cranes lingered into Dec in WI and MI; e.g., 1,215 were counted 30 Nov in *Jackson*, MI (RD).

Peak plover numbers included 85 Black-bellieds 21 Oct at Green Bay (JR), 224 Am. Golden 18 Oct in *Jackson*, MN (PC), 50 Semipalmateds 18 Aug at *Big Stone* NWR, MN (BO), and 372 Killdeers 26 Aug in *Dodge*, WI (JF). Piping Plovers were found at WPBO, with 2–3 on 3–4 Sept (JSc et al.); Wisconsin had one 6–18 Sep in *Manitowoc* (TW et al.). Black-necked Stilts that nested at Horicon NWR moved to a site w. of the refuge during Aug. Many birders enjoyed the adults and four of five young as the birds fed in flooded fields, departing at the end of the month. Also in Wisconsin was a record late bird 7 Nov in *Columbia* (AS). Am. Avocets were found in each state, with 13 in MN, seven in MI, and two in WI. Tardy was the Greater Yellowlegs at Shiawassee NWR, MI, 26 Nov (DP). Olson counted 343 Lesser Yellowlegs 18 Aug at Big Stone NWR An injured Solitary Sandpiper was still in *Wayne*, MI, 30 Nov (WP). Willets had a good flight, as evidenced by 20+ in MI, 15+ in WI, and six in MN. Sixty Spotted Sandpipers at Big Stone NWR 12 Aug was a record count (BO). Better-than-average fall numbers of Whimbrels were had, with 10+ in WI, four in MI, and one in MN.

Michigan had an excellent Hudsonian Godwit flight, with 70 to 75 reported from five sites, including a record 63 at M.W.S. 21 Aug (PC). Several were at Green Bay 23 Sep–21 Oct (DT, JH, JR et al). Both states also recorded Marbled Godwits. In Michigan, two were found at the mouth of the Huron R. 3 Aug–11 Oct (SS, SSb, AC et al.); others included one 21 Aug at St. Joseph (JRo), one 22 Aug at Nayanquing Pt. S.W.A. (JB), and two 4 Sept at Alpena (WG). In Wisconsin, two were at Green Bay 16–17 Aug (JR, JH), with one there 1 Oct (DT). The Ruddy Turnstone flight in WI and MI was exceptionally poor. Minnesota had no Red Knots but the other two states had good movements: Michigan had 13 from five sites and Wisconsin had 10+ from three sites. Green Bay had a remarkable Sanderling flight, peaking during the first three weeks of Oct when 500–600 fed on mudflats at the

s. end of the bay (DT, JR). Notable shorebird peaks in Minnesota included 500 Semipalmateds 18 Aug, a record 1,787 Least 2 Aug, and a record 713 Pectorals 18 Aug, all at Big Stone NWR (BO), and 500 Stilts in *Jackson* 27 Sep (m.ob.). Wisconsin recorded a surprising number of W. Sandpipers, with 15 to 20 carefully documented from five sites. In Michigan singles were found at two sites. Late were Pectoral Sandpipers at Elberta, MI, 10 Nov (KW) and in *Dane*, WI, 13 Nov (ME). Michigan had an unusually good Purple Sandpiper flight, with birds at WPBO 23 Oct, their first record (m.ob.); S. Haven 30 Oct (RS); New Buffalo 7 and 22 Nov (RS); Frankfort 11 Nov (KW); P.M.G.S.A. late Nov (DS); up to three at Muskegon 14–29 Nov (CFr, AB, PC et al); and two at Ludington 30 Nov (BA). One was at Harrington Beach S.P., WI, 18–22 Nov (JF et al.). Impressive Dunlin numbers included 300 at Green Bay 21 Oct (JR) increasing to 500 by 1 Nov (DT). In Michigan, 400 to 430 were in *Monroe* 6–7 Nov (AB, KO). Both WI and MI had good Buff-breasted Sandpiper flights, each reporting approx. 30 birds from 10 to 15 sites. In Minnesota the main flight was during late Jul, with fair numbers noted during Aug–Sep from eight sites. Over 300 Short-billed Dowitchers were in *Dodge*, WI, 22 Aug (DT). An Am. Woodcock 20 Nov in *St. Louis* (SD) provided the third-latest Minnesota date. The Red-necked Phalarope flight was generally good; maximum flocks included 20+ in MN and 17 in WI. A **Red Phalarope** discovered by Bontly at the Schlitz Audubon Center in n. *Milwaukee* 19 Oct was, surprisingly, joined by another the next day. They ranged s. along the L. Michigan shore, eventually settling in Milwaukee, where the last lingered to 19

Nov (m.ob.). One was in New Buffalo Harbor, MI, 7 Nov (BM).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS

The jaeger flight was below normal. Highlighting this group were one to three **Pomarine Jaegers** that alternated between Duluth, MN, and Superior, WI, 7–28 Sep. Two were ad., the other a juv. that was photographed. Other juvs. were on Chequamegon Bay, Ashland, WI, 7 Nov (RB, ph) and Mille Lacs L., MN, 22 Nov (PS, AH). Nine Parasitic Jaegers were recorded at MI six sites, five were at two MN sites, and three were at two WI sites. The imm. Parasitic at Grand Marais 14–22 Nov was record late for MN. Michigan had 28 unidentified jaegers, the majority (25) at WPBO 27 Aug–14 Nov, another was at Ashland, WI, 16 Sep (RB). The Laughing Gull that summered at Manitowoc, WI, lingered until 22 Aug (AHO, CS). One was at Green Bay 1 Oct (JR). Small numbers of Franklin's Gulls were found in all three states. Tardy was one in *Sibley*, MN, 29 Nov (KB). Little Gulls were in Michigan at WPBO 4 Sep (JSc et al.), Grand Haven 11 Sep (SM), and Muskegon 5–18 Nov (CF, SM) and two were in *Ottawa* 5 Nov–early Dec (CF et al.). A juv was on Minnesota's L. Winnibigoshish 3–4 Oct (PS, AH). Two **Black-headed Gulls** wandered to the MN side of Big Spirit L 9 Oct–13 Nov (AH). Bonaparte's Gull peaks included 2,239 at Mille Lacs L. 14 Oct (AH, PS), 2,120 at L. Winnibigoshish 3 Oct (PS), and 1,500 at the Whiting Plant 6 Nov (AB). Two **Mew Gulls** were found in Wisconsin, a record-early ad. on a WSO field trip to nw WI in Port Wing Harbor 25 Sep (m ob), and another at Milwaukee 20 Nov (DG) A California Gull spent 6–21 Nov on L Calhoun, MN (PB et al.). Also early was an

Table 1. SMRR—Lake Erie Metropark and Pte. Mouillee SGA, MI—Raptor Totals (fide JSch)

Species	Totals	Comments
Turkey Vulture	31,425	
Osprey	73	
Bald Eagle	109	
N. Harrier	1,159	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	11,571	record high 3,570 on 17 Sep
Cooper's Hawk	395	
N. Goshawk	32	
Red-shouldered Hawk	735	
Broad-winged Hawk	612,457	record high 555,371 on 17 Sep
Swainson's Hawk	14	record high; one 7 Nov—record late
Red-tailed Hawk	5,475	1,307 on 7 Nov
Rough-legged Hawk	93	
Golden Eagle	245	record high 48 on 31 Oct
Am. Kestrel	1,529	
Merlin	44	
Gyrfalcon	1	14 Nov (JSch)
Peregrine Falcon	93	record high 19 on 17 Sep

ad Iceland Gull accompanying the Mew at Port Wing Harbor 25 Sep (m.ob.). Others were at Grand Marais 14 Nov+ (CK, JSt et al) and in *Muskegon*, MI, 25 Nov (PC). Lesser Black-backed Gulls included 19 in Michigan, four in Wisconsin, and two in Minnesota. Minnesota had its fourth **Glaucous-winged Gull**, a second-year bird at Grand Marais 15–16 Nov and 27 Nov–4 Dec (PS et al.). Wisconsin likewise had its fourth, an uncooperative individual in Port Washington Harbor 25 and 27 Nov (SL, TU). Glaucous Gulls were in below-average numbers. Early for s. MN was one 29 Oct at L Calhoun (PB). Single **Black-legged Kittiwakes** were found 21 Oct at Grand Marais (m.ob.) and 21 Nov in *Bayfield*, WI (RB, ph.). Five lucky birders found Minnesota's first living alcid (all others had been found dead or shot by hunters). On 20 Oct, Benz spotted the state's seventh **Ancient Murrelet** actively feeding off Grand Marais. For 70 minutes the group watched as it repeatedly dove and made short flights eastward (DB, PC et al.).

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Minnesota's eighth **Band-tailed Pigeon** was at Hawk Ridge 25 Oct (FN). **White-winged Doves** again made news. Michigan had its fifth when Binford watched one in *Houghton* 17 Aug, and Wisconsin had its second when Cowart saw one flying by Concordia College, *Ozaukee*, 16 Oct. **Eurasian Collared-Doves** continue to be observed in Minnesota. Three in Jasper since early 1999 remained into Dec; four at Fairmont mid-Oct (BK) provided the sixth state record. A successful Barn Owl nest was discovered in *Grant*, WI, late Aug (FL et al., ph.). Unusual for Duluth was an E. Screech-Owl banded by Nicoletti 8 Oct. Snowy Owls were exceptionally scarce, indicative of a poor winter irruption. Also scarce were N. Hawk and

Great Gray Owls. The only N. Hawk Owl was one in Duluth 17–18 Nov (*vide* DBE) and Great Grays were found in three MN and one WI counties. By contrast good numbers of Short-eared Owls were in all three states. Single Boreal Owls were banded at Hawk Ridge 1 Oct and 16 Nov, with one at WPBO 26 Oct. Excellent numbers of N. Saw-whet Owls were banded in each state. Undoubtedly due to the lack of fronts, the Com. Nighthawk flight was poor. A Ruby-throated Hummingbird captured during mid-Oct in *Outagamie*, WI, was rehabilitated and flown to Florida where it eagerly joined its colleagues! A *Selasphorus* hummingbird came to Jacob's feeder in *Crawford*, WI, 20 Oct–11 Nov, when captured. Unfortunately it died during rehabilitation. Michigan also had a *Selasphorus*, at a Lansing feeder 9 Oct (CH), and two male **Rufous Hummingbirds**, at a Lachine feeder 16–17 Aug (R&MS, ph.) and at a Fenton feeder 19 Aug–6 Sep (PC, AB, SH, ST et al., ph.). This fall is the third consecutive the species has been found in Michigan.

Red-bellied Woodpecker sightings increased in n. parts of the Region; e.g., one was at Superior 9 Oct (RJ) and four were in the Upper Peninsula 10 Oct–8 Nov. A male **Williamson's Sapsucker** was observed at Taconite Harbor 16 Oct (AHe, AH, PS), representing Minnesota's third record. Black-backed Woodpecker sightings were up in Michigan and along Minnesota's Lake Shore.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WAXWINGS

A W. Kingbird was at Stony Pt., MN, 19 Sep (JGr). Loggerhead Shrikes were seen during Aug in five MN and two WI counties (both were family groups in the latter state). There was an excellent N. Shrike flight in Wisconsin and Michigan. Up to four White-

eyed Vireos were in *Hillsdale* 9 and 18–19 Sep (JRe, SS) and one was in *Branch* 12 Sep (JG), both MI. The Yellow-throated Vireo at Grass L., MI, 27 Sep was late (DBr). Other tardy vireos included a Philadelphia banded at Hawk Ridge 30 Oct (DGr), the second-latest record for MN, and a Red-eyed at Croftville, MN, 22 Oct (AH, PS). Gray Jay sightings were above normal in Michigan South of normal were Com. Ravens in Michigan's *Lake* 11 Oct (FA, TA) and *Iosco* 28 Nov (DB, JD). Impressive swallow concentrations included 15,000 Trees in *Muskegon* 28 Sep (JPo) and 10,000 at Horicon NWR 30 Sep (DT), plus a record 2,500 Banks in *Traverse*, MN, 1 Aug (PS) Ah, the luck of some birders! Two-thirds of Michigan's Records Committee, an hour before they were to meet, found the state's (and Region's) first **Cave Swallow** at Grand Isle Marina, Grand Haven, 13 Nov (KT, KM, AB, AC, CFr, JRe, DM). Extremely late were Barn Swallows in *Berrien*, MI, 30 Nov+ (KM, JW) and in *Scott*, MN, 14–17 Nov (CM, SC), the latter record late. Tufted Titmice coming to feeders in Rogers City and North Pt. (WG) were n. of their normal Michigan range. Wisconsin and parts of Michigan had an excellent Red-breasted Nuthatch movement. Carolina Wren reports came from 14 Michigan, four Wisconsin, and one Minnesota Counties Late was a House Wren observed by Regan in *Brown*, WI, 11 Nov. Likewise tardy was a Marsh Wren in *Dane*, WI, 20 Nov (PA). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was watched by the Hoffmans at Grand Marais 22 Oct. Tardy gnatcatchers included two at WPBO 8 Nov (*vide* AB, JG) and one in *Ozaukee*, WI, 2 Nov (DT). Minnesota recorded four Mountain Bluebirds. Females were found in *Mille Lacs* 4 Oct (PS), *Kanabec* 14 Oct (AH), and *Dakota* 14–15 Oct (D&BS et al), with a two at Holland 3 Nov (*vide* AH). Extremely early were Townsend's Solitaires in *Washburn*, WI, 23 Sep (JW) and *Hennepin*, MN, 28 Sep (SC); the Wisconsin bird was record early Minnesota had 12 additional birds from three counties. In Michigan, one was in *Iosco* 27 Oct (DM). The thrush migration was absolutely terrible. Exceptionally low numbers of Gray-cheeked and Swainson's were reported, with other thrush numbers almost as dismal (m.ob.). A Varied Thrush 23 Sep in Grand Marais (K&MH) was the third-earliest for MN. Others were in *Anoka* and *Crow Wing* during Nov. N. Mockingbirds found were a pair lingering until 26 Aug in *Door*, WI (R&CL, JR), one in *Cook*, MN, 19 Sep and 21 Nov (D&BM), and one in *Monroe*, MI, 21 Nov (WP).

Table 2. Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve MN Raptor Totals

Species	Totals	Comments
Turkey Vulture	1,912	
Osprey	442	
Bald Eagle	3,155	
N. Harrier	1,373	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	20,449	
Cooper's Hawk	290	
N. Goshawk	558	
Red-shouldered Hawk	5	
Broad-winged Hawk	86,513	
Swainson's Hawk	17	good number
Red-tailed Hawk	9,770	
Rough-legged Hawk	834	
Golden Eagle	121	
Am. Kestrel	2,861	record high
Merlin	277	
Peregrine Falcon	62	



This Barn Owl near Boscobel, Grant, Wisconsin, in late Aug 1999 was part of a successful locale nesting effort. Photograph/Fred Lesher

Early were Am. Pipits in *Bay* 20 Aug (AB) and *Muskegon* 22 Aug (GW, ES), both MI. Truly impressive were pipit numbers tallied in Minnesota: North had 300 in *Cass* 4 Oct and the Millards had 600 in *Otter Tail* 26 Sep, both record counts. Bohemian Waxwings appeared in fair to good numbers in n. parts of the Region, mainly in Nov.

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Present at the beginning of the season was a Tennessee Warbler in *Washington*, WI (BD). Record late was one in Madison 25 Nov (PA). Also record late in Minnesota was a Yellow Warbler in *Ramsey* 28 Nov (TT). Other tardy warblers in Minnesota were a Chestnut-sided banded at Hawk Ridge 19 Oct (Dgr) and a Cape May in *Lake* 6 Nov (KE et al.). In contrast Michigan had early warblers, including an Orange-crowned 30 Aug in *Iosco* (DGa) and a Chestnut-sided 16 Aug in *Wayne* (JC). Yellow-rumped Warblers migrated in unusually low numbers throughout Michigan. Of special note was a female feeding two fledglings at Agate Harbor, MI, 17 Aug (LB), which is late. Unique was Michigan's first **Audubon's Warbler**, observed 21 Sep in *Macomb* (AR). Michigan had **Yellow-throated Warblers** 27 Aug in *Berrien* (DV), 12 Sep in *Branch* (JG), and very late 3 and 5–6 Nov in *Monroe* (AC, AB et al., ph.). However, in Wisconsin an individual at Marking's feeder w. of Onalaska during Nov lingered well into Dec. One successfully wintered at this site two years ago. No fewer than five **Kirtland's Warblers** were in *Marquette* 1–3 Aug for only the second fall Upper Peninsula record (MP); one was at Grayling 1 Aug (KT). A Prairie Warbler at Richfield 12–19 Aug (TT et al.) represented Minnesota's first fall

record. A male was in *Mason*, MI, 15 Aug (BA) and the Smiths had one in *Oconto*, WI, 5 Oct. Record late for Wisconsin was a Palm Warbler found by Bridge (PBr) at Marinette 26 Nov. Early was a Bay-breasted Warbler 1 Aug in *Washington*, WI, (BD) and a Blackpoll Warbler 14 Aug at Agate Harbor (LB). At the other extreme were a Bay-breasted in *Cook* 6 Nov (C&MM), the second-latest date, a Blackpoll in *Rice* 3 Nov (CG), and an Am. Redstart in *Lake* 6 Nov (KE et al.), all MN. Michigan's tardy warblers included a Prothonotary 17 Oct in Warren Woods S.P. (AA), two Ovenbirds 9 Nov in Detroit (KO), and a Com. Yellowthroat 9 Nov at Shiawassee NWR (BG, CSz). Wisconsin also had a late yellowthroat in *Dane* 20 Nov (PA). Seven Hooded Warblers, above normal, were found early Aug to mid-Sep in Michigan. Yellow-breasted Chat sightings in Michigan were from *Presque Isle* 16 Sep (WG) and at Agate Harbor 25 Sep (LB, JM).

Summer Tanagers were sighted in Minnesota at Spring L. Park 20 Aug (AH) and Knife R. 21 Oct (AH, PS). In Wisconsin singles were in Milwaukee 14 Oct (KD) and at Wausau 28–31 Oct (DBel et al.). A male **Western Tanager** was watched at the Heckrodt Wetlands near Menasha, WI, 6 Sep (DT). Wisconsin's 10th **Green-tailed Towhee** came to Nowak's feeder in *Milwaukee* 9–10 Oct (ph. MNo). Representing only Wisconsin's sixth record was a **Spotted Towhee** at Madison 2–6 Nov (PA et al.). In Minnesota single Spotted were in *Lac Qui Parle* 1 Oct (WM) and *Murray* 17–18 Oct (ND). A **Lark Bunting** was seen near Copper Harbor 27 Aug (LB, JY, JRoo). Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were found in five

Minnesota and two Wisconsin counties. Exceptionally late were two Lincoln's Sparrows in Detroit 19 Nov, with one lingering into Dec (KO). Very early was a Dark-eyed Junco 6 Aug at Mosquito Hill Nature Center, *Outagamie*, WI (JA). Up to 50 Smith's Longspurs were in *Cottonwood* 16–25 Oct (CK, JSt), with up to three each in *Marshall*, *Polk*, and *Wilkin*. Michigan's third **Chestnut-collared Longspur** was at WPBO 29–30 Oct (Jru, AB). Truly impressive were 20,000+ Snow Buntings in *Aitkin*, MN, 31 Oct (WN et al.). Far n. were Northern Cardinals at Superior, WI, 17–24 Oct (RJ) and Copper Harbor 29 Nov (SB). A territorial imm. male **Blue Grosbeak** was at the Aasen residence in *LaCrosse*, WI, 4–21 Aug (m.ob.). A male **Painted Bunting** at a feeder in w. *Hennepin* 10–20 Aug represented Minnesota's seventh record (m.ob.). A Rusty Blackbird in Wisconsin's *Portage* 12 Sep was early (MB). Up to 50 **Great-tailed Grackles** were watched during Oct in s. *Jackson*, MN.

Winter finches presented a more optimistic picture than the dismal one last year. All species were found, although numbers were highly variable between and within states. The most abundant was the Com. Redpoll, especially along Minnesota's North Shore where thousands were migrating 22–24 Oct. Hoary Redpolls were found in all three states, with a record early Wisconsin sighting in *Kewaunee* 30 Oct (BH).

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middle western prairie

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Fall 1999 was mild and dry. Strong front-al systems were conspicuously absent in August and September, creating what Alan Bruner graphically referred to as “stagnant” weather. This tranquil atmosphere provided perfect conditions for migrating passerines; there were few fall-outs or waves. Across the Region low precipitation desiccated mud flats and significantly lowered water levels, thereby modifying shorebird migration pat-terns in many areas. The season’s highest temperatures, compared to average, occurred in November, the warmest on record in the western states. Taking advan-tage of optimum atmospheric conditions, most passerines over-flew the Region, pro-ducing, from the birder’s perspective, one of the poorer autumn songbird migrations in recent memory. Balmly November tempera-tures also caused some waterfowl and many gulls to linger north of the Region, pushing migration into winter. As a result, mediocre numbers and precious few high daily counts characterized the season.

In the absence of a sterling flight among the regular migrants, Middlewestern Prairie Region birders compensated by ferreting out an unprecedented number of vagrants. The season’s rarities list included an impres-sive seven first state records, two also firsts for the Region. Unfortunately, formal re-ports from Kentucky and Missouri did not arrive in time to be incorporated into this summary. Information from these states is represented only by personal data submitted by Brainard Palmer-Ball and Frank Renfrow (KY), and Mark Robbins (MO).

Abbreviations: Carl. L. (*Carlyle Lake in Clinton, Fayette, and Bond Counties, IL*); H.B.S.P (*Headlands Beach S.P., OH*); L. Cal. (*Lake Calumet, Chicago*); L. Chau. (*Lake Chatauqua 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 N.W.R., MO*); Spfld. (*Springfield, IL*).

LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

Red-throated Loons appeared in excellent numbers with 67 reported on the Indiana lakefront, 14 in Ohio, 11 in Illinois, four in Iowa, and one in Missouri. Pacific Loons were restricted to w. states; singletons were reported at three inland Illinois locations and two in Iowa. Com. Loons peaked 7 Nov with 520 at Oberlin Beach, OH (VF). Except for Eared Grebes, which were scarce, grebe numbers were near normal. Birders at Miller Beach, IN, were stunned when a close range imm. N. Gannet flew past 6 Nov (†JCd, EH, WS, SB, DG, m.ob.) to provide Indiana’s third record in the past eight years. Once again Am. White Pelicans were plenti-ful across the Region; the peak count was 7,600 at Saylorville, IA, 19 Sep (BEn) and seven wandered e. to Ohio, where the largest count consisted of three near Dayton 28 Nov (KG). Brown Pelicans, accidental only a decade ago, are becoming casual in the Region. This fall singletons were reported at Geist Res., *Hamilton, IN*, 3–14 Aug (†DG, RBu, P & JK m.ob.) and an adult was at Saylorville Res., IA, 22–29 Sep (†JF, †TK, †JD, †CE et al.).

With two exceptions herons and egrets appeared in typical numbers. An exception-al count of 1,200 Great Egrets was made at L. Chau. 21 Aug (RCh), and in Missouri Snowy Egrets and Little Blue Herons were deemed scarce (MRO). Additionally, the 47 Black-crowned Night-Herons at Turning Point I., *Erie, OH*, 29 Nov (RH, SW), were remarkable for the late date. Unidentified *Plegadis* ibis were reported in Indiana, Iowa, and Ohio. Impressive Turkey Vulture con-centrations included 500 at Heuston Woods S.P., OH, 13 Oct (DRu) and 250+ at Newton L., IL, 15 Oct (LH).

WATERFOWL THROUGH CRANES

Although the main goose flight was late, a Gr. White-fronted appeared at Terra L., IA, 22 Aug (BEn) and 3,000 Snow Geese were at



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