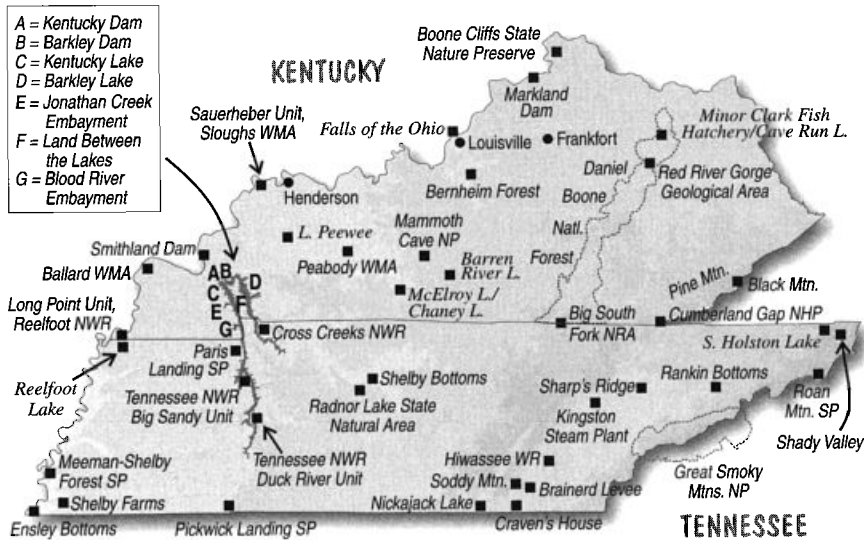


Tennessee & Kentucky



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The season began milder than normal, but a period of wet weather from mid-April through the first half of May was partly responsible for cooler-than-average temperatures for the latter two months. Precipitation was close to normal other than during a four-week period surrounding the first of May. As a result, rivers and reservoirs remained higher than normal through the end of May. Passerine migration was exceptional in the western portion of the two states, especially in Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, but considered poor by observers in many other areas. Highlights included "firsts" in each state and a modest sprinkling of rare but not totally unexpected strays. Consistent with the dismal winter for northern irruptive species, few were reported during spring migration.

Abbreviations: Eagle L. (Eagle L. W.M.A., Shelby, TN), Ensley (Ensley Bottoms, including the EARTH Complex, in sw. Shelby, TN), Radnor (Radnor L. State Natural Area, Nashville, TN), Sauerheber (Sauerheber Unit of Sloughs W.M.A., Henderson, KY), Shelby Forest (Shelby Forest, Shelby, TN).

LOONS THROUGH SPOONBILL

Rare for the Region was a Red-throated Loon

on Kentucky L., Marshall, KY 22–25 Mar (ph. BPB, HC). An imm. Red-necked Grebe at Boone L., TN 18 Apr & 6–16 May (RK et al.) was apparently injured. An Eared Grebe at Center Hill L., TN 12 Apr (PaC, CW, †SS, m. ob.) furnished a very rare spring record for the Region; 6 of S. Holston L., TN's anomalous wintering population were last seen 14 Apr (WC). A Brown Pelican on the Tennessee R., Hamilton, TN 20–25 May (GS, m. ob.) represented the 2nd county record and one of only a handful for the Region. An Anhinga flying over Shelby Forest 10 May (†WRP) represented the only report for the Region this spring.

An overwintering Great Egret at Shelby Farms, Shelby, TN continued through 3 Mar (WRP). A Snowy Egret at Hatchie N.W.R., TN 23 Mar (MTOS) was very early. A Tricolored Heron at S. Holston L. 26–27 Apr (WC et al.) furnished only the 3rd record for ne. Tennessee; another was found in Dyer, TN 30–31 May (ph. JRW, m. ob.). Ibis are rare anytime in the Region, so a Glossy in Dyer, TN 28–31 May (S&RS, †JRW, m. ob.) was noteworthy. An imm. Roseate Spoonbill in Hamilton 31 May–4 Jun (JN, m. ob.) was a first for se. Tennessee and remarkable for spring.

WATERFOWL THROUGH FALCONS

Whistling-ducks are exceptionally rare in the Region, but the appearance of both species in nw. Tennessee in May was unprecedented! Up to 11 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were observed regularly 10–31 May+ at several locations in Lake and Dyer (WGC, ph. JRW, m. ob.). Likewise, up to 9 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were found at three locations in Dyer 25–31 May+ (KL, JRW, NM, m. ob.).

About 7000 Snow Geese were still in w. Fulton, KY 16 Mar (HC, RD). Ross's Geese were reported regularly in w. Tennessee and Kentucky through mid-Mar; elsewhere, one in s. Warren, KY 3 Mar (DR), one in s. Ohio, KY 7 Mar (DR), 4 at Eagle Bend, Anderson, TN 6–7 Mar (NeM), 3 at Cove Lake S.P., TN 9 Mar (RH et al.), one in Hardin, TN 17 Mar (DS et al.), and one in Bradley, TN 25–26 Mar (DC) were indicative of the species' continuing increase in the Region. Wintering Tundra Swans at Sauerheber were last seen 13 Mar (MMn); 2 imms. were at Kentucky L., Calloway, KY 1–8 Mar (HC et al.). Ten swans observed in flight near Mt. Sterling, KY 15 Mar were unconfirmed to species but thought to be Tundras (GR).

With a few exceptions, duck movements were normal. One to 4 Surf Scoters were reported from three Kentucky and three Tennessee locations 3 Mar–2 May. Single White-winged Scoters were on the Ohio R., Campbell, KY 2 (DMr) & 17 Mar (LB) and in Carter, TN 27 Mar (GW). A female Hooded Merganser with 7 ducklings at Kyker Bot-

toms, *Blount* 10 May (BS) represent one of only a few breeding records for e. Tennessee.

A **White-tailed Kite**, one of only a few Regional records, was present at Ft. Campbell, *Montgomery*, TN 7–8 Apr (†DM, m. ob.). Single extralimital Mississippi Kites were observed at the Duck River Unit of Tennessee N.W.R. 27 Apr (JSD, CS), in *Ohio*, KY 1 May (DR), and at Sauerheber 9 May (BY). One to 2 Merlins were reported from five Kentucky and two Tennessee locations 1 Mar–30 Apr.

RAILS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

A **Yellow Rail** in e. *Jefferson* 1–2 Apr (†BPB) represented a first spring record for Kentucky. Common Moorhens continue to be irregular in the Region; one to 2 were present in *Union*, KY 5–31 May+ (BPB et al.), and another was in *Murfreesboro*, TN 18 May (TW).

Mild late-winter weather resulted in a few early arrival dates for shorebirds, and unsettled weather during late Apr and early May resulted in some decent fallouts. The following were unusually early: American Golden-Plover at *McElroy L., Warren*, KY 4 Mar (DR), Semipalmated Plover at *Eagle L.* 15 Mar (JRW), Spotted Sandpiper in *Campbell*, KY 31 Mar (FR), Upland Sandpiper at *Shelby Farms, Shelby*, TN 12 Mar (JRW), Pectoral Sandpiper in s. *Ohio*, KY 1 Mar (BPB et al.), Stilt Sandpiper (4) at *Hatchie N.W.R.*, TN 23 Mar (M.T.O.S.), and Wilson's Phalarope in *Hardin*, TN 17 Mar (DS et al.). In contrast, 2 American Golden-Plovers in *Lake*, TN 31 May (JRW et al.) were unusually late.

Record or noteworthy spring counts included 17 Black-bellied Plovers in *Tipton*, TN 11 May (JRW), 40 American Avocets in w. *Caldwell*, KY 1 May (J&PN), 20 American Avocets at *Old Hickory L., Davidson*, TN 15 May (RL), 191 White-rumped Sandpipers at *Ensley* 17 May (JRW), and 522 Dunlin in *Dyer* and *Lake*, TN 24 May (JRW et al.).

It was a good spring for some of the less common migrant shorebirds. One to 40 American Avocets were reported from one Kentucky and three Tennessee locations 5 Apr–15 May. One to 43 Willets were reported on four occasions from four Tennessee locations and on eight occasions from five Kentucky locations 25 Apr–27 May. A Whimbrel at *Kingston Steam Plant, Roane*, TN 18 May (FB, m. ob.) was the only one reported. Marbled Godwits, rare in the Region, were reported as follows: one each at

Minor Clark Fish Hatchery, *Rowan*, KY (ph. LKo) and along the Mississippi R. in *Lake*, TN (ph. JRW et al.) 26 Apr; 2 flying n. over *L. Barkley, Lyon*, KY 28 Apr (MM, †BPB); and one at *Ensley* 11 May (†CB, VR). One to 2 Ruddy Turnstones were found at two



Whistling-ducks, scarce vagrants to Tennessee, put on quite a show in northwestern Tennessee in spring 2003. Up to 11 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, including those shown here, were seen regularly at several locations in Lake County and Dyer County 10–31 May 2003 and into June. Up to 9 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were also found in Dyer County 25 May and later. Photograph by Jeff R. Wilson.



These Surf Scoters in Boone County, Kentucky 18 April 2003 were part of a modest spring movement through the Tennessee & Kentucky Region. Photograph by Lana Hays.

Tennessee and two Kentucky locations 7–27 May. One to 4 Sanderlings were reported from one Kentucky and two Tennessee locations 2–24 May. One to 4 Baird's Sandpipers, rare to uncommon spring migrants, were reported from two locations in w. Tennessee and three locations in e. Tennessee 10–25 May. Two Ruffs were found in Tennessee: a very early ad. male in *Hardin* 17 Mar (†DS et al.) and a female at *Eagle L.* 23 Apr (JRW). A female Red-necked Phalarope was at *Ensley* 17–18 May (ph. JRW et al.).

GULLS THROUGH CUCKOOS

There were four reports of single Laughing Gulls: a first-year bird on *L. Barkley, Lyon*, KY 16 Apr (ph. BPB), an ad. below *Barkley Dam, Lyon*, KY 25 Apr (BL), and single ads. on the *Ohio R., Boone*, KY (LM, JC) and in *Lake*, TN (MT, †JRW et al.) 10 May. One to 4 Franklin's Gulls

were reported from four Kentucky locations 16 Apr–8 May (BPB, MM, JD). A second-year **California Gull** at *Kentucky Dam Village State Park, Marshall*, KY 7 May (†BPB, †JD) furnished Kentucky's 5th and the Region's 6th record. One to 4 Lesser Black-backed Gulls were observed on *L. Barkley* and *Kentucky L.* in Kentucky and Tennessee s. to *Pickwick Dam, Hardin*, TN as late as 8 Apr. An exceptional collection of large gulls at *Pickwick Dam, Hardin*, TN 2 Mar included an imm. Thayer's (ph. JRW), 4 Lesser Black-backed (ph. JRW), and an imm. Glaucous (ph. JRW). Always a rare find in the Region, a **Black-legged Kittiwake** at *S. Holston L., TN* 19 Apr (LaM, ph. DN, m. ob.) was exceptional for two reasons: it furnished the first spring record for the Region, and it represents one of only a few records of an ad. bird.

A **Caspian Tern** on *L. Barkley, Lyon*, KY 29 Mar (BY) established a new early arrival date for the Region by one day. Common Terns passed through the Region in typically small numbers, although a flock of 60+ below *Newburgh Dam, Henderson*, KY 5 May was noteworthy (BPB, MM).

A **White-winged Dove** at *Hickman, Fulton*, KY 6–7 May represented a 3rd state and 5th Regional record (ph. BPB, MM, LM, ph. MT). One to 2 Black-billed Cuckoos were reported from six Kentucky and three Tennessee locations 27 Apr–31 May. One was seen carrying food in *Lake*, TN 30–31 May (JRW, NM).

NIGHTHAWK THROUGH SWALLOWS

A record-early Common Nighthawk for Kentucky was reported at *Lexington* 18 Mar (SM, RB). An ad. female Rufous Hummingbird was banded in *Hamilton*, TN 22 Mar (CF, †BSa). The second-year male Allen's Hummingbird present in *Smith*, TN since late Dec remained through 5 Mar (ph. KH). A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** in *Cheatham*, TN 10 May (ST, CGD) was late.

A **Least Flycatcher** and a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** along *Walnut Log Rd., Obion*, TN 25 May (JRW et al.) were relatively late for Tennessee. Western Kingbirds continued their expansion at *Ensley*, with at least 5 ads. and two nests observed 17–31 May+ (ph. JRW). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers continue to increase in the Region. Kentucky saw reports of one to 2 birds in no fewer than five locations. A bird found in *Bourbon* in the n.-cen. part of the state 27 Apr (ph. G&NE) turned out to be the male of a pair



Scissor-tailed Flycatchers are now annual breeders in the Tennessee & Kentucky Region, though this lone female in *Fulton County, Kentucky* 12 May 2003 appeared to be a transient. Photograph by Jeff R. Wilson.

that has been present for three years (*fide* SW). In Tennessee, single birds were reported in Oakland 30 Apr (DY) and Stewart 10 May (JCR), while a nest was found in Marion, where 3 birds were present 27 Apr–31 May+ (EC, DG).

A White-eyed Vireo at Shelby Forest 17 Mar (DP) was an early county record. A Blue-headed Vireo in e. Pulaski, KY 18 Mar was a new early state date by three days (RD). A Warbling Vireo at the Craven's House Unit of Chickamauga National Military Park, Hamilton (DJ, RJH, JN) furnished only the 2nd se. Tennessee record in 10



This White-winged Dove in Fulton County 6–7 May 2003 was Kentucky's third and the Region's fifth. Photograph by Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr.



This Marbled Godwit in Rowan County, Kentucky 26 April 2003 was the easternmost of several spring records in the Tennessee & Kentucky Region. Photograph by Lew Kornman.

years. A Philadelphia Vireo heard and seen in Calloway, KY 23 Apr was exceptionally early (KCo).

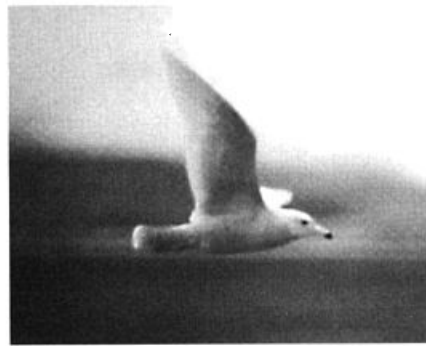
Continuing a trend of the past few years, 2 Fish Crows were reported from Chester Frost S.P., Hamilton, TN 10 May (DJ, RJH). A Common Raven nest discovered in Sullivan, TN in Apr furnished a first county nest record; 2 birds in Campbell, TN 30 Mar and 15 Apr (NeM) were an encouraging sign for the Cumberland Plateau region, where this species has only recently reappeared. Two Northern Rough-winged Swallows in Marshall, KY 14 Mar (vt. BY) established a new early state date by one day; a Bank Swallow in Lake, TN 5 Apr (JRW) was relatively early.

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

A Brewster's Warbler (Golden-winged x Blue-winged hybrid) was

observed in Land Between the Lakes, Trigg, KY 9 May (BL). The following warblers were exceptionally early: Northern Parula at Shelby Forest 17 Mar (DP) and in Lyon, KY 29 Mar (BY); Blackburnian in Davidson, TN 7 Apr (LK); Black-and-white in Perry, TN 16 Mar (AV) and Wolfe, KY 22 Mar (FR) (latter a new early state date); and Kentucky in Whitley, KY 5 Apr (MV). A Magnolia Warbler at Radnor 30 May (PC, FF) was close to a record-late date for Tennessee. Connecticut Warblers are uncommon to rare in e. and w. Tennessee, so two reports of one to 2 birds in both e. and w. Tennessee were noteworthy.

Two singing Henslow's Sparrows in Henry 1–20



This first-winter Glaucous Gull at Pickwick Dam, Hardin County, Tennessee 2 March 2003 was part of an exceptional collection of gulls that also included 4 Lesser Black-backed and one first-winter Thayer's. Photograph by Jeff R. Wilson.



Black-legged Kittiwakes are very rare in the Tennessee & Kentucky Region, but this adult bird at South Holston L., Tennessee 19 April 2003 was doubly exceptional: it furnished a Region-first spring record, and it is one of only a few adult birds ever documented in the Region. Photograph by Dexter Newman.

May (MT) are evidence of that species' continuing expansion in Tennessee. A few Le Conte's Sparrows lingered in both states through at least 8 Apr. A male Painted Bunting on territory in w. Fulton 30 Apr–31 May+ represents the first fully-documented record for Kentucky (ph. BPB, ph. MM, m. ob.); another in Hamilton, TN 4–17 Apr (MF, m. ob.) furnished a 3rd county record. A Dickcissel in Wynnburg, Lake, TN 1 Mar (NM, JRW) may have wintered.

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