

Western Great Lakes



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It was a season of western strays in the Region, so many that it was difficult to list them all. Of all the exceptional finds, there was one first state record, a Wilson's Plover in Wisconsin, along with a number of second state records throughout the Region. Weather was unremarkable this season, slightly warmer and drier in the early part of the season and wetter and cooler in the latter part of the season.

One interesting trend in Michigan worth noting has been the increase in reports of exotic species, even at remote locations. For example, Whitefish Point Bird Observatory reported a Eurasian Siskin and a Eurasian Linnet this season, both mixed in flocks of normally occurring finches. There has been an increasing number of Eurasian Goldfinch reports; there was even a

Eurasian Jay at a feeder in Allegan County. The source of these apparent escapees would be interesting to discover.

Abbreviations: H.P.B.C. (Hastings-Prescott Bird Count, Dakota, MN), W.P.B.O. (Whitefish Point B.O., Chippewa, MI).

LOONS THROUGH IBISES

As is typical, the majority of Red-throated Loons in the Region were reported at W.P.B.O., where 515 were seen 23 Apr-31 May, with a peak of 70 on 6 May (staff). Minnesota hosted a single Pacific Loon at Duluth, St. Louis 25-28 May (MH et al.), while Michigan had two reports in Berrien, with an alternate-plumaged bird at Lakeside 25-27 Apr (p.a., JW, DV, RBr, CG) and a basic-plumaged bird at Grand Mere 25 Apr (p.a., TBa). Well above average at W.P.B.O. were 1388 Red-necked Grebes, with a peak of 162 on 20 Apr (staff). Michigan had four reports of Eared Grebe, the most unusual being one at Lake Linden Ponds, Houghton 29 May (JK); there were six reports from Wisconsin. Also in that state, single Western Grebes were reported in Pierce 17 May (p.a., MKo), in Taylor 19 Apr (p.a., PRi), and in Douglas 13 May (p.a., RJ). As usual, the only Clark's Grebes in the Region came from w. Minnesota, where singles were seen in three lo-

cations beginning in late Apr (m.ob.). Forty-five American White Pelicans in Michigan this spring were more than usual, while in Minnesota, an impressive 8783 were reported during the H.P.B.C., the peak being 3436 on 10 Apr (KB). An Anhinga in Ozaukee 14 May (p.a., KR) would be a rare Wisconsin record if accepted by the Wisconsin B.R.C.

Snowy Egrets made their best spring showing ever in Minnesota, with some 35+ reports. Wisconsin also had a good number; reports from five counties there included a very early record in Trempealeau 14 Apr (TH, DJ, JRu, LJ, FL). Michigan had three reports each of Snowy Egrets and Little Blue Heron, which was above average for that state. In Wisconsin, where Little Blue Herons are unusual in spring, there were reports of singles in Sandhill W.A. 24 Apr (p.a., DH), in Rock 28 Apr (p.a., AP), and in Douglas 13-15 May (p.a., RJ, SPu). Minnesota had a typical number of Little Blue Herons, including a new county record in Lake of the Woods 15 May (MK). In Michigan, Tricolored Herons were observed in Hampton Twp., Bay 5 May (p.a., JSe) and at the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, Kalamazoo 5-17 May (SW, m.ob.). Cattle Egret numbers were about average in the Region. Minnesota and Wisconsin each had 2 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons. A Glossy Ibis was reported at Horicon N.W.R., WI 29 May (p.a., JB); another Plegadis ibis seen in Marathon, WI 16 May (p.a., DB) was left unidentified. A Glossy was in Michigan at the Shiawassee N.W.R., Saginaw 26 May (p.a., DP). Minnesota had a remarkable number of White-faced Ibis, including an early report at L. Byllesby, Dakota 16 Apr (CBR et al., ph. JMa), in Otter Tail 19-21 Apr (EE, JE, DTh, ST), in Douglas 25-28 Apr (ph. PP, BF), in Winona 30 Apr (ph. PP), in Sherburne 2 May (HD et al., ph. CM), in Carver 13-14 May (RD et al.), and in Meeker 24-25 May (BK, DF). A Black Vulture in Lake 26 May (JL et al.) constituted only the 3rd Minnesota state record.

WATERFOWL

Five reports of Greater White-fronted Goose in Michigan was about average, although the peak of 16 in Bayport, Huron 24 Mar (TBe) was noteworthy. In Wisconsin, the high total for this species was 1450 in Dane and Columbia 20 Mar (DT). A total of 325+ Ross's Geese was reported from 27 counties in Minnesota, with a peak of 84 near Salt L., Lac Qui Parle 28 Mar (BU). Wisconsin had reports of Ross's from six counties, while Michigan managed individuals in five counties. A Brant in Paynesville W.T.P., Stearns 21-22 Mar (PC, m.ob.) was an exceptional find in Minnesota, while 2 on 23 May and one on 24

May at W.P.B.O. (PC) were less unexpected. Drake Cinnamon Teals were found in Big Stone, Chippewa, and two locations in Lac Qui Parle in Minnesota; an apparent Cinnamon Teal x Blue-winged Teal hybrid was in Olmsted. A Tufted Duck, or possibly a hybrid, was observed in South Haven, Van Buren 6 Mar (p.a., JG, RS); it would provide the 4th Michigan record if accepted. Wisconsin had three reports of Harlequin Duck plus a King Eider in Manitowoc 3 Apr (p.a., DT); a Barrow's Goldeneye was present in Milwaukee 3 Mar.

RAPTORS THROUGH TERNS

A White-tailed Kite in Burnette 10 Apr (p.a., RPe) would constitute only the 4th Wisconsin record if accepted. A Mississippi Kite in Odessa Twp., Big Stone 11 May (p.a., BU) was a rare find in Minnesota, while one at W.P.B.O. 16 May (p.a., CB) was less unexpected. A record-high 822 Bald Eagles was tallied at the West Skyline Hawk Count near Duluth, MN 23 Mar (FN, DC). A Swainson's Hawk in Barron 6 Apr (p.a., SBe) was notable in Wisconsin. In Michigan, 6 at W.P.B.O. was an above-average spring season total, and one at Brockway Mt., Keweenaw 12 May (LB, MMy, JP) was notable. Minnesota reported Ferruginous Hawks in Big Stone 22 & 27 Apr (BU) and in Lac Qui Parle 27 Apr (BU). Also in that state, Prairie Falcons were reported in Chippewa 20 Mar (BU) and in Pennington 2 May (JJ, SS).

Peak count for Yellow Rail in Minnesota was 24 on 4 May in Rice Lake N.W.R., Aitkin (WN). Wisconsin reported Yellow Rails from six counties, while Michigan had a report of 4 at Martin Bay, Delta 16 May (JY). Exceptional in Minnesota was a Black Rail in Big Stone N.W.R., Lac Qui Parle 22 May (p.a., BU). King Rails were reported from Wisconsin in Horicon N.W.R. 15 May (AH), in Winnebago 8 May (TZ), in Dodge 15 May (AH), and in Douglas 15 May (RJ, SPu), all pending review. Encouraging in Minnesota was an increased number of Common Moorhens, with 6 reported, while in Michigan a total of 63 at Shiawassee N.W.R., Saginaw 25 May (DP) was exceptional.

A Wilson's Plover in Douglas 9 May (p.a. SST, RJ) would constitute a first state record in Wisconsin. The Region has only two accepted records, both from Michigan, the most recent from 1993. The 290 Semi-

palmated Plovers recorded in Lac Qui Parle 6 May (BU) provided a new spring high total for Minnesota. Piping Plovers appear to be stable in the Region, with 9 among five locations in Minnesota, three reports from Wisconsin, and reports from the traditional locations in Michigan. Black-necked Stilts were reported Regionwide. In Michigan, up to 2 were present after 18 Apr at Pointe Mouillee, Monroe (AB, m.ob.), while Wisconsin had reports in Trempealeau 15-17 Apr (p.a., JRu, LJ, FL), in Dane 13-20 May (p.a., MM, AS, EH, CH, DU et al.), and 14 May in Columbia (p.a., TPr, SC, EH, SFi). Minnesota reported this species in Mounds View, Anoka/Ramsey 14 Apr (AHe), near Rice Lake S.P., Steele 16-17 May (JSt, m.ob.), at Belle Plaine W.T.P., Scott 16-27 May (AHe, m.ob.) and near L. Lillian, Kandiyohi 18 May (RF). Very rare in Michi-



Exceptional in Michigan was this adult White Wagtail near Houghton 27 April 2004. Michigan has a prior record of a White/Black-backed Wagtail from spring 1985, but this is the first record verifiable as to species from the Western Great Lakes region. Away from the West Coast, White Wagtail is known only as a single-shot vagrant in spring to South Carolina (*ocularis*) and Québec (*alba*), and in fall to North Carolina (*alba*) and Newfoundland (probably *alba*). This individual appears to be of the *ocularis* race, whose closest nesting grounds lie in western Alaska. Photograph by Adam M. Byrne.

gan was a Whimbrel away from the Great Lakes in Clinton 22 May (BC). Also notable were 18 Whimbrels at Salt L. 18 Apr (BU), both early and unusual in w. Minnesota. Minnesota had six reports of Red Knot this season, while Wisconsin had a high of 10 in Brown 24 May (DCh). Michigan also had a high of 10 at Tawas S.P., Iosco 23 May (MHu, JHu).

Rare in the Region in spring, a Western Sandpiper was reported in Brown, WI 18 May (p.a., NW), and another was reported in Lac Qui Parle, MN 6 May (p.a., BU). Also rare in the e. portion of the Region in spring, Baird's Sandpipers were reported in Dane 17 Apr (MM, JS) and in Burnett 20 May (DCh et al.) in Wisconsin, while in Michigan singles were at St. Joseph, Berrien 19 Apr (TBa), at Shiawassee N.W.R., Saginaw 20 Apr (DP), at

Atlantic Mine S.P., Houghton 17 May (JMu, TA), and at W.P.B.O. 24 May (PC). Minnesota had an excellent shorebird migration in Big Stone; some notable peaks included 2029 Least Sandpiper 16 May (PS, JL), 2847 Pectoral Sandpipers 9 May (PC, PS), and 1183 Dunlin 22 May (PS, JJ), the latter being a record-high spring count. Accidental in Minnesota was an ad. Curlew Sandpiper near Clinton, Big Stone 16-17 May (JL, PS). A Buff-breasted Sandpiper in Lac Qui Parle, MN 5 May (BU) made a rare spring appearance in the Region. A Ruff was found in Wisconsin in Brown 22-23 May (p.a., TB, IB et al.), while in Minnesota, individuals were reported in Lac Qui Parle 6-7 May (BU), in Big Stone 9 May (PC, PS), and in Dakota 17 May (JMa). Record-high spring totals for Minnesota included 460 Short-billed Dowitchers 19 May and 342 Long-billed Dowitchers 12 May in Lac Qui Parle (BU).

Two Parasitic Jaegers were seen in Douglas, WI 19 May (AP, DT, RJ et al.). W.P.B.O. had a single Parasitic Jaeger 16 May (KB) and 3 unidentified jaegers otherwise. Minnesota also had 2 jaegers unidentified to species in Duluth, St. Louis 22 May (m.ob.). A Long-tailed Jaeger was reported at Tawas S.P., Iosco MI 26 May (p.a., JWo, WW), as was a Laughing Gull 19 May (LG). Little Gull reports in the Region included 2 in Milwaukee 25 May (JI) and 2 at Tawas Point S.P. 30 May (KO). An Arctic Tern at the Three Oaks S.P., Berrien 14 May (p.a., PC, JW, KM, KT) would be only the 3rd spring record for Michigan. Minnesota reported an Arctic Tern at Breckenridge

W.T.P., Wilkin 15 May (PS, JL), which provided the first state record away from Duluth, plus another at Duluth, St. Louis 23 May (MH), the 14th and 15th Minnesota records, respectively.

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Eurasian Collared-Doves continue to spread in the Region. Wisconsin had its first confirmed breeding in Columbia (STi, NC), while Minnesota moved the species to its regular list. Michigan had its 2nd and 3rd records, with one at Bridgeman, Berrien 7 May (KM) and 2-3 in Traverse City, Grand Traverse (KT), where discovered last winter. Minnesota had its 4th and 5th records of White-winged Dove, with individuals in Ely, St. Louis 8-15 May (SF, m.ob.) and near Rochester, Olmsted 14 May (JSt), and one

was seen in Wisconsin in *Milwaukee* 28 Apr and 11–15 May (p.a., JI, BB et al.). A Northern Hawk Owl at W.P.B.O. 1 May was unexpected in Michigan after the poor showing of the winter. Encouraging in Minnesota were **Burrowing Owls** in Perry Twp., *Lac Qui Parle* 21 Apr (BU) and a pair near Lewisville, *Watonwan* 22 May (DBe). Good numbers of Long-eared (95), Boreal (14), and Northern Saw-whet (87) Owls were banded at W.P.B.O. (staff). Only the 21st and 22nd records of **Chuck-will's-widow** in Wisconsin were 2 found in *Vernon* 28 May (DJ, AS, JPe et al.). Remarkably, Michigan had 2 **Lewis's Woodpeckers**, one in Copper Harbor, *Keweenaw* 18 May (LB, TA) and perhaps the same bird at W.P.B.O. 21–26 May (m.ob.); these furnish the 2nd and 3rd state records.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WARBLERS

In Wisconsin, Western Kingbirds were reported in *Burnett* 21 May (CH, DU, AP) and in *Iowa* 25 May (DT). There was a remarkable number of **Say's Phoebe** reports in Minnesota, including singles in *Lac Qui Parle* 4 May (BU), in *Clay* 8 May (WM), and at Blue Mounds S.P., *Rock* 19 May (ND). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were seen Regionwide, with individuals in *Racine*, WI 12 May (p.a., SK), at W.P.B.O. 29 Apr and 30 May, and in at Camden S.P., *Lyon*, MN 12 May (SM). The total of 28 Loggerhead Shrikes reported this season was below the long-term average for Minnesota, while two reports came from Wisconsin, but none were found in Michigan. A **Black-billed Magpie** in *Shawano* 21 Mar (HE) was an excellent find in Wisconsin.

Minnesota hosted single **Rock Wrens** at Split Rock Creek S.P., *Pipestone* 2–3 May (JMu et al.; PS) and in Felton Prairie, *Clay* 8 May+ (m.ob.). A **Bewick's Wren** was reported at Lake Erie Metropark, *Wayne* MI 20 Apr (p.a., PCy). Two Mountain Bluebirds were reported in the Region, individuals in *Winnebago*, WI 19 May (p.a., PB) and in *Walter Twp.*, *Lac Qui Parle*, MN 5 Apr (BU). Wisconsin had solo Townsend's Solitaires in *Portage* 4–10 Apr (KJ, KH) and in *Dane* 6 Apr (SP). A **Sage Thrasher** in *Schroeder*, *Cook* 11–12 May (DS) afforded the 10th state record for Minnesota. Exceptional in Michigan was a **White Wagtail** near Houghton, *Houghton* 27 Apr (p.a., GS, AB). This represents the 2nd record of this complex in the Region: the first was of a single ad. White/Black-backed Wagtail at the Muskegon Wastewater System 14–24 Apr 1985 (ph. *American Birds* 39: 304).

Blue-winged Warblers n. of normal this season included individuals in *Lac Qui Parle*, MN 2 May (BU), in *Morrison*, MN 12 May (BF), and at W.P.B.O. 21 May. Quite unexpected was an Audubon's Warbler in *Dane*,

WI 28 Apr (AS). A good find in Wisconsin was a Kirtland's Warbler in *Barron* 8 May (JH). Notable were Prairie Warblers at St. John's University, *Stearns*, MN 20 May (THo, BR, HD) and in *Grant*, WI 7 May (EH). Michigan and Wisconsin reported Worm-eating Warbler from four counties each. In Minnesota, where the species is casual, one at Big Stone N.W.R., *Lac Qui Parle* 18 May (BU) provided a first county record. Kentucky Warbler reports in Michigan included one in *Wayne* 1 May (DO), at least 3 in *Berrien*, and 2 in *Hillsdale*. Minnesota had Kentucky Warblers in *Lac Qui Parle* 19 May (BU) and in *Blue Earth* 25 May+ (m.ob., CBr). In Minnesota, Hooded Warblers strayed as far nw. as *Otter Tail* 15 May (m.ob.) and *Kittson* 28 May (PS).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

Minnesota had a major influx of Summer Tanagers, with 11+ individuals. Michigan had reports of the species from four counties and Wisconsin from five. A **Western Tanager** was photographed in *Paradise*, *Chippewa*, MI 5 May (CN), while males were seen in *Ramsey*, MN 18 May (TN) and in *Polk*, MN 19–20 May (JJ, PS). The **Spotted Towhee** in *Livingston*, MI continued through 1 Mar and reappeared 30 Apr–2 May (JLo), while the *Waukesha*, WI bird remained through the period and was reported singing 2 Mar (DG). Minnesota reported 7 Spotted Towhees. Michigan had above-average numbers of Lark Sparrows, with individuals in *Berrien* 18 Apr (DV, JW), in *Wayne* 7 May (CP), in *Baraga* 8 May (ZG, LB), and at *Shiawassee* N.W.R., *Saginaw* 12 May. Good numbers of Harris's Sparrows were reported in Michigan, including at least 9 from the Keweenaw Peninsula. A **McCown's Longspur** at W.P.B.O. 16 May (p.a., KB) would provide a 2nd state record. A good find in Minnesota was a Chestnut-collared Longspur near Duluth, *St. Louis* 7 May (JGr).

A male **Black-headed Grosbeak** was seen in *Lac Qui Parle*, MN 29 May (BU). **Blue Grosbeaks** were reported in *Racine*, WI 12 May (p.a., SFi, DT) and in *Allegan*, MI 17 May (RBr). All three states hosted **Lazuli Buntings**: in *Murray*, MN 27 May (ND), *Portage*, WI 23 Apr (KD, MD), and *Leelanau*, MI 20–22 May (AB, m.ob.), the latter providing a 2nd state record. In Minnesota, **Painted Buntings** were reported in *St. Louis* 13 May (JGe, AE, MH, PS), in *Becker* 13–17 May (MA, JJ, PS, DTh, ST), and in *Clay* 19–20 May (RP, RO, PS). Wisconsin hosted one in *Door* 12 May (ROs, CO), while Michigan had reports in *Dickinson* 12 May (SBr), *Eagle Harbor*, *Keweenaw* 16 May (LB, m.ob.), and in *Hancock*, *Keweenaw* 21 May (JK, DR). In Minnesota, Great-tailed Grackles were documented in *Lac Qui Parle* and

Rock. Generally, winter finches were reported in low numbers into the early part of the season, with exception of redpolls in both Wisconsin and Michigan, which were quite abundant, and Pine Gosbeaks in Michigan, where 728 were reported at W.P.B.O. including a late individual on 9 May.

Observers (subregional editors in boldface): Melissa Anderson, Tom Auer, Tim Baerwald (TBa), Jeff Bahls, Karl Bardon, Ida Baumann, Ty Baumann, Tom Beachy (TBe), Dan Belter, David Benson (DBe), Laurie Binford, Brian Boldt, Ryan Brady, Shirley Bray (SBr), Calvin Brennan, Rick Brigham (RBr), Connie Brunell (CBr), Kay Burcar (KBU), Adam Byrne, Dave Carman, Daryl Christensen (DCh), Phil Chu, Bruce Cohen, Noel Cutright, Seth Cutright, Paul Cypher (PCy), Nelvina De Kam, Herb Dingmann, Karen Dostal, Mark Dostal, Robert Dunlap, Eddy Edwards, Judy Edwards, H. Erickson, Audrey Evers, Sean Fitzgerald (SFi), Dan Floren, Steve Foss, Jim Frank, Randy Frederickson, Ben Fritchman, Zach Gayk, Judy Gervasio (JGe), Leonard Graf, Jim Granlund, Janet Green (JGr), Corey Gregory, David Grosshuesch, Dennis Haessly, Kent Hall, Helen Hansen, Daniel Hanz, Chuck Heikkinen, Mike Hendrickson, Anthony Hertzler (AHe), Todd Highsmith, Aaron Holschbach, Josh Horky, Timothy Houghton (THo), Eric Howe, Joanne Hubinger (JHu), Mark Hubinger (MHu), Dan Jackson, Karen Johnson, Larry Johnson, Robbye Johnson, Jeanie Joppru, Joe Kaplan, Martin Kehoe, Brad Koenen, Mark Korducki (MKo), Sue Kulinski, Sue Lendborg, Fred Leshar, James Lind, John Lowry (JLo), William Marengo, James Mattsson (JMa), Bob Matyas, Mike McDowell, Craig Menze, Kip Miller, John Morrison, Sue Morten, Jake Musser (JMu), M. Myers (MMy), Warren Nelson, Chris Neri, Frank Nicoletti, Robert O'Connor, Carol Anne Osinski, Ray Osinski (ROs), Karl Overman, Andy Paulios, J. Peacock, Paul Pederson, Rich Peet (RPe), Rich Pemple, Tom Pfothenhauer, Sandy Pfothenhauer, Dave Peters, Jesse Peterson (JPe), Curt Powell, Tom Prestby (TPr), Helen Pugh, Shuan Putz (SPu), Kate Redmond (KR), Jack Reinoehl (Michigan), Dana Richter, Paul Risch (PRi), Bob Rogers, **Wayne Rohde** (Wisconsin), Jean Ruhser (JRu), Jason Sailing (JS), Russ Schipper, Carl Schwartz, Grant Seohnel, Joe Seohnel (JSe), Dory Spence, Sparky Stensaas (SSt), Jeff Stephenson (JSt), Shelley Steva, Aaron Stutz, **Peder Svingen** (Minnesota), Daryl Tessen, Steve Thiessen (STi), Dan Thimgan (DTh), Sandy Thimgan, Kevin Thomas, Delia Unson, Billy Unzen, Dave Vinnedge, Steve Walker, Nick Walton, Jon Weupper, Joan Wolfe (JWo), Will Wolfe, Thomas Wood, Joseph Youngman, Tom Ziebell. 🍎