

Warblers were at McDonough W.A., Wood, WV and Pike, KY (*vide* BPB) by 18 Apr, and the first 2 reached Hendersonville, NC 19 Apr (WF). In addition to several records from the usual migration stopover and nesting sites, a Prothonotary Warbler was at Allegheny Res., McKean, PA 11-13 May (JF), and one was banded at P.N.R. 7 May (RM, RCL). Other early warblers include Worm-eating in Wood, WV 16 Apr and a Kentucky there 15 Apr (JB); the first Hooded Warbler (about two weeks early) was at P.N.R. 17 Apr (RCL, RM).

Among highlights of the sparrow flight was a Lark Sparrow at Portersville, Butler, PA 17 Apr (WS). Two Clay-colored Sparrows at Pisgah Forest 25-27 Apr (NS, m. ob.) represented just the 2nd *Transylvania*, NC record; one was a rarity at P.I.S.P. 5 May (J&TC), and another was banded at P.N.R. 10 May (RM, RCL). The Fox Sparrow migration was heavy over much of w. Pennsylvania; 61 were banded at P.N.R. 27 Feb—16 Apr (RM, RCL), and 18 were at a feeder near Berlin 16 Mar (JP). A Harris's Sparrow at Weyers Cave, Augusta, VA 5 Apr—5 May (ph. MHo) attracted much birder interest and established a first county record (YL). A Dickcissel that had wintered in Greene Twp., Erie, PA was last seen 11 Mar (JM), one was at Riverport, Hamilton, TN 28 Apr (DJ), and another near New Enterprise, Bedford, PA on 31 May (RM). A Blue Grosbeak was a rare, early find at McDonough W.A., WV 28 Apr (*vide* JE), and singles at Bellfonte 6 May (ML) and at Smicksburg, Indiana, PA 11 May (*vide* MHi) were well out of the usual range. The sole report of Western Meadowlark came from Belleville, Mifflin, PA where one was seen over a two-week period beginning 11 May (*vide* GG).

Following a heavy winter invasion, up to 6 Purple Finches remained at a Blairsville, GA feeder through 14 Apr (DF), and several were seen through late Apr in Hamilton, TN (KAC); in Pennsylvania, good numbers passed over the Tussey Mt. hawkwatch, including 130 on 17 Apr (SM). Late reports of Red Crossbill included one at a feeder in Warren, PA 8 Apr (JF), and one near Meadville, PA 30 May (KM). In Virginia, single White-winged Crossbills appeared at Staunton 21-23 Mar and at Stuarts Draft 10 Apr (YL); a male was at a feeder in Canfield, OH 22 Apr (NB), and a female frequented a Frostburg, MD feeder until 1 May (*vide* RKi). Up to 20 White-winged Crossbills that had wintered at Lake City, Erie, PA remained through 23 Apr (JM). A Common Redpoll was at Rew, McKean, PA 8 Apr (JF), and a few remained in Erie, PA through 14 Apr (m. ob.). A small flock of Pine Siskins visited a feeder at Blairsville, GA

through at least 10 May (DF), and one was banded at P.N.R. 17 May (RM, RCL). The American Goldfinch migration was particularly heavy in PA (m. ob.), with a record 828 birds banded at P.N.R. during the season (RM, RCL). Late Evening Grosbeaks included one at Johnstown, PA 9 May (KG) and another at Pine Grove Furnace S.P., Cumberland, PA May 10 (RKO).

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# Western Great Lakes



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Strays from the West dominated a long list of casual and accidental species.

**E**arly March was colder than it had been all winter. A wide variety of migrants arrived earlier than usual as temperatures soared into the 80 degrees Fahrenheit during mid-April. Early migrants were soon shocked into reality by a cold spell that persisted into late May.

**Abbreviations:** M.C.G.I. (Milwaukee Coast Guard Impoundment, WI); Mud L. (*Traverse*, MN); p. a. (pending acceptance); Pte Mouillee (Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe, MI); Tawas Pt. (Tawas Point State Park, Iosco, MI); W.P.B.O. (Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, Chippewa, MI).

## LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

The total of 398 Red-throated Loons 24 Apr—29 May at W.P.B.O. was similar to last spring's, but reports declined in Wisconsin (three counties along L. Michigan). Exceptional away from L. Superior, Minnesota had single Red-throated in *Olmsted* 3 May (JPr et al.) and *Hennepin* 20–26 May (WCM et al.). Minnesota has very few spring records of Pacific Loon; found during the North American Migration Count was one at L. Shetek, *Murray* 11–17 May (AXH, ph. PHS, m. ob.). Only 3579 Common Loons were counted at W.P.B.O. through the end of May.

An impressive total of 3078 Red-necked Grebes passed W.P.B.O., including 1762 on 5 May. Eared Grebes appeared in five Michigan locations, including *Baraga* 11 May (LCB, JMu), *Pte. Mouillee* 19 May (AMB), and *Mackinac* 27 May (DL). Reports were also up in Wisconsin (seven counties). Michigan's first spring Western Grebe in more than a decade lingered at South Haven, *Van Buren* Feb—5 Apr (ATC, CF, JG). Wisconsin had 3 Westerns at L. Wissota, *Eau Claire* 30 Apr (JPo) and singles in *Burnett* (AP), *Portage* (GJ), and *Racine* (EH). Almost routine in Minnesota were Clark's Grebes at Thielke L., *Big Stone* 27 Apr+ (m. ob.) and Agassiz N.W.R., *Marshall* 29 May (KJB).

Snowy Egrets were at five Michigan, four Wisconsin, and eight Minnesota locations. Three Little Blue Herons in Michigan equaled the recent average, but singles in *Manitowoc*, WI 29 May (CS) and *Hennepin*, MN 29 May (RDE) underscored its scarcity in those states. Also scarce in recent years, low numbers of Cattle Egrets were in two Michigan, five Wisconsin, and thirteen Minnesota counties. The Region's only Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was an ad. in *Washington*, MN 19 Apr (*fide* AXH). An unidentified *Plegadis* ibis in *Mackinac* (vt. JMi) was the only Michigan report. Providing Wisconsin's 10th record was a White-faced Ibis in *Dunn* 5–8 May (JPo). Recently annual in s. Minnesota, an influx of White-faced Ibis included 3+ at East Landfill Res., *Olmsted* 17 Apr (JWH et al.), singles in *Waseca* 23–29 Apr (RBJ et al.) and *Big Stone* 5 May (m. ob.), and 5 in *Murray* 7 May+ (JJS et al.) A **Black Vulture** loitered at W.P.B.O. 5–9 Apr (RP, DL).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH RAILS

Greater White-fronted Geese were in six Michigan locations and peaked in Wisconsin at 315 in *Columbia* 13 May (DT). Veteran observers were astonished by numbers of geese in w. Minnesota, e.g. 8000+ Greater White-fronteds in three sw. counties 29 Mar

(RBJ et al.) and 10,585 in *Big Stone* 3 Apr (KJB). Bardon counted 54,000 Snow Geese in *Jackson/Nobles* 22 Mar, and 100,000+ moved through Lac Qui Parle W.M.A. 4–6 Apr (DTr). Minnesota reported >1000 Ross's Geese, including 163 in *Lyon* 10 Apr (KJB). This bonanza of Ross's spilled over into Wisconsin (seven counties) and Michigan, where single Ross's occurred at Pte. Mouillee 16 Mar (p.a., AMB) and *Houghton* 29–30 May (p.a., LCB, JMu). Michigan had almost all of the Region's Brant, including one at St. Ignace, *Mackinac* 20 May (ph. SH) and 6 in *Alpena* 28 May (p.a., WNG). Minnesota's first Brant since 28 Mar 1991 was at Coon Creek W.M.A., *Lyon* 10 Apr (KJB); like most of that state's records, this bird was identified as the Atlantic race (*Branta bernicla hrota*).

A male Cinnamon Teal in *Trempeleau* 8–12 Apr (ph. FZL, m. ob.) furnished Wisconsin's 5th spring record. Normally very rare in Minnesota, single male Cinnamon Teal were in *Hennepin* 28 Apr—7 May (JEP, m. ob.), *Renville* 13 May (PME, WCM, DDM), and *Polk* 26–27 May (AXH, PHS et al.). Underscoring the need to consider hybridization, apparent Blue-winged x Cinnamon Teal were at Meade W.M.A., WI 29 May (PL) and at 4 Minnesota locations: *Becker* (ph. FJN), *Crow Wing* (ph. BM), *Goodhue* (AXH, ph. PHS), and *Traverse* (KJB). Most impressive was the count of 15,000+ Greater Scaup at Platte Pt., *Benzie*, MI 12 Mar (KW), while 5400 at Duluth 17 Apr (PHS) provided a record high for Minnesota. Providing Minnesota's 2nd spring record and 15th overall was a hen King Eider at Duluth 7–20 May (KJB, m. ob.). Harlequin Ducks were in all three states, including 4 overwintering in *Milwaukee*, WI through 12 Apr (m. ob.). The only scoters away from the Great Lakes were 4 White-wingeds in *Portage*, WI 8 May (MBE).

Casual in Michigan, a Mississippi Kite graced Rouge River Bird Observatory 9–10 May (p.a., RS). Recently an annual migrant in Minnesota, ad. Mississippi Kites were in *Hennepin* 26 Apr (AXH, SKS) and *Otter Tail* 27 May (SPM). Furnishing only the 2nd *St. Louis*, MN record was the ad. light-morph Ferruginous Hawk at West Skyline Hawkwatch 24 Apr (ph. FJN, DCa) that drifted into *Douglas*, WI. Another Ferruginous was in *Clay*, MN 25 Apr (KJB). Establishing a first county record was the Prairie Falcon in *Murray*, MN 30 Mar (PEJ, DFN). Migrant Yellow Rails were unexpected at Pt. LaBarbe, *Mackinac*, MI 20 May (DL) and Carlos Avery W.M.A., *Anoka*, MN 3 May (KJB). Potentially a first Wisconsin record was the **Black Rail** heard at M.C.G.I. 4 May (JI), then heard again

and briefly seen 5 May (MK). Providing the first Michigan record since 1998 was a King Rail at Crosswinds Marsh, *Wayne* 12–21 May (WGP, PCC, m. ob.).

## SHOREBIRDS

A pair of Piping Plovers nested at Tawas Pt (GN) for the first time since 1963, and another pair nested in *Alpena* (WNG); Michigan's only reported migrant was at W.P.B.O. 30 May. Wisconsin had singles in *Douglas* (DRB), *Racine* (EH), and *Marinette* (J&KS, TCW), the latter at last year's breeding site. Minnesota reported its best Piping Plover migration in years: one or 2 in *Clay*, *Grant*, *Murray*, *St. Louis*, and *Swift*, plus up to 3 at L. Byllesby, *Dakota* 6–10 May (CRG, FTM). American Avocets increased in all three states. Michigan had five reports, including 18 at Pte. Mouillee 13 Apr (AMB, BCM). Wisconsin welcomed them in seven counties, including 51 in *Manitowoc* 27 Apr (CS). Thirty in *Freeborn* 18 Apr (WJP) was the largest flock among a statewide total of 166+ avocets in 29 Minnesota counties.

At Mud L., yellowlegs peaked at 390 Greater and 1560 Lessers 30 Apr (BEO). Willets showed well in all three states. Michigan's nine reports were the most since 1997, Wisconsin counts peaked at 41 in *Manitowoc* 28 Apr (CS) and 53 in *Milwaukee* 3 May (DG), and a total of 177+ was scattered across 34 Minnesota counties. Providing first county records in Minnesota were one Whimbrel in *Polk* 26 May (AXH, PHS) and 3 in *Kandiyohi* 31 May (RSF). Michigan and Wisconsin reported average numbers of Hudsonian Godwits, but well above average was the count of 721 in 29 Minnesota counties, including 168 at Mud L. 13 May (KJB). An overwintering Ruddy Turnstone in *Alpena*, MI was "agitated, calling from a white spruce tree, surrounded by equally agitated Common Redpolls" 5 Mar (JSO). Ruddy Turnstones peaked at 300 in *Manitowoc*, WI 27 May (CS). Five Red Knots at W.P.B.O. and up to 14 at Tawas Pt. (GN et al.) was slightly below the Michigan average, but Wisconsin and Minnesota each had knots in seven counties.

Providing only the 4th acceptable Minnesota record since its status review in 1988, 2 Western Sandpipers were carefully studied at Mud L. 2 May (KJB). High counts at Mud L. included 787 White-rumped Sandpipers 29 May and 256 Baird's Sandpipers 2 May (KJB). Amazing was 7566 Dunlin at Pte. Mouillee 11 May (AMB). Furnishing Michigan's first record since 1998 was the **Curlew Sandpiper** at Shiawassee

N W.R., *Saginaw* 30 May (p. a., DP). Photographed in Michigan were Ruffs in *Washtenaw* 3–6 May (JBL, MJ, HP, ATC) and *Genesee* 11–12 May (p. a., JRa, JAB et al.); another was in *Dakota*, MN 23 Apr (TAT et al.). Noteworthy were 23 Long-billed Dowitchers at Pte. Mouillee 11 May (AMB) and a record-high 203 at Mud L. 8 May (KJB). Encouraging was the tally of 340 Wilson's Phalaropes at Warroad, *Roseau*, MN 26 May (AXH, PHS).

### JAEGERS THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS

One Parasitic Jaeger was at W.P.B.O. 11 May and 2 there 26 May. The Region's only Laughing Gull was at M.C.G.I. 11 May (TCW). Michigan reported 5 Little Gulls, including one in *Alpena* 12 Apr (CR). Wisconsin had 2 on L. Michigan, plus one in *Chippewa* 19 May (JPo). No Little Gulls were at Duluth, but the ad. in *Carlton*, MN 18 May (MSS, GL) was a county first. Establishing Wisconsin's 3rd spring record was a **Mew Gull** in *Racine* 30 Mar—4 Apr (RHu, KD). Bardon cornered the Minnesota market on California Gulls with 2 ads. in *Clay* 25 Apr and a fourth-year bird in *Isanti* 3 May. Among the late larvae at W.P.B.O. were a Thayer's Gull 31 May and an Iceland Gull 16 May. Each state had 4–6 Lesser Black-backed Gulls; most unusual was a second-year bird at Mud L. 2–4 May (KJB, PCC). Providing the 6th Minnesota record within five years was an ad. Arctic Tern at Duluth 27 May (PHS).

Single Eurasian Collared-Doves persisted in *Oconto* and *Ozaukee*, WI, while a pair returned to last year's nesting location in *Houston*, MN. Newly discovered was one in *Grant*, MN 13 Apr+ (SPM). Photographed while furnishing the 6th and 7th Michigan records were single **White-winged Doves** in *Clinton* 10 Mar (AMB) and *Houghton* 12–17 May (WS, JK, JMu, RH). A Snowy Owl lingered in *Ashland*, WI through 3 May (DV), and the last of 134+ in Minnesota from the fall/winter invasion was in Duluth 17–18 May (AXH, PHS). Faithfully attending an unoccupied badger hole and furnishing Minnesota's first documented record since 1997 was a Burrowing Owl in *Murray* 6 May+ (m. ob.). Record-early was a Ruby-throated Hummingbird in *Dane*, WI 12 Apr (SM).

### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH THRASHERS

Still casual in Minnesota, a Say's Phoebe was in *Clearwater* 29 Apr (TD). Not relocated was a male **Vermilion Flycatcher** in *Benzie*, MI 25 May (p. a., MP). Six Western Kingbirds in five Michigan counties doubled the 1998 spring maximum. Ephemeral were single Scissor-

tailed Flycatchers in *Keweenaw*, MI 30 May (LCB, JMu), *Ozaukee*, WI 14 Apr (DD), and *Cook*, MN 25 May (C&JT). Small numbers of Loggerhead Shrikes were in three Michigan, three Wisconsin, and fourteen Minnesota counties. White-eyed Vireos were in five Michigan and six Wisconsin locations; officially casual but recently annual in Minnesota, single White-eyes were in *Olmsted* 14 May (JPr et al.) and *Hennepin* 15 May (JEP).

A Black-billed Magpie at W.P.B.O. 29 Mar was Michigan's first since 1995. Casual and ephemeral was the Rock Wren at Moorhead, *Clay*, MN 21 Apr (DDW). Mountain Bluebirds in *Polk* 16 May (JV) and *Manitowoc* 23 May (CG) supplied the 19th and 20th Wisconsin records (p. a.). Wisconsin's only Townsend's Solitaire was in *Sauk* (AH), but 5 more in Minnesota, including a late migrant at Duluth 13 May (ph. FJN, DCa), brought that state's total since Sep 2001 to 32 records of 34 birds. A Varied Thrush in *Marquette*, MI mid-Mar—5 Apr (BCM) and one in *Hennepin*, MN 9 Mar (DO) were the only "new" reports. Providing the 4th Michigan record but the 3rd since Sep 2001 was a **Sage Thrasher** in *Marquette* 23 Mar—5 Apr (AMB, SS et al.).

### WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

**SA** Warblers arriving in Minnesota during the first half of May encountered predominantly north winds, cold temperatures, and delayed leaf-out. These phenomena kept birds on or near the ground. Hordes were seen along roadways and streams, and around lakes and ponds, apparently searching for insects and other food sources. Few communicated the exuberance of spring migration through birdsong. Unprecedented counts included 600–800 Tennessee Warblers along the shoreline of L. Carlos, *Douglas* 15 May (SPM, DKM). Bardon circumvented Mille Lacs L. 15 May and tallied record high counts for Nashville (488), Northern Parula (56), and Yellow (492) Warblers. Also record-high were counts of 43 Black-and-white Warblers 6 May, 51 Ovenbirds 10 May, and 64 Northern Waterthrushes 10 May, all in *Anoka* (KJB). Boevers found 20+ warbler species for six consecutive days in *Rice*, including 25 species 17 & 18 May (TFB). Peak variety was 26 warbler species in *Goodhue* 11 May (KJB), near Mankato 18 May (CRM), *Meeker* 18 May (DMF), *Anoka* 23 May (KJB), and nw. Minnesota 26 May (AXH, PHS).

Record or near-record early warblers included a Blue-winged in *Washtenaw*, MI 16 Apr (MJ), a Tennessee in *Sauk*, WI 23 Apr (AH), Nashvilles at Tawas Pt. 17 Apr (GN) and *Dane*, WI 19 Apr (CH), 10 Yellow Warblers in *Hillsdale*, MI 18 Apr (JR), and a Cape May in *Berrien*, MI 17 Apr (DS). Michigan's overwintering **Black-throated Gray Warbler** in *St Joseph* was last seen 13 Apr (m. ob.). Record-early by one week was the Blackburnian Warbler in *Dane*, WI 18 Apr (NW). Also early was a Yellow-throated Warbler in *Berrien*, MI 9 Apr+ (JTW). Out of range were Yellow-throated Warblers at Copper Harbor, *Keweenaw*, MI 13 May (JP), *Door*, WI 14 May (JS), and *Portage*, WI 16 May (MBe). Seven Prairie Warblers were in three Michigan locations, but one in *Waukesha* 9 May (JM) was the only Wisconsin occurrence. Almost record-early was the Cerulean Warbler in *Rock*, WI 25 Apr (TK). Six Kentucky Warblers in five Michigan locations was an average count, but the same number was above average in Minnesota. Early was the Hooded Warbler in *Berrien*, MI 20 Apr (KM); inexplicably lost was one at Bemidji, *Beltrami*, MN 24 May (TJB). Also out of range was a Yellow-breasted Chat at Tawas Pt. 14–19 May (TN, LC).

All states reported an influx of tanagers. Quadruple the recent spring average was the tally of 13 Summer Tanagers in Michigan, including 4 in *Berrien*. Off the chart were Summer Tanagers in 10 Wisconsin counties, including 3 in *Racine* (EH), 3 in *Dane* (EHa), 3 in *Ozaukee* (JF), and 2 in Milwaukee (JI). Minnesota modestly noted 5 Summer Tanagers, but countered with 12+ Westerns—the most since the invasion of spring 1995. Unfortunately, only 7 were reported with details, but all were reportedly males. Wisconsin chimed in with one in *Pierce* 4–10 May (AL). In Michigan, where this species remains casual, a Western Tanager was photographed in *Kalamazoo* 28 Apr—5 May (RS, BCM, m. ob.) and a male was in *Houghton* 22 May (p. a., DR, RH). Potentially a 6th Michigan record and the first since 1988 was a **Green-tailed Towhee** in *Benzie* 6 Apr (p. a., DJ et al.). Apparently absent from sw. Minnesota, the only Spotted Towhee was in *Steele* 13 May (ph. PHS). Noteworthy for Michigan were single Lark Sparrows in *Houghton* 5–7 May (p. a., LCB, JMu) and *Ontonagon* 12 May (ph. MM). Furnishing the 6th Minnesota record was an ad. **Black-throated Sparrow** at Moorhead, *Clay* 16–17 Apr (RHO, ph. DDM, m. ob.) Rarely detected as migrants in Minnesota, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were in *Hennepin* (PEB), *Jackson* (BRB), and *Murray*

(CRG et al.). Unexpected were 2–3 Smith's Longspurs at Felton Prairie, *Clay*, MN 15 Apr (ph. DAC) and 2 Chestnut-collared Longspurs in *Renville*, MN 13 Apr (RPR).

Another entry on Minnesota's long list of v. rarities was the male Black-headed Grosbeak at Moorhead, *Clay* 24–26 May (RHO, ph. DAC, m. ob.). Extralimital Blue Grosbeaks included a first-year male at Fernwood, *Berrien*, MI 22 May (p. a., WJ) and 2 reports in *Ozaukee*, WI (p. a., SC). Potentially a 5th Wisconsin record was the Lazuli Bunting in *Milwaukee* 26 Apr (p. a., SSm). Unprecedented was the total of 7 Lazuli Buntings in Minnesota; well-documented were singles in *Scott* 16 May (B&SF), *Kandiyohi* 23 May (G&EB, ph. DAC), *Otter Tail* 26 May (E&JE et al.), and *Crow Wing* 30–31 May (ph. J&SB). All three states recorded **Painted Bunting!** Michigan had a female in *Presque Isle* late Feb–21 Mar (WNG) and a male in *Houghton* 12–16 May (BF, LCB, JMu), both attractively photographed. Providing 9th and 10th state records, respectively, were male Painted Buntings in *Iron*, WI 18–20 May (JBa, m. ob.) and *Aitkin*, MN 24–29 Apr (BBr, ph. JPR, m. ob.). Less attractive in Minnesota were 3 male and 4 female Great-tailed Grackles at Grovers L., *Jackson* 6 May+ (PHS et al.) and single males in 3 more counties. Rare for W.P.B.O. was an Orchard Oriole 22 May. Incredible was the appearance of 2 male **Scott's Orioles** in Minnesota. News about one in *Wright* 20 Mar–23 Apr (ph. BAL) did not reach the birding community until several weeks after its departure, but the other was much appreciated at *Oronoco*, *Olmsted* 17–20 Apr (GE, ph. AXH, m. ob.). Minnesota's only previous record was an imm. male at *Duluth* 23 May+ 1974 (*Loon* 47: 22–24, 48: 34).

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# Midwestern Prairie



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**S**pring weather of 2002 was generally cool and wet. March temperatures in Chicago averaged some three degrees Fahrenheit below normal. April readings were similarly low, with the exception of an unprecedented warm spell at mid-month, which produced record-high temperatures across the Region. The balance of April and most of May was also cool and damp;

indeed northwestern Indiana experienced a killing frost on 21 May.

Most contributors assessed the spring flight in positive but qualified terms—that is, though the migration was agreeable, superlatives were rare. The mid-April 80+ degree temperatures stimulated many migrant passerines to press northward ahead of schedule. As a result, scores of early arrival dates were established across the Region. Seasonal highlights included a Garganey in Ohio (discovered by field tripping members of the Indiana Audubon Society) and an alternate-plumaged Curlew Sandpiper in Iowa.