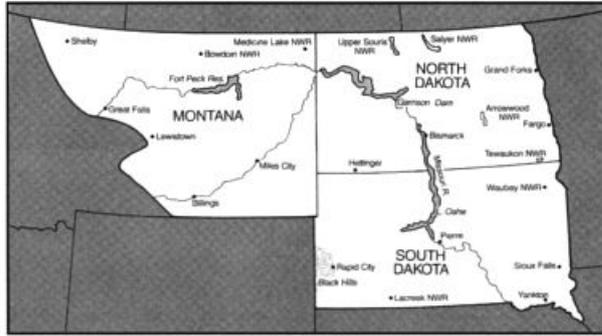


Northern Great Plains



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This was undoubtedly one of the strangest springs in recent memory. After the above-average warmth of February, the real winter finally arrived. The average temperature for the March–April period was the coldest in recorded history at the Glasgow, Montana weather station. In Grand Forks, North Dakota, the temperature was seven degrees Fahrenheit below average for the season. Much of the Region saw snow several times in May. Continuing the trend of last fall and winter, precipitation levels were very low, and many wetlands are now dry. Most trees were just getting leaves at the end of May in North Dakota and Montana.

The bulk of migration was one to two weeks late, and birds appeared to be feeling the stress of the cold, leafless conditions. Many eastern migrants, especially warblers, were displaced far to the west. Tennessee, Magnolia, Cape May, and Bay-breasted Warblers were the most noticeable. Major fallouts occurred 11, 17, & 22–25 May. Carlson recorded 43 species in his yard in Ft. Peck, Montana on 17 May. Many species were literally grounded 22–25 May. Hundreds of warblers were feeding on the streets of Fargo, and the same conditions were reported from many other areas. Several vagrant gulls were reported this spring, a phenomenon usually reserved for fall and winter.

Abbreviations: N. G. P. (National Game Preserve). Species marked a “p. a.” are subject to review by the appropriate state records committee.

LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

Accidental in spring in Montana, a **Red-throated Loon** was at Ft. Peck 14 Apr (CC, p. a.). Horned Grebes peaked at 1900 at the Grand Forks Lagoons, ND 4 May (EEF). A Red-necked Grebe in *Custer*, SD 28 Apr was unusually far

west (KH). Establishing a new peak for North Dakota, 42 Clark’s Grebes were in *Kidder* 4 May (HCT, CDE). If accepted, a **Glossy Ibis** 20 May in *Brown*, SD would provide the 2nd record for the state (DAT, p. a.). A White-faced Ibis 14 Apr at Long L. NWR furnished the earliest spring record for North Dakota (PCV).

Two **Mute Swans** in *Pennington* 28 Apr—31 May furnished the 3rd report for South Dakota (JLB, TJ, p. a.). Among the 5000 Tundra Swans at Freezeout L., MT 31 Mar were 2 **Bewick’s Swans** (MS). Casual in North Dakota, 2 Trumpeter Swans were at the Grand Forks Lagoons 17 May. One individual sported a band from Crex Meadows, Wisconsin (EEF, DOL, ph., p. a.).

An estimated 250,000 Northern Pintails at Freezeout L., MT 28 Mar must have been an impressive sight (MS). The 14th report for North Dakota, a Eurasian Wigeon was photographed 25 Apr at the Grand Forks Lagoons (DOL, p. a.). An apparent Redhead x Ring-necked Duck hybrid was noted at Garrison Dam, ND 7 Apr (DNS). Casual in spring, Surf Scoters were reported 13 May in *Charles Mix*, SD (DS, p. a.) and 27 May at Fargo, ND (KRC, p. a.). A White-winged Scoter was in *Sheridan*, ND 4 May (KK). Providing the 14th report for North Dakota, a Barrow’s Goldeneye was photographed at Garrison Dam 31 Mar—13 Apr (REM, p. a.).

A moribund **Mississippi Kite** picked up in Jordan, MT 9 May died the following night. This will provide the first record for Montana, leaving North Dakota as the only state in the Region without a record of this species. Seemingly on the increase, Red-shouldered Hawk reports in the Dakotas this spring included a single at Bismarck, ND 19 Apr (PMK, p. a.), and a calling bird 18 May over Grafton, ND (DOL, p. a.). In South Dakota, an individual was in *Marshall* 18 May (DS, JC, p. a.). A Gyrfalcon was very late in *Stanley*, SD 29 Apr (DB).

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH GNATCATCHERS

If accepted, a Snowy Plover at Dewald Slough, *Kidder*, ND 26 May would furnish the 6th record for the state (KE, p. a.). Very unusual was a high count of 1250 Ruddy Turnstones at Minnewaukan, ND 31 May (REM).

The 2nd report for South Dakota, a **Laughing Gull** was in *Stanley* 27 Apr (RDO, p. a.). Two **ad Little Gulls** in *Sargent* 19 May furnished the 7th report for North Dakota and the first for the spring season (DNS, REM, p. a.). A **Mew Gull** in *Stanley*, SD 21 Apr would provide the 4th record for that state if accepted (KM, p. a.). **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** made an unprecedented showing in the Dakotas this spring. Providing the 7th and 8th reports for North Dakota and the first for spring, singles were in Dickinson 15–16 Apr and in Minot 19–20 Apr (JPL, p. a.). In South Dakota, individuals were noted in *Hughes* 1 Apr (KM, RDO, p. a.) and in *Kingsbury* 6 Apr (JSP, p. a.). These birds provided the 4th and 5th reports for the state.

Eurasian Collared-Doves continued at six locations in North Dakota and five counties in South Dakota, including a new record in *Todd* (DS, JC, p. a.). The 3rd report for South Dakota, a **White-winged Dove** was noted in *Lake* 3 May (KB, p. a.) Casual in Montana, a Barn Owl was at Ft. Peck 13 May (NP, p. a.). Last winter’s Snowy Owl invasion concluded with peaks of 20 in *Lyman*, SD 31 Mar (CEM) and in *Grand Forks*, ND 4 Apr (EEF). The last noted were 2 in *Grand Forks* 30 Apr (EEF). A calling **Boreal Owl** 12 May in *Lawrence*, SD furnished the 5th report for the state and the 2nd for the spring season (DGP, p. a.).

A Chuck-will’s-widow returned to the *Stanley*, SD breeding area for the 3rd consecutive year (RDO). Intriguing were reports of **Broad-tailed Hummingbirds** at two locations in *Custer*, SD 25 & 27 May (MR, p. a.). There are no breeding records for the state in recent decades. Double-digit counts of Black-backed Woodpeckers were noted on some transects in the Jasper Burn of South Dakota’s Black Hills this spring (*vide* MR). A calling Pileated Woodpecker at Stump L., ND 14 Apr provided a first record for *Nelson* (CDE, HCT, JPL).

A Dusky Flycatcher was n. of normal haunts in *Harding*, SD 17 May (JC). Several vireo species appeared w. of their usual migration routes. A Yellow-throated Vireo was noted 12 May in *Pennington*, SD (TJ, p. a.). Casual in Montana, a Blue-headed Vireo was at Ft. Peck 23 May (JC, p. a.). A Philadelphia Vireo was in *Meade*, SD 10 May (APB, p. a.). Providing about the 7th and 8th reports for Montana, Philadelphia Vireos were at Ft. Peck 22–33 May and near Loma 23 May (JC, p. a.).

Tree Swallows peaked at 3000 in *Cass*, ND 11 May, a new high count for spring (REM). A

Violet-green Swallow was unusually far e. in *Tripp*, SD 6 May (REP). A Brown Creeper gathering nest material at Sully's Hill N.G.P. 25 May provided the first evidence of nesting for that species in North Dakota (JPL, CDE). Blue-gray Gnatcatcher sightings continued to increase in the Dakotas with three reports nw. of normal migration areas. Out west, a single noted in *Custer*, SD 26 May was in an area where individuals have been seen in recent years (CN, p. a.).

WARBLERS

A massive fallout of Tennessee Warblers in North Dakota and e. Montana began 22 May, with birds remaining to the 25th in some areas. A few examples were the hundreds noted n. of Glasgow, MT 22 May (JC) and 200 estimated at Ft Benton, MT 23 May (JS). A peak of >650 was tallied at Fargo, ND 25 May, with most feeding on the streets (REM, KRC). Hundreds of Yellow Warblers were feeding on the ground in McElroy Park in Jamestown, ND 15 May (LDI). A good peak of 25 Magnolia Warblers was tallied in Lisbon, ND 21 May (BS), and at least four sightings were reported from e. Montana 22-23 May. Well to the w. for South Dakota, a single Magnolia was in *Pennington* 21 May (TJ).

Casual in Montana, Cape May Warblers were noted in *Phillips* 22 May (SD, p. a.), at Ft. Benton 23 May (JS, p. a.), and at Bowdon N.W.R. 23 May (SD, p. a.). Unusually far w. in South Dakota was a single Cape May in *Harding* 27 May (KM, CEM). Three Black-throated Blue Warbler reports in North Dakota were above average, with 2 out west at *Hettinger* 19-20 May (DAG, CG). Four Audubon's Warbler reports from North Dakota were well above average. A Townsend's Warbler documented at *McCluskey*, ND 20 May furnished the 7th report for the state (GRO, p. a.). A possible Townsend's x Hermit Warbler hybrid was documented in *Grand Forks* 15 May (EEF, p. a.). Another westward wandering warbler was a Blackburnian in *Meade*, SD 29 May (REP). Casual in Montana, Black-throated Green Warblers were seen n. of Glasgow (JC, p. a.) and in *Phillips* (SD, p. a.) 22 May, and a single was at *Loma* 23 May (JC, p. a.).

Providing the 3rd record for North Dakota, a **Yellow-throated Warbler** was photographed in *Fargo* 28 Apr—5 May (KRC, m. ob., p. a.). Four Bay-breasted Warblers were seen w. of the Missouri R. in North Dakota. In Montana, this casual species was noted at Ft. Peck 18 May (CC, JC, PH, p. a.), and 2 were seen at Ft. Benton 23 May (JS, p. a.). The 15th report for North Dakota, a Cerulean Warbler was singing at J. Clark Salyer N.W.R. 31 May (JR, AH, p. a.). Providing the 10th report for the state, a Worm-eating Warbler was identified in *Richland*, ND 23 May (DNS, BS, p. a.). Casual in South Dakota,

Prothonotary Warblers were reported 12 May in *Union* (JC, p. a.), and 19 May in *Lincoln* (KM, RDO, p. a.). Also casual in South Dakota, 2 Kentucky Warblers were in *Union* 31 May (JC, DS, p. a.). A Connecticut Warbler in *Great Falls*, MT provided the 7th report for the state (GS, p. a.). Above average were three Mourning Warbler reports from e. Montana and 4 MacGillivray's Warblers e. of normal areas in the Dakotas. A Wilson's Warbler in *Hughes*, SD 18 Apr tied the previous early date for the state (RDO).

TANAGERS THROUGH CROSSBILLS

Casual in South Dakota, Summer Tanagers were reported 9 May in *Union* (DS, p. a.) and 14 May in *Stanley* (RDO, p. a.). Casual in North Dakota, a Western Tanager was documented in *Dickinson* 13 May (JPL, p. a.). A Scarlet Tanager n. of Glasgow 22 May would provide the 12th record for Montana if accepted (JC, p. a.).

A **Black-throated Sparrow** photographed near *Chester*, MT 23 May will likely provide the 6th record for the state (HM, p. a.). Sparrow peaks included 520 White-throated Sparrows in *Grand Forks* 6 May (EEF) and 400 Harris's Sparrows at *Fargo* 11 May (REM). The 5th and 6th reports for North Dakota, Gray-headed Juncos were studied 19-20 Apr in *Bismarck* (DNS, p. a.) and 27 May in *Fargo* (DPW, DW, p. a.).

Well nw. of their now established range in se. South Dakota, a Great-tailed Grackle was in

Butte 19 Apr (REP). A peak of 60 Orchard Orioles was tallied in *Fargo* 25 May (KRC) during the grounding of migrants there. A pair of Red Crossbills was nesting at the Minot Country Club, ND 28 Apr (REM), and three pairs of White-winged Crossbills nested in *Hettinger*, ND, with young fledged at the end of May (DAG, CG).

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Southern Great Plains



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In a Region where the abnormal too often seems the norm, it is difficult to assess a season in which most things seemed normal. Adjacent states' trends this season seemed out of