

female feeding a fledged juv. at a Granger feeder 15 Feb (TMK) left little doubt as to the species' hardiness. Four White winged Crossbills at Yellowknife 2 Jan (*fide* RB) represented the only Northwest Territories C.B.C. record this year. In the Yukon, Pine Grosbeaks' health raised concerns in Haines Junction and Whitehorse, where reports came in of sickly-looking birds and low numbers later in winter; Christmas counts found normal numbers; e.g., 119 at Teslin 16 Dec (*fide* CA), 200 at Marsh L. 19 Dec (*fide* HG), 163 at Haines Junction 28 Dec (*fide* DH), and 68 at Mayo 29 Dec (*fide* MOD). Both Pine and Evening Grosbeaks were present at Ft.

Simpson, NWT in typical numbers this season (DT), while the one Evening Grosbeak on the 2 Jan Yellowknife C.B.C. furnished only the 2nd record for that count (*fide* RB). Redpoll (mostly Common, some Hoary) numbers were fairly typical in the Yukon, with low numbers seen in Dec, increasing through Jan, with good-sized flocks present at most feeders by late Feb. Redpolls were noted in slightly above-average numbers at both Norman Wells (RP) and Ft. Simpson (DT). While House Sparrows have yet to gain any kind of foothold in the Yukon or Nunavut, small populations persist in Northwest Territories, as evidenced by counts of 38

at Ft. Simpson 2 Jan (*fide* DT) and 368 at Yellowknife the same day (*fide* RB).

Contributors (subregional editors in bold-face): Carolyn Allen, Julie Bauer, Andreas Bode, Robert Bromley, Boris Dobrowolsky, Claude Dulac, Cameron Eckert, Robb Ellwood, Marsha Flumerfelt, Dave Fowler, Lloyd Freese, Helmut Grünberg, Millie Hall, David Henry, Tracy Hillis, Mark Mallory, Ted Murphy-Kelly, Mark O'Donoghue, Richard Popko, Michael Settingington, Pamela Sinclair, Gordie Stewart, **Douglas Tate** (NWT), Debbie van de Wetering, Dave Wilderspin, Brian Zawadski. 🐾

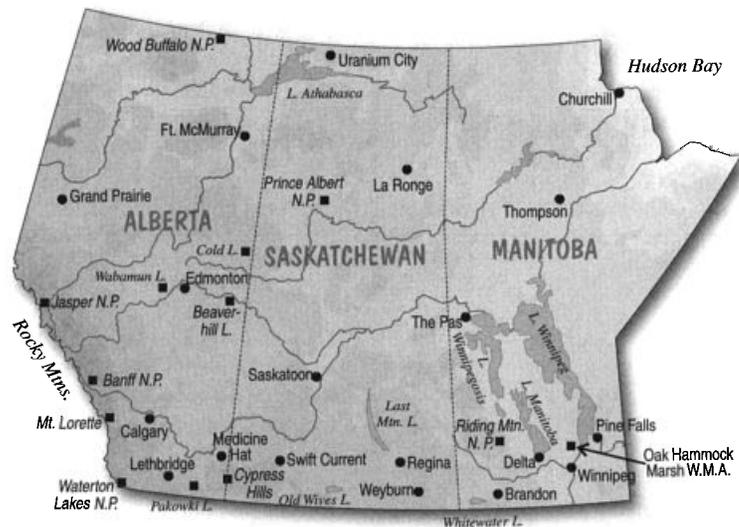
A bitterly cold January was flanked by milder weather in December and February; Alberta in particular enjoyed spring-like conditions late in the season, resulting in the arrival of some very early migrants. Manitoba and parts of eastern and central Saskatchewan endured heavy snows in late December, which interfered with a number of Christmas Bird Counts. Elsewhere accumulations were generally light, and much of the snow cover in southern Alberta and Saskatchewan had disappeared by the end of the period. A Region-wide influx of northern owls provided the major highlight of the season.

LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

Single Yellow-billed Loons lingered at Wabamun L., AB 3 Dec (FW, m.ob.) and near Innisfail, AB 7 Dec–7 Jan (RKL, FW, m.ob.). Notable late waterfowl in Alberta included a Wood Duck at Medicine Hat 15+ Dec (BV), and several groups of late American Wigeon: 46 at Inglewood Bird Sanctuary, Calgary 2 Dec (RW), 10 at Little Bow River Dam 6 Dec, and 4 at Pine Coulee 12 Dec (both TK). Manitoba's first winter Blue-winged Teal was at Oak Hammock Marsh 1 Dec (RK), and 4 Northern Shovelers lingered at Frank L., AB 12 Dec (BW). Two imm. Trumpeter Swans wintered at Wyndham–Carseland P.P., AB (RW, m.ob.). Extremely early at Taber, AB were 3 Snow Geese 26 Feb and 11 Tundra Swans 28 Feb (LB), a Northern Shoveler 28 Feb (LB), and 6 Redheads 26 Feb (LB). A Eurasian Wigeon at Frank L. 25 Feb (JMM, BE, JP) was the only one reported and was also early.

Between 17 Dec and 1 Mar there were an unprecedented 10 reports of Sharp-shinned Hawks in s. Manitoba (m.ob.), plus one at Swift Current, SK 5 Jan (*fide* TH), while a Cooper's Hawk was noted at Kleefeld, MB 29 Jan (DF). A Ferruginous Hawk at Maple Creek, SK 24 Feb may have been an early migrant (AH). Alberta reported fair numbers of Gyrfalcons, whereas only 3 were not-

Prairie Provinces



Rudolf F. Koes

135 Rossmere Crescent
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2K 0G1
(rkoes@merlin.mb.ca)

Peter Taylor

P.O. Box 597
Pinawa, Manitoba R0E 1L0
(taylorp@granite.mb.ca)

ed in Saskatchewan and 2 in Manitoba. Saskatchewan had 8 Prairie Falcons; the lone bird in Manitoba was near Pipestone 21 Dec (IM).

CRANES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

A Sandhill Crane near Powerview 15 Dec was Manitoba's latest ever (RTa, JA). Also notably tardy were a Killdeer at Swift Current, SK 7 Dec (RDu), a Wilson's Snipe on the Ft. Walsh, SK C.B.C. 18 Dec (GW et al.), a Mew Gull at Cold L. 2 Dec (RKL), and a

Ring-billed Gull at Winnipeg, MB 20 Dec (DN). Six California Gulls arrived at Inglewood Bird Sanctuary, Calgary, AB on the early date of 28 Feb (RS). A Glaucous Gull at Wabamun L. 26 Feb had apparently wintered locally (RKn, RK, RT). Eurasian Colared-Dove reports came from Pierson, MB, from Delisle, Maple Creek, Swift Current (14 on 21 Feb), and Weyburn, SK; and from Nanton (up to 11) and Grassy Lake, AB (m.ob.).

Snowy Owls were common around Ed-

Help your friends get more from birding!

Keep them abreast of what's going on in the birding world—from ID skill-building, to checklist changes, to travel opportunities, to conservation issues.

BUILD A BETTER BIRDING COMMUNITY! SEND A GIFT OF ABA MEMBERSHIP TODAY.

Your friends will receive from you all the benefits of ABA membership, including:

- *Birding*—our full color bi-monthly members' magazine
- *Winging It*—our monthly members' newsletter
- Supplemental publications—including *A Birder's Resource Guide* and the *Big Day and List Report*
- Involvement—conventions, conferences, workshops, birding trips, volunteer opportunities, and more
- Discounts—on AVIS car rentals



American Birding[®]
ASSOCIATION

TO SIGN UP A NEW MEMBER, CALL:

(800) 850-2473

OR GO TO:

www.americanbirding.org/memgen.html

The American Birding Association aims to inspire all people to enjoy and protect wild birds.

MEMBERSHIP

PRAIRIE PROVINCES



Sharp-shinned Hawks are increasingly spending the winter in the Prairie Provinces. In Manitoba alone, there were ten reports of the species December–February. This bird terrorized a Winnipeg feeder through the season (here 1 February 2005). Photograph by Brian Huebert.

monton, AB and Winnipeg and were reported as “numerous” in Saskatchewan, where 22+ were tallied near Eston 14 Dec (DZ). Similarly, Northern Hawk Owls were widespread throughout the Region: 87 were banded in Feb alone in a band across cen. Saskatchewan from Leoville to Hudson Bay (BT, MB), and one bird popularly known as the St. Vital Bandit spent the entire winter in that area of Winnipeg. Several Northern Pygmy-Owls moved eastward out of the mountains in cen. and n. Alberta (m.ob.). Like hawk owls, Great Gray Owls were present in large numbers at the edge of the boreal forest in all three provinces. Seventy-four were banded in cen. Saskatchewan in Feb (BT, MB). A Long-eared Owl at Kleefeld 10 Dec was a winter rarity (CP, DF). Up to 11 Short-eared Owls were tallied e. of Calgary late Dec–late Jan (KJ, TK), while an amazing 39 were at Eston, SK 3 Jan (DZ). Boreal Owls staged a minor incursion into s. Manitoba, with about half a dozen one-day wonders reported (m.ob.).

A Belted Kingfisher at La Barrière Park near Winnipeg survived until at least 17 Dec (AA, FB, AC, m.ob.). The only Red-bellied Woodpecker report came from the Pilot Mound, MB area 9 Jan (DNn). An American Three-toed Woodpecker (JC, m.ob.) and 2 Black-backed Woodpeckers (m.ob.) wintered in Wascana Park, Regina, SK, well s. of their usual range.

PASSERINES

A Loggerhead Shrike on the Ft. Walsh C.B.C. 18 Dec provided a rare winter record for this species (R&CG et al.). Lone American Dippers at Eastend, SK 4 Jan (HJ) and at Okotoks, AB 12 Jan (TK) were e. of normal range. A Hermit Thrush at Delisle 15 Dec was tardy (TL). Rare at any time in Alberta, a Northern Mockingbird lingered at Fish

Creek P.P. until late Jan (m.ob.). A Brown Thrasher was at Estevan, SK 13 Dec (BD), while another present through the season at Calgary was believed to have been the city's first successful winterer (FD, m.ob.).

Bohemian Waxwings were plentiful at Mt. Lorette (PS) and in good numbers elsewhere in the Region (GK, m.ob.). An Orange-crowned Warbler at Biggar, SK 1 Dec was very late (GW). The only other warbler was the previously reported Hooded Warbler at

Calgary, Alberta's 3rd, last seen 7 Dec (m.ob.). A Spotted Towhee seen intermittently at Winnipeg 17 Dec–13 Feb and possibly later was the province's first ever in winter (SB, RI, PH et al.). Another was at Cayley, AB 6 Dec–9 Jan (JS, m.ob.), and one at Ft. McMurray, AB lasted through the winter (LE, m.ob.). Other noteworthy lingerers included single Chipping Sparrows at Winnipeg 18 Dec–9 Jan (M, B, & AHu) and 2 Jan (CA, AW et al.), a Clay-colored Sparrow on the Brandon C.B.C. 24 Dec (CC), a Vesper Sparrow on the Yorkton, SK C.B.C. 18 Dec (B&JA), a Song Sparrow through the winter at Eden, MB (RD), and an exceptionally late McCown's Longspur on the Coronach, SK C.B.C. 2 Jan (GW). Winter finches were generally scarce, particularly in the west. Crossbills were almost absent. Common Redpolls were present in fair numbers in s. Manitoba, but very few Hoary Redpolls were reported anywhere. Feeders in s. Manitoba hosted small flocks of American Goldfinches, e.g., up to 14 birds until 11 Jan at Grosse Isle (KG).

Observers (subregional editors in boldface):

B. & J. Anaka, J. Anderson, C. Artuso, A. Aug, S. Beaulieu, L. Bennett, M. Blom, F. Boileau, J. Clarke, A. Courcelles, C. Cuthbert, R. Demey, F. Dersch, B. Dies, R. Dudgeon (RDu), L. Eddy, B. Elder, D. Fast, K. Gardner, R. & C. Gardner, M. Harrison, A. Hartley, P. Hayden, M. Herriot, T. Herriot, M., B., & A. Huebert, R. Iverson, H. Johnson, K. Jones, R. Klauke (RKL), R. Knapton (RKn), R. Koes, T. Korolyk, G. Krätzig, T. Lawton, J. & M. Macdonald, I. Milliken, D. Nelson (DNn), D. Neufeld, C. Penner, J. Pilney, P. Sherrington, J. Shier, R. Storms, R. Taylor (RTa), B. Terry, R. Thomas, B. Velnor, A. Walley, G. Wapple, R. Wershler, F. Whaley, B. Wilson, D. Zazelenchuk. 🐦