

at Hatchie N.W.R., TN (LAZ, VVZ), though not quite so out-of-place, nonetheless provided the 4th summer record for the state and the first for w. Tennessee. Earliest ever in fall for coastal Mississippi were a Black-and-white Warbler on Horn Is. 4 Jul (AD) and a Worm-eating Warbler in *Harrison* 27 Jul (JD). As a rare and local resident in the summer in the Ozarks, up to 4 singing male Chestnut-sided Warblers 9–25 Jun (MMI) in two separate *Newton*, AR, locations were noteworthy. Nine reports of breeding Black-throated Green Warblers were received from Arkansas, including 4 records (4 adults, 2 immatures) from *Polk* and *Montgomery* in the Ouachita Mtns (RHD) and 5 (4 adults, 4 immatures) from *Izard*, *Newton*, *Pope*, *Searcy*, and *Johnson* in Ozark N.F. (LA). With concern mounting over the status of Swainson's Warbler, we merely note the following reports from n. Mississippi and Arkansas, where the species is uncommon: three records of single birds in *Oktibbeha* and *Noxubee*, MS (TS, MS), and another individual in *Grant*, AR, 11 Jun (RHD). Donata Roome, who is studying the species in Louisiana, found 20 nests this breeding season, 13 in the Pearl R. basin. Of this total, young were fledged successfully from at least six nests, six were depredated, and one was abandoned. Latest laying date was 15–16 Jun.

Also declining is Bachman's Sparrow, of which Schiefer dutifully submitted two reports from *Noxubee* and *Chickasaw*, MS, the latter involving 2 singing males 22 Jun in "remnant Black Belt Prairie" habitat. Lark Sparrows, rarely found nesting in w. Tennessee, established the first *Lake* breeding record (JRW, WGC, KL); there were 6 reports, all implying breeding, from Alabama, where the species is "rare but increasing." Late were a single Rose-breasted Grosbeak in *Pontotoc*, MS, 4–5 Jun (MtS, DS) and a White-throated Sparrow in *Webster*, MS, 7 Jun (MS, TS). A pair of Great-tailed Grackles in *Dyer*, TN (JRW, LP), would furnish the first record for the state if accepted.

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prairie provinces



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June was cool throughout the region, ranging from extremely wet in southern Manitoba to severe drought conditions in southern Alberta. July was generally warmer, with some exceptionally hot spells

in Saskatchewan. Cold, wet weather persisted well into July on the Hudson Bay coast, where ground-nest losses were compounded by increased predation due to low lemming numbers. Wet conditions in se. Saskatchewan and s. Manitoba were a mixed blessing. Species apparently benefitting included Pied-billed Grebe, American Bittern, Black Tern, and Sedge Wren. There was some evidence that Yellow Rails were displaced by high water from traditional fens and marshes to more transitory wetlands. Rapid water-level changes coupled with strong winds diminished productivity for some Eared and Western Grebe colonies.

LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

Manitoba's 7th **Yellow-billed Loon** visited Churchill 10–11 Jun (RKn et al.). Up to 10 Great Egrets frequented Whitewater L., MB, from mid-June into Aug (m.ob.), and one summered near Innisfail, AB (RH, BV et al.). A Snowy Egret was at Reed L., SK, July 30 (WH), and Manitoba's first Tricolored Heron since 1993 was at Whitewater L. 14–17 Jun (BdL, AW, RW, TW). Other highlights at Whitewater L. were 5 Cattle Egrets 22 Jul (RP, LV) and several White-faced Ibises, starting with one 29 June and peaking with 7 on 26 Jul (GH, CC et al.). Single Green Herons were noted at Lethbridge, AB, 4–7 Jun (DD, TD et al.) and Ft. Whyte, Winnipeg, 26 July (KC).

Turkey Vulture nesting was confirmed at Medicine Hat, AB (MO); westerly birds were 2 at Chain Lakes P.P., AB, 11 Jun (JR et al.) and one at Calgary 20 Jul (GY et al.). Over 30 late Tundra Swans flew over Regina 11 Jun (TR). Six Cinnamon Teal were recorded in Saskatchewan and 4 in Manitoba; one male-plumaged bird was twice flushed from what proved to be an abandoned Mallard nest at Whitewater L. (AW, TW, RW, CC, GH). Rare in summer was a sub-adult male Surf Scoter at Reed L., SK, 7 Jul (WH). A female and 8 juv. Red-breasted Mergansers near Estuary 8 Jun (WH) add to scattered breeding records since 1979 in sw. Saskatchewan.

A Bald Eagle nest at Oak Hammock Marsh, MB, exemplifies this species' recent range extension out of the boreal forest. There were mixed reports on Swainson's Hawk, with improved productivity in e. Saskatchewan (SH) but not in the southwest of that province (WH). Banding records in Saskatchewan indicated good productivity for Cooper's Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Golden Eagle, and Prairie Falcon, but not for Merlin (SH). Merlin numbers, however, continue to increase in much of the region.

CRANES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Two Sandhill Cranes accompanied one juvenile at Police Outpost P.P., AB, 4 Jun (PR). In Saskatchewan, single Snowy Plovers were observed at Chaplin L. 7 Jul (WH) and Opuntia L. 15 Jul (WR, GT, *fide* GW). Eleven Black-necked Stilts were reported in Saskatchewan: one at Chaplin Marsh 10 June (WH), 4 at Francis L. 11 Jun (SS, MW), and 6, including one on a nest, near Mossbank in both June and July (DS, *fide* TH); one at Whitewater L. 1–14 Jun

(CCb, BdL, CC) was about the 7th for Manitoba.

A godwit concentration at Opuntia L. 15 Jul comprised 450 Hudsonian and 850 Marbled (WR, GT, *fide* GW); 47 Red Knots were tallied at Francis L. 11 Jun (SS, MW). Yet another rarity at Whitewater L. was a very approachable Western Sandpiper 28 Jul (AW, RW). Noteworthy concentrations there included 500 Semipalmated and 500+ White-rumped Sandpipers 11 Jun (DF), and 1000 Stilt Sandpipers and 2000 dowitchers 14 Jul (RW, AW). Reed L. hosted a mixed flock of 1300+ dowitchers, as well as 3200+ Wilson's and 1100+ Red-necked Phalaropes 30 Jul (WH).

A Parasitic Jaeger passed Whitewater L. 23 Jun (RB et al.). Single ad. **Laughing Gulls** at Lac du Bonnet 4 Jun (PT, RZ) and Holland 16 & 25 Jun (AW, BC et al.) were Manitoba's 7th and 8th. Unusual in summer was an ad. Thayer's Gull in Calgary 9 Jul (LB). Two Ross's Gulls spent most of the period at Churchill (m.ob.). Breeding Caspian Terns (14 adults, 10 immatures) at Reed L., SK, 20 Jul (WH) parallel the recent range expansion of this species in s. Alberta.

The (re)appearance of a second Eurasian Collared-Dove at Weyburn, SK, 14 Jul (JW, CB, MB) raised speculation about failed nesting. Rare in summer even at Churchill was a Snowy Owl 5 Jul (KG, RK et al.). Great Gray Owls were unusually prominent (for summer) in se. Manitoba, with at least 10 scattered daylight sightings. An astonishing 43 Long-eared Owl nests were found and 130 nestlings banded in the Saskatoon area (MS, MHo, SH); atypically, there was no corresponding concentration of Northern Harriers and Short-eared Owls. A Lewis's Woodpecker was seen in Calgary 9 Jun (TK). Single Red-headed Woodpeckers were at the fringe of their range in Medicine Hat 5 Jul (BV), Leader, SK, 8 Jun (WH), and Meadow Portage, MB, 20 Jun (PT). Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers seemed more prominent than usual in agricultural Manitoba (KGa, PT), and nesting Red-naped Sapsuckers were unusually far east at Lethbridge, AB, in early July (D&TD).

PASSERINES

Rare in s. Alberta was a Great Crested Flycatcher at Wyndham-Carseland P.P. 7 Jun (JC); rare anywhere in the Region was a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher near Cochrane, AB, 10–11 Jun (ph. DC et al.). A nesting pair of Yellow-throated Vireos was found near Roche Percee 4 Jun (BL), and one was

near Macdowell, SK, 7 Jun (AS, EW). Val Marie in extreme sw. Saskatchewan was an unusual location for a singing Philadelphia Vireo 28 June (LdM). Horned Larks seem to be disappearing rapidly from much of agricultural Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Unusual so far onto the prairies, a pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches nested near Taber, AB, in July (LB). At least 20 Eastern Bluebirds near Roche Percee 3 Jun (BL) was a good count for Saskatchewan.

Single Northern Mockingbirds appeared at Churchill 11 Jun (MWi), Ravenscrag, SK, 3 Jul (WH), and near Neepawa 7–8 Jul (RDe). Extralimital male Chestnut-sided Warblers in Alberta were at Police Outpost P.P. 4 Jun (PR), Fort McMurray 8–13 Jun (EG et al.), and Exshaw 23 Jun (GC et al.). Rarer were a Black-throated Blue Warbler e. of Canmore, AB, 7–12 Jun (RD) and another videotaped at Calgary 6–11 Jun (VS). Eighteen Yellow-breasted Chat records imply a fair population in Saskatchewan, especially in and near the Qu'Appelle Valley (m.ob.); an outlying western pair bred at Okotoks, AB (KL, ph. TK).

Unusual were two Western Tanagers at Weyburn, SK, 14 & 15 Jun (GD, *fide* CB). Alberta's 3rd **Green-tailed Towhee**, and 2nd of the year, graced a farm near Taber 27 Jul (LB). Two Spotted Towhees near Lauder, MB, 22 Jun (AW) were exactly where one occurred last year. Spotted and Eastern Towhees in the Qu'Appelle Valley seem to favor brushy northern slopes and moister, wooded southern slopes, respectively (BL, TH). A male **Field Sparrow** along Bryant Creek w. of Calgary 8 Jun (BW, HG et al., ph. DC, TK) furnished Alberta's first record; just 2 returned to their now-traditional Roche Percee, SK, site (BL et al.). A 7.5-mile roadside survey of the Laurier, SK, Community Pasture turned up a fine assortment of grassland birds, including 161 Baird's Sparrows (CB). Errant longspurs were a male Lapland near Flintstone L., MB, 6 Jun and a male Chestnut-collared near Seven Sisters Falls, MB, 3 Jul (both PT).

Two Northern Cardinals were at Medicine Hat 7 Jul (NM et al.). Hot on the heels of recent Saskatchewan sightings was Alberta's first **Painted Bunting**, a male at a feeder near Bowden, 19–24 Jul (GP, VP et al., † ph. to AB Provincial Museum). A "minor invasion" of Dickcissels was welcomed by Saskatchewan birders: at least 5 frequented an alfalfa field near Grassdale 2–12 Jul (CB, AS et al.) and one was near Coalfields 24 Jul (WH). Burgeoning num-

bers of Brewer's Blackbirds in parts of Saskatchewan and Manitoba contrast with an apparent (and not entirely unwelcome) collapse of Common Grackle numbers in se. Manitoba. At least 21 sightings of Orchard Oriole attest to this species' consolidation in se. Saskatchewan. Rare even in sw. Saskatchewan was a Bullock's Oriole at Eastend 3 Jul (WH).

EXOTICS

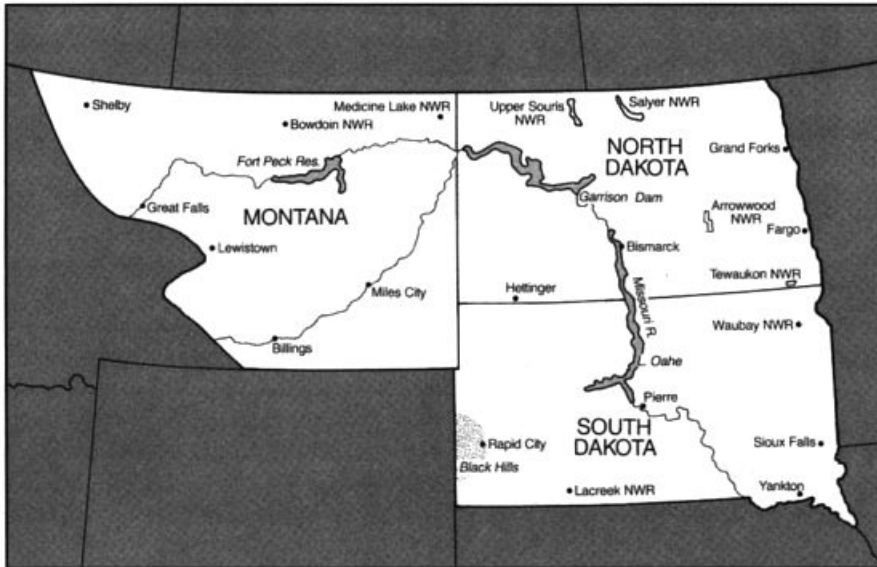
A flamingo at Coldspring L., SK, 5 Jun (MSk) was later identified as Chilean (SS, LW).

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northern great plains



counted at the Hecla, SD, colony (REM). The species was noted from six locations in North Dakota, with a new breeding area documented at L. Alice N.W.R., Ramsey (JB). In Montana, four nests at Medicine L. N.W.R. were a first for the refuge (RS). If accepted, a **Glossy Ibis** at Hecla, SD, 1–15 Jul would be a first for the state (†KB). Turkey Vultures were unusually common in the Bowdoin area in Montana this summer, with a peak of 17 at Nelson Res. 27 Jul (SD).

A **Ross's Goose** in Sully, SD, 3 Jun and 3 Jul provided the first summer record for the state (RDO). A brood of Cinnamon Teal in Grant 2 Jul furnished the 3rd nesting record for North Dakota (REM). A **Long-tailed Duck** in Grand Forks, ND, 19 Jun provided the 2nd summer record for the state (EEF).

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June was wet and cool and July was hot and humid with average precipitation. After years of very high water levels, many areas finally saw some decreases, however, locally massive rains in some parts of eastern North Dakota kept levels up in those areas. For example, 12–14 June saw 17–19 in. (43–48 cm) of rainfall in western Grand Forks County, North Dakota. Waterbirds again had a very successful year, and migrant shorebirds made a strong showing. Numerous significant nesting records and range expansions were documented.

EGRETS THROUGH DUCKS

The explosion in numbers of large waders that began in the early 1990s continued unabated. Among the thousands of nests at Hecla, Brown, SD, were 240 Great Egret nests (DNS). Snowy Egrets were noted at five locations in North Dakota, and nesting was confirmed at Long L. N.W.R., Burleigh, a first for the refuge (KL). Tricolored Herons have been seen in South Dakota four of the last five years. This summer singles were in Clark 24 Jun (JSP, RFS) and Brown 15 Jul (RDO). Thousands of Cattle Egret nests were in the Hecla, SD, colony, and the now locally common species barely merits a mention in the eastern Dakotas.

A White-faced Ibis was unusual in Stanley, SD, 17 Jun (DB), and 30 nests were

KITES THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Subject to review, a **White-tailed Kite** in Stanley, SD, 8 Jul would furnish the 3rd record for the state (†ME). A Sharpshinned Hawk in Stanley 5 Jul was well east of known breeding areas in South Dakota (RDO). Cooper's Hawks, which began nesting commonly in North Dakota cities in the past decade, are now beginning to nest in open farm country in shelter-belts and single-row plantings. Murphy has now documented at least nine nests in this habitat. An adult Northern Goshawk 26 Jul in the Little Rockies, MT, was an unusual summer record (SD, AB).

A Red-shouldered Hawk in Renville, ND, 6 Jul provided the 17th record for the state (BM, BR). Furnishing the 2nd and