

Illinois & Indiana



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Average to cool temperatures in March and little precipitation were followed by warmer-than-normal weather during the first two thirds of April. The warmth perhaps was likely responsible for a flurry of early arrival dates throughout the Region, though the bulk of the migration seemed late. April also provided some respite from the reduced rain levels, but even then just the southern areas received reasonable amounts of precipitation. Beginning with a cold front that entered the Region 22 April, cooler temperatures once again prevailed. Although the southern portions experienced normal temperatures after the first week of May, the northern sections remained cool and dry. Migration there, particularly of passerines, was quite late. Many Chicago area birders thought that major movements never occurred and that the migration overall was one of the worst they could remember. A fallout on 19 May at Lake Michigan migrant traps, especially noted along the Indiana-Illinois border, was the one large movement apparent to birders. Precipitation levels for May were lower than

normal in the Region; May was the seventh driest on record for Illinois.

Abbreviations: Brook. L. (Brookville L., Union and Franklin, IN); Carl. L. (Carlyle L., s. IL); D.S.P. (Indiana Dunes S.P., Porter, IN lakefront); F.P. (Forest Preserve); F.W.A. (Fish and Wildlife Area); Grassy Slough (Grassy Slough Preserve, Johnson, IL); Jax. P. (Jackson Park, Chicago); Kankakee Sands (The Nature Conservancy Kankakee Sands Preserve, Newton, IN); Montrose (Montrose Point, Lincoln Park, Chicago); Pine Creek (Pine Creek Gamebird Habitat Area, Benton, IN).

LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

A strong loon flight featured 40 Red-throated Loons, with a peak count of 9 off D.S.P. and Beverly Shores, IN 17 Apr (JJM) and one inland sighting in Richland, IL 28 Mar (†LH). An impressive total of 3 Pacific Loons, all in basic plumage, included one in Hamilton, IN 24–25 Apr (KW, LP) and Illinois's 3rd and 4th for spring, seen at Crab Orchard N.W.R. 15 Apr (KAM) and in Richland, IL 15–23 May (†LH, ph. BS). Common Loons peaked 18 Apr with 793 along the Indiana lakefront (JJM). Four Red-necked Grebes and 9 Eared Grebes—with 2 rather late at Willow Slough F.W.A., IN 21 May (EMH)—constituted a good movement.

It was a banner year for American White Pelicans. A record high count for Indiana was set with 78 at Brook. L. 18 Apr (CCW), and a strong movement through Illinois peaked with 3136 at Chautauqua N.W.R. 1 Apr (R&SB). A tally of 840 Double-crested Cormorants at Brook. L. 26 Mar (JyS) was a record-high spring count for Indiana. An American Bittern 30 Mar at Jax. P. (BWH, PRC) was early for n. Illinois. Although Indiana had 16 American Bitterns reported, with 6 at Kankakee Sands 27 & 30 Apr (JBH), none were recorded on the Indiana lakefront, and Keith McMullen noted poor numbers in s. Illinois. Least Bitterns were well represented, with counts of at least 2 birds coming from four locations. The totals of 73 Little Blue Herons 8 May in Union, IL (SDB) and 200 Cattle Egrets at Sauget, IL 15 May (DMK) were the highest spring counts for Illinois in 10 and 12 years, respectively. The largest concentration of Black-crowned Night-Herons in the Region was 447 individuals at the L. Calumet, Chicago rookery (WJM, MB). Encouraging were 11 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons at Horseshoe L., Madison, IL 16 Apr (FRH).

It was an excellent season for ibises in the Region: 9 individuals of three species were reported. The White Ibis observed at Kankakee Sands 13 May (EMH) provided Indiana's first spring record since 8 May 1878 and was the 2nd ad. ever for Indiana. An ad. Glossy Ibis at Fawn River Fish Hatchery 5 Apr–2

May (DC, m.ob.) represented Indiana's earliest spring record ever. Sauget, IL hosted 2 ad. Glossy Ibis 28–29 May (KAM, CJL, ph. DMK, m.ob.) and a subad. White-faced Ibis 8–10 May (PEL, DMK, KAM). An ad. White-faced Ibis 28 Apr–6 May at Chautauqua N.W.R. (R&SB, AFS) and 3 ads. at Cahokia Mounds S.P., IL 3 May (TB, KAM, DMK) were part of a now-expected spring influx. Black Vultures continued their spread northward in Indiana, with 2 noted 28 Apr at Summit L. (KI).

WATERFOWL THROUGH GROUSE

Greater White-fronted Goose counts of 365 in *Stephenson*, IL 12 Mar (DFS) and 302 at Kankakee F.W.A., IN 20 Mar (JJM) reflected a reduced movement through Illinois but a banner spring for this species in Indiana. The high count of 10 Ross's Geese at Santa Fe Bottoms, *Clinton*, IL 13 Mar (DMK) was typical for recent years; however, it was one of only two reports of the species. Peak counts of 40 Cackling Geese 13 Mar in *Clinton*, IL (DMK) and 16 Mar in *De Kalb*, IL (DJS) contributed to our developing understanding of movements of this taxon through the Region.

Dabbling ducks were reported mostly in good numbers. High counts included 2980 Gadwalls at Hennepin-Hopper L., IL 14 Apr (DFS), 2080 Northern Shovelers at Chautauqua N.W.R. 1 Apr (R&SB), 2200 Northern Pintails at Beehunter Marsh, IN 3 Mar (DRW), and an impressive 8000 Green-winged Teal at Carl. L. 25 Mar (DMK). A Eurasian Wigeon 19–24 Mar at Shabbona Lake S.P., IL (PO, DJS, et al.) was Illinois's 3rd in the last 10 springs. The season's rarest waterfowl was a *Mottled Duck* 28–30 May at Horseshoe L., *Madison*, IL that would constitute the Region's 2nd record (†JWE, KAM, ph. DMK, m.ob.). Diving ducks were generally reported in above-average numbers, represented by an exceptional count of 14,000 Canvasbacks in *Hancock*, IL 11 Mar (AGD), 4000 Ring-necked Ducks 7 Mar in *Clinton*, IL (KAM), and 7200 Lesser Scaup 11 Mar in *Hancock*, IL (AGD). Three lingering Red-head were at Willow Slough F.W.A., IN 28 May (SRB, JKC, LSH, RJP, KJB). A male Greater Scaup 14–16 May in *Lake* (KJB, JJM, BJG, JKC) provided Indiana's first May lakefront record in 20 years. Totals of 39 Surf Scoters, 4 Black Scoters, and 6 White-winged Scoters were reported, with two thirds of the Surf and all the White-winged Scoters at inland locations. A White-winged Scoter at Mississinewa Res. 7 May (JJM) was Indiana's 8th May record. The 52 Long-tailed Ducks 3 Apr at Winthrop Harbor, IL (AFS) provided Illinois's highest spring total in 13 years, and one female 4 May on L. Monroe, IN was late (MC, JKR, J&SH).

The expansion of nesting Ospreys was

very encouraging, exemplified by two pairs at Pigeon River, IN (JAH, FH, SS) and four pairs on nests reported in Illinois. The Mississippi Kite explosion continued, with a record Illinois count of 198 tallied 27 May in a three-county area (*Pulaski*, *Alexander*,



Nine ibis of three species visited the Illinois & Indiana region this spring. This Glossy Ibis was one of two in St. Clair County, Illinois 29 May 2005. Photograph by Joshua Uffman.

Union) (SDB). Four Northern Goshawks during the first half of Mar furnished the only reports. For the first time in 24 years, no Broad-winged Hawks were reported from the Indiana Dunes Hawkwatch. A Swainson's Hawk 2 Apr in *Winnebago*, IL (†DTW, BW), away from traditional nesting areas, was noteworthy. A high of 27 Rough-legged Hawks was logged in w.-cen. Indiana 27 Mar (LS); a Rough-legged at Palos, *Cook*, IL 14 May (WSS, WJM) was late. Six Golden Ea-



One of three reported in the Illinois & Indiana region in spring 2005, this Purple Gallinule was photographed 28 May 2005 at the Middle Fork River Forest Preserve, Champaign County, Illinois, where it was present for most of the month. Photograph by Travis A. Mahan.

gles were reported, all but one from Indiana. Excellent numbers of Merlins were tallied, with 26 across the Region. An individual of the infrequently seen subspecies *richardsonii* was at Montrose 25 Apr (ph. RDH, GAW).

A report of a Black Rail at Springbrook

Prairie, DuPage, IL 5 May (†REF) would be Illinois's first live sighting of this species since one seen at the same location May–June 2000. The only Yellow Rail reported was at Northerly Island, Chicago 7 May (SHu). Numbers of King Rail remain

encouraging: 7 were reported from Illinois and 5 from Indiana. The season's 3 Purple Gallinules included an injured bird found at Spencer, IN 14 Apr (JL) that unfortunately died at a rehabilitation center two days later; one at a Homer, IL yard 12 Apr–2 May (J&MW, ph. BG, m.ob.); and one in *Champaign*, IL 4–31 May (L&MH, ph. TAM, SDB, m.ob.). A lone Whooping Crane from the Wisconsin reintroduction program was an unusual sight in a Chicago park 8–10 May (ph. MM, WJM, PRC). Weekly censuses of Greater Prairie-

Chickens at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area, *Jasper*, IL resulted in a high count of 52 males in Mar–Apr (SAS, m.ob.), a 93% increase from 2004.

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH TERNS

Plover numbers were normal this season, but three tallies of over 1000 American Golden-Plovers in Indiana were notable, including 1665 at Pine Creek 24 Apr (JJM). Four reports of Piping Plover was average, with the only L. Michigan sighting at Miller Beach 11 May (MT). The 400 Semipalmated Plovers 29 May at Carl. L. (DMK) provided a sizeable count. A Black-necked Stilt discovered 17 May in *Whitley* (SH) was the first record for ne. Indiana. Ten Black-necked Stilts were reported at five locations in Illinois, with 2 at Whalon Lake EP, *Will* 23 May (ph. ET) the most northerly. Thirty-two American Avocets were noted, with a peak count of 14 at the Wakarusa Wastewater Treatment Facility, *Elkhart*, IN 1 May (HK, fide DS).

The total of 500 Greater Yellowlegs 16 Apr at Carl. L. (TAM) was triple the average Illinois high count. Sixteen Willets in se. *Morgan* (JJ) was a notable total for an Indiana report away from the lakefront, and 44 Willets 30 Apr at Grassy Slough (KAM, DMK, CLW) was impressive. A rare inland record of 2 Whimbrels 26–28 Apr at Grassy Slough (KAM, DMK, PEL) was noteworthy; the only other report was of 10 Whimbrels on the Waukegan, IL lakefront 21 May (AFS, DTW et al.). The Region hosted an impressive 8 Hudsonian and 70 Marbled Godwits, with 52 Marbled Godwits in *Montgomery* 26 Apr (CCM) tying an all-time Indiana high count. The only Red Knot seen this spring,



This Fork-tailed Flycatcher—present 16 May 2005 at Paul Douglas Forest Preserve, Cook County, Illinois—represented a first state record. It spent most of the day hawking insects, being chased by congeners, and being enjoyed by dozens of birders. Photographs by Arlene Kozioł.

14 May in *Winnebago* (DTW), provided Illinois's first spring record since 2001. Spring Sanderling numbers have declined, with 16 at Carl. L. 16 May (KAM, DMK) and 14 at Miller Beach, IN 12 May (MT) the highest counts. The concentration of 2200 Semipalmated Sandpipers 29 May at Carl. L. (KAM) was exceptional, and an estimated 500 Least Sandpipers 4 May at Pine Creek (EMH) was a record-high count for the state. Three Baird's Sandpipers, casual in Indiana in spring, were in *Benton* 30 Apr (JJM). Pectoral Sandpipers made a solid flight through the Region, with 3100 at Kankakee F.W.A., IN 11 Apr (JJM). An impressive 500 Dunlin were at Carl. L. 29 May (KAM). Creating some excitement was a female Ruff at Grassy Slough 26 Apr (PEL, DMK, KAM et al.). The peak number in a strong flight of Wilson's Phalaropes was 12 seen 1 May at Carl. L. (TAM, DMK, SDB, MFD). A Red-necked Phalarope in *Champaign*, IL 12 May (SDB et al.) and 2 at Carl. L. 29 May (KAM, DMK) represented an above-average spring flight.

For the 9th consecutive year a Laughing Gull (CAM, †WJM et al.) and for the 2nd straight year an apparent Laughing Gull × Ring-billed Gull hybrid 7–8 May (†WJM, MB) returned to a Kentucky Fried Chicken on Chicago's s. side. An Iceland Gull observed 26 May in Waukegan, IL (AFS) was very late. Seven Thayer's Gulls and 22 Great Black-backed Gulls were reported at the Indiana lakefront; both numbers are slightly higher than average. The Caspian Tern flight was very strong, with 587 at Great Lakes Naval Training Center, *Lake* 11 May (DRD) the 2nd highest Illinois count ever. Hot on the heels of an Oct 2004 record, another Black Skimmer was discovered in Indiana at L. Gibson 23 May (CM, G&LB).

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Eurasian Collared-Doves continued their inexorable push into new territory with a first *LaPorte* record at Michigan City, IN 13 Apr (LSH). Indiana's 8th White-winged Dove

was found in *Montgomery* 4 May (JDP, CCM, LP), while Illinois's 11th was at Springfield 17 May (PW, ph. DO); another was heard calling at Carl. L. 28 May (DMK). This species has become annual in the Region. Monk Parakeets continued their invasion of Indiana from the west. In addition to 8 birds at the nest site in Hammond 19 Mar (JAH), birds were seen at two other sites in Hammond (JJM) and at two locations in Highland (MT). A healthy count of 110 was observed 7 Mar at nearby Burnham, IL (WJM).

A Black-billed Cuckoo's 26 Apr arrival at Ullin, IL (KAM) tied Illinois's 2nd earliest date, and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo 23 Apr at Ft. Massac S.P., IL (KAM) was Illinois's earliest record by one day. Twenty-seven Yellow-billed Cuckoos in *Monroe* and *Brown* 17 May (MC) provided Indiana's highest one-day total. Five Barn Owls were reported in the Region. The peak tally for Long-eared Owl was 5 at Carl. L. (TAM, DMK) and for Short-eared Owl 10 at Hawthorn Mine, IN (LS). Eight of Carl. L.'s impressive 10 Northern Saw-whet Owls from last winter were still present 6 Mar (TAM). Good numbers of caprimulgids were reported, with 150+ Common Nighthawks in *Macon*, IL 19 May (TAM), 19 Chuck-will's-widows at Ferne Clyffe S.P., IL 8 May (SDB), and Whip-poor-will counts of 24 in *Newton*, IN 14 May (EMH) and 27 in *Union*, IL 7 May (SDB). An astounding 60 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in *Shelby*, IL 15 May (KF) broke a five-year-old spring record for Illinois from the same location. A juv. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 30 May in Naperville, IL (PS) was notable; the species breeds only rarely in Illinois.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH NUTHATCHES

The flycatcher flight was generally strong, including 51 Eastern Wood-Pewees and 50 Acadian Flycatchers in *Union*, IL 7 May (SDB) and 39 Eastern Phoebes in Jax. P. 30 Mar (PRC, BWH). An Alder Flycatcher seen 9 May at L. Lemon (J&SH) and a Least Flycatcher 10 Apr at Muscatatuck N.W.R. (DG)

were record early for Indiana, and a Willow Flycatcher at Beverly Shores 8 May (JJM) was the Indiana lakefront's earliest ever. The Region was overrun by Western Kingbirds, with 10 reported. An unprecedented 3 singles were in Indiana at D.S.P. 9 May (JJM, KJB), Kankakee Sands 14 May (JJM), and Universal Mine 21 May (MRB). Six were at the established *Madison*, IL breeding location (DMK, PEL). Two Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were reported from Illinois without details. The flycatcher of the season was Illinois's first and long overdue Fork-tailed Flycatcher, an imm. present 16 May at Paul Douglas F.P., *Cook*, IL (ph. JIE, ph. WSS, JWL, m.ob.).

Loggerhead Shrikes have virtually vanished from their sw. Indiana stronghold, but they appeared elsewhere in Indiana: in *Newton* (JJM), where the species was last recorded in 1956, in nw. *Lagrange* (DS, PM), in *Orange* (AH), and in *Lawrence* (DL). Numbers reported from Illinois were average. Following the invasion of Northern Shrikes during the winter period, at least 8 birds in Indiana and 3 in Illinois lingered into Mar, the latest being one at Minnehaha F.W.A., IN 27 Mar (LS). A White-eyed Vireo at *Pomona*, IL 30 Mar (KAM) was early. Bell's Vireos once again ranged eastward, with 3 at Summit L., IN 28 May (SAP). A very late Bell's Vireo was at *Montrose* 25 May (RDH, GAW). The season's high count was 10 in *Sullivan*, IN 14 May (LS). An all-time Indiana lakefront high of 21 Yellow-throated Vireos was tallied 14 May in D.S.P. (LSH). Fish Crows continue to expand northward, as evidenced by 2 reported from Lock and Dam 21, *Adams*, IL (AGD). Three Purple Martins at Pratt's Wayne Woods F.P., *DuPage*, IL 18 Mar (EES) were the earliest arrivals for n. Illinois on record. Both Bank and Cliff Swallows 12 Apr (JAH) established record arrival dates for ne. Indiana. Unusual for an odd-numbered year was the large total of 61 Red-breasted Nuthatches reported throughout Indiana.

WRENS THROUGH TANAGERS

An undocumented report of a Bewick's Wren near Germantown, IL 23 Apr (DMK) is of interest because of the near-extirpation of this species from Illinois. A Sedge Wren 26 Mar at Robert Ridgeway Grassland, *Jasper*, IL (MAH) had possibly overwintered. A *Townsend's Solitaire* was seen at D.S.P. 16 Apr (BJG); since Indiana's first record in 1995, this species has appeared in eight of 11 years in the state. *Catharus* thrushes were generally reported in higher numbers than in recent years. The peak American Robin tally was a strong 2030 at Jax. P. 30 Mar (PRC, BWH). A Gray Catbird seen 9 Apr at Waterfall Glen F.P., *DuPage*, IL (UG) was two weeks early.

A number of record-early warbler arrivals

were followed by what many observers deemed a dismal Apr and early May movement, but overall the warbler migration was generally late and produced average numbers. Record-early arrivals for Illinois were a Yellow Warbler 10 Apr at Carl. L. (DMK), a Palm Warbler 25 Mar in Clinton (DMK), and a Blackpoll Warbler 15 Apr at Ft. Massac S.P. (KAM). A Cerulean Warbler 10 Apr at Pomona, IL (KAM) was very early. Prothonotary Warblers 4 Apr at Ft. Massac S.P. (KAM) and 5 Apr at Lincoln Park, Chicago (AG) were the first and 2nd earliest ever for Illinois, the latter quite remarkable given the northerly location. A Canada Warbler found at Crooked Creek, Brown 21 Apr (J&SH) provided Indiana's 2nd earliest record.

The rarest warbler reported was an apparent **Sutton's Warbler** (Northern Parula × Yellow-throated Warbler hybrid) at Fabyan EP, Kane, IL 22 Apr–16 May (DJS, ph. EES); the Region's only other record occurred 21 Apr 1980 in Indiana (two photographs by D. Z. Arvin in *American Birds* 34: 783). Also rare were 2 Audubon's Warblers, one a well-studied female at Jax. P. 19–29 Mar (†PRC, KMC, ph. EWW, m.ob.), the other a female at Carl. L. 1 May (DMK). A Swainson's Warbler at Beall Woods S.P., IL 6–8 May (†LH, ph. †BS) would furnish just the 2nd record for Illinois since 1996. The count of 15 Blue-winged Warblers at Palos 7 May (CT) was impressive, as were the 4 Brewster's Warblers reported this spring. Orange-crowned Warblers were seen in good numbers, with a high of 12 at Evanston, IL 7 May (JIE). Record Indiana high counts included 60 Cape May Warblers 19 May at the Hammond Sanctuary and Staline Woods (JJM, AS) and 16 Worm-eating Warblers at Hoosier N.F. 28 May (DL); the 54 Cerulean Warblers occurring along the Indiana lake-front provided the highest season total there in six years. Sixty-nine Kentucky Warblers made an impressive single-observer tally in Union, IL 7 May (SDB), and Connecticut Warblers peaked 19 May with 5 at the Hammond Sanctuary and Staline Woods, IN (JJM, AS). The Summer Tanager in Union, IL 10 Apr (KAM) provided the 2nd earliest arrival date for Illinois, and the count of 35 Summer Tanagers 7 May (SDB), also in Union, IL, was impressive. This species is becoming more common in n. Indiana.

SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES

The only Spotted Towhee was found 20 Apr in Adams, IL (AGD). Though several observers deemed the sparrow migration to be poor to mediocre, good high counts of some species were received this season. Among these were 142 Chipping Sparrows 7 May in Bureau, IL (DFS), Indiana's 2nd highest count of 83 Field Sparrows at Brook. L. 10 Apr (WHB), and 44 Vesper Sparrows 16 Apr

in Grundy, IL (DFS). The count of 220 Savannah Sparrows at Notherly Island, Chicago (DEW) was the highest Illinois spring total in at least 14 years. Indiana's first Lark Bunting in 20 years (a female or basic male) was found in Newton 16 May (JJM). The concentration of 35 Henslow's Sparrows near Dongola, IL 25 May (SDB) was impressive. Nine Le Conte's Sparrows occurred in scattered locations; a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area, Jasper, IL 10 May (LH) was one of 5 reported. A notable count of 220 Swamp Sparrows was made in Grant Park, Chicago 7 May (DEW). There were only two reports of Harris's Sparrow: 27 Mar at Horseshoe L., Madison, IL (FRH) and 20 Apr at Jax. P. (PRC). The largest longspur totals were 1000 Lap-



Great-tailed Grackles have appeared more frequently in Illinois in recent years. This individual was present throughout April (here 7 April 2005) in Sangamon County. Photograph by Travis A. Mahan.

lands in Macon, IL 3 Apr (TAM) and 140 Smith's in Newton, IN 9 Apr (CCM). Lap-lands lingered until early May, and 8 Smith's Longspurs 13 May in Newton, IN (AS) were record late.

An Indigo Bunting 9 Apr in Cook (REF) provided a record-early arrival for n. Illinois. A banded male Painted Bunting was observed 8 May in East St. Louis, IL (DMK, PEL) at the site where nesting has occurred since 2000. The tally of 300 Bobolinks in Fulton 13 May (JWW, JSf, MBo) tied the 2nd highest count for Illinois. An interesting meadowlark was heard in Boone, IN 17–18 Apr singing both Western and Eastern Meadowlark songs and giving the *pluk* call of the former (RLH, CH). The presence of a female and 3 male Yellow-headed Blackbirds 7 May at the Dredge Ponds, Macon, IL, with one male still there 19 May, suggested a possible nesting attempt (TAM). Nesting has not occurred outside n. Illinois in over a decade. Three records of Yellow-headed Blackbirds from Indiana were more than expected. The season highlight among blackbirds was the ad. male **Great-tailed Grackle** in Sangamon, IL 1–30 Apr (ph. KB, ph. TAM, KAM, m.ob.). Presumably the same bird relocated to Menard and was found 29 May

(PSW). This constitutes Illinois's 5th record.

Purple Finches and Pine Siskins were unusually common for an odd-numbered year, breaking a pattern associated with the two-year cycle of fall irruptions. The peak count of Purple Finches was in w. Monroe, IN with 32 there 6 Mar (SRE). The latest among several tardy birds was in Greene, IN 25 May (JG). A single Common Redpoll in Highland 11 Mar (MT) provided the first Indiana record in an odd-numbered spring in 10 years. Four of the wintering Common Redpolls at the Chicago Botanic Gardens lingered until 13 Mar (GAW). A high of 33 Pine Siskins was in e. Monroe, IN 1 Mar (LS), and one was quite late in se. Morgan, IN 31 May (JJ). The total count of 238 Pine Siskins was the highest ever in spring for Indiana.

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