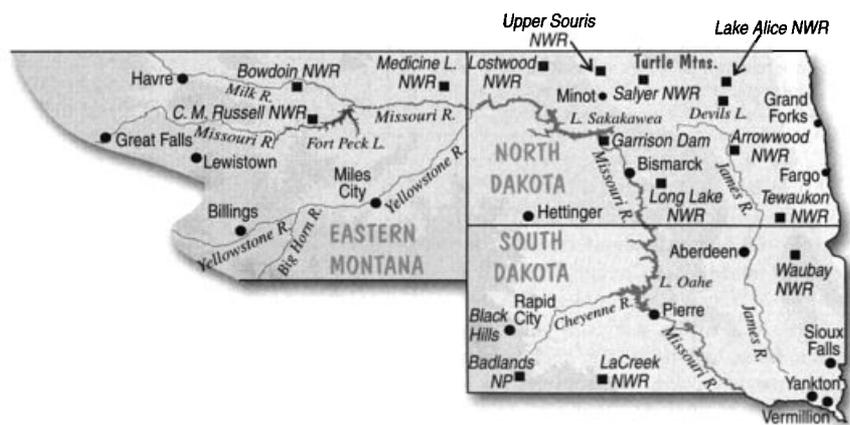


# Northern Great Plains



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Following the trend of the last few years, precipitation levels in March and April were very low. Very little snow remained by the beginning of the season, but March temperatures were cool. April temperatures were above average, but May was cool and wet, again like the past few years. The insect hatch was late, and peak numbers for many migrant species were unimpressive. The changeable weather led to spurts of migration followed by periods of little activity. Late holdovers from invading winter species were notable. Several observers noted the absence or diminished number of Black-capped Chickadees, possibly related to West Nile virus.

### LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

A Red-throated Loon 10 May in Stanley, SD provided the 7th report for the state and only the 2nd in spring (p.a., KM). Common Loons peaked at 70 on the Missouri R. at Ft. Peck, MT 2 May (CC). Accidental in w. South Dakota, a Snowy Egret was in Pennington 20 Apr (p.a., MMM). Northwest of its usual range, a single Snowy Egret at Upper Souris N.W.R., ND 14 May furnished the first record for Renville (DW). Casual in

South Dakota, a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was in Sanborn 10–11 May (p.a., RGR, DC). A White Ibis was photographed and seen by many 16–25 Apr in Kidder, ND (p.a., JJM, DLR, MA). This provided the 5th report for the state. White-faced Ibis reports from w. of the Missouri R. in the Dakotas are on the increase; a single 15 Apr in Hettinger, ND was the farthest afield (JPL).



This White Ibis in Kidder County, North Dakota 16-25 (here 18) April 2005 provided the fifth report for the state. The expansion of *Plegadis ibis* through the continent's center would appear to be followed by the beginnings of a *Eudocimus* invasion! Photograph by Bob Freeberg.

Goose migration through the Region moved quickly, and most were gone by 1 Apr. A Snow Goose seen 7 Mar at Freezeout

L., MT had been collared in nw. Russia in 1994. Schwitters has seen this twelve-year-old bird 13 times since 1995 (MS). About the 17th report for North Dakota, a Brant was in Kidder 27 Mar (RB). Tundra Swans peaked at 15,000 on 24 Mar at Freezeout L., MT, and a family group of 3 Bewick's Swans was noted there 22 Mar (MS). Only the 4th for South Dakota, a Eurasian Wigeon was in Yankton 3–7 Apr (p.a., RD, JC, JSP, DC) A Eurasian Wigeon was at Ft. Peck, MT 21 Mar (CC), and a single at Long Lake N.W.R., ND 3 Apr furnished about the 15th report for the state (p.a., CDE, DNS, HCT) Accidental in spring in North Dakota, single Surf Scoters were at the Grand Forks Lagoons 14 Apr and 4 May (p.a., EEF). A Long-tailed Duck was late in Morton, ND 1–6 May (CDE).

### KITES THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Furnishing the 5th report for South Dakota a Mississippi Kite was in Davison 16 May (p.a., JC, DS). Bald Eagles peaked at 100 at Arrowwood N.W.R., ND 29 Mar, a new high for the state (PRS). The nesting population continues to expand, and this year an occupied nest 27 Mar in McHenry, ND provided a county first (REM). Nesting Merlins also continued their upward trend in North Dakota, with at least four pairs in Minot (REM) and a territorial pair at Icelandic S P 13 Apr (DOL). Providing the first May record for the state, a Gyrfalcon was in Dickey, ND 3 May (PMK).

Rare and local in ne. Montana, a Yellow Rail was calling near Homestead 25 May (EM). Casual in South Dakota, a Common Moorhen was in Union 18 May. Four Whooping Cranes were n. of Malta the first week of Apr (p.a., CG, DP); the species is casual in Montana. Snowy Plovers in Lake 10–12 May (p.a., JSP, RFS) and Hughes, SD 16 May (p.a., RDO, KM) provided only the 2nd and 3rd reports for the state. The 8th report for North Dakota, a Snowy Plover was in Kidder 31 May–5 Jun (p.a., KR). Nine May reports of Whimbrel was higher than usual for spring. Twenty-five Red Knots photographed at Long Lake N.W.R. 19 May was an unusually high count for the Region (AV). An American Woodcock was early 9 Mar in Hughes, SD (KM), and 15 were heard displaying in the Pembina Hills of North Dakota 13 Apr (DOL).

### GULLS THROUGH WRENS

Spring reports of Glaucous Gulls seem to be on the increase. At least 5 were in cen. North Dakota 21 Mar–1 Apr (CDE, HCT, MAG) Two Mar reports came from South Dakota, and a single was at Ft. Peck, MT 20–21 Mar (CC). A potential first for North Dakota a first-year Great Black-backed Gull was in Burleigh 22–25 Mar (p.a., CDE, DNS, HCT) Only the 2nd spring report for the state, a



This Great Black-backed Gull provided the long-awaited first record for North Dakota at the Bismarck Landfill 22 (here) through 25 March 2005. Photograph by Ron Martin.



This Arctic Tern (left) at Pierre, South Dakota 12 (here) through 15 May 2005 furnished the second record for the state. Photograph by Doug Backlund.

Black-legged Kittiwake was at Garrison Dam, ND 15–22 May (p.a., RSL, DMF, DNS). The 2nd report for South Dakota, an Arctic Tern was photographed in Stanley 12–15 May (p.a., DB, KM, RDO, DC).

Eurasian Collared-Doves were reported from 15 South Dakota counties, seven North Dakota counties, and three Montana counties. Constituting the 4th report for North Dakota, a White-winged Dove was at Minot 20 May (p.a., JK). In South Dakota, a



Furnishing the eighth report for North Dakota, this Snowy Plover was in Kidder County 31 May through 5 June (here) 2005; two other state records also come from Kidder County. Photograph by Peder Svingen.

White-winged Dove was reported in Apr from Edmonds (p.a., *fide* DAT), a 5th report for the state. Following last winter's two documented sightings of Great Gray Owl in North Dakota, an injured bird was found 14 May in Grand Forks (p.a., EEF). It was sent to the Minnesota Raptor Rehabilitation Center. Three Northern Saw-whet Owls were calling 13 Apr in the Pembina Hills, ND (DOL). Nesting is suspected but not confirmed in this area. Sapsuckers made an early showing in the Dakotas. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were in Lisbon, ND 29 Mar (PL, REM) and in Lake, SD 5 Mar (JSP). A Red-naped Sapsucker was in Lawrence, SD 15 Apr (DGP).

An Eastern Phoebe singing at Medicine

Lake 23–24 May provided the 7th report for Montana (p.a., TR). The 13th report for South Dakota, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was noted in Bon Homme 22 May (p.a., RM). Following a fresh fall of 15–20 cm of snow near Ashland, MT 12 May, up to 20 Western and Cassin's Kingbirds were seen attending beehives in the area (JM).

Casual in North Dakota away from the Badlands, a Violet-green Swallow was in Morton 15 May (p.a., HCT). Rare in Montana, a Purple Martin was at Medicine Lake 12 May (SC). The latest report for North Dakota, a Winter Wren was in Grand Forks 20 May (EEF).

### THRUSHES THROUGH WEAVER FINCHES

Following last winter's invasion, several late Townsend's Solitaires were noted in the Dakotas. Reports included 2 May at J. Clark Salyer N.W.R., ND (GAE), 22 May in Hettinger, ND (JPL), and 18 May in Hughes, SD (KM). Providing the 6th and 7th reports for Montana, Wood Thrushes were seen 28 May on the Tongue R. (p.a., JM) and 30 May at Westby (p.a., TN). On the heels of last winter's numbers of Varied Thrushes, several were noted lingering into May in the Dakotas. Singles were in Minot, ND 4 May (REM) and in Bismarck, ND 8 May (CDE). The latest was an individual in Lawrence, SD 28 May (DGP). Casual in Montana, a Northern Mockingbird was at Medicine Lake N.W.R. 18 May (TR, JR, EM). Five Northern Mockingbird reports in North Dakota spanned 9–22 May. Providing the first May report for the state, a Bohemian Waxwing was in Harding, SD 14 May (CEM).

The warbler migration was generally uninspiring, but at nice fallout in Minot, ND

21–22 May produced, among 18 species, 250 Tennessee Warblers, 150 Yellow Warblers, 100 Blackpoll Warblers, and 4 Connecticut Warblers (REM). Furnishing just the 8th report for Montana, a Northern Parula was along the Tongue R. 29 May (p.a., CB). The 11th report for North Dakota, a Prothonotary Warbler was in Morton 7–8 May (p.a., DLR, MA, DNS). Casual in South Dakota, a Worm-eating Warbler was banded 9 May in Brown (p.a., DAT), and a Louisiana Waterthrush was in Lincoln 25 May (p.a., JC). The 8th record for Montana, a Connecticut Warbler was photographed at Ft. Peck 31 May (p.a., SJD). Casual in North Dakota, MacGillivray's Warblers were in Regent 18 May (p.a., JPL) and in Bismarck 22 May (p.a., CDE, HCT). Three Hooded Warblers were noted in Union, Stanley, and Lincoln, SD 8–25 May (p.a., JC, KM).



A remnant of last winter's invasion, this Great Gray Owl was found injured in Grand Forks County, North Dakota 14 May 2005. Photograph by Bob Freeberg.

A Chipping Sparrow was unusual 5 Mar in Gregory, SD (RM). Continuing the trend of the past few years in the Dakotas, a Henslow's Sparrow was in Miner 28–29 May (p.a., JSP, DC, JC). A wintering or early Lincoln's Sparrow was noted in Fall River, SD 11 Mar (JSP). Casual in w. South Dakota, a Northern Cardinal was in Meade 18 Apr



Worm-eating Warbler is considered casual in South Dakota; this one was banded in Aberdeen 9 May 2005. Photograph by Dan Tallman.



Providing an eighth record for Montana, this Connecticut Warbler was at Fort Peck, Valley County 31 May 2005; the most recent prior state record was in 1995. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore.

(EEM). An Eastern Meadowlark was ne. of its typical range in Hyde, SD 17 Mar (NS). Providing the first May report for North Dakota, a pair of Pine Grosbeaks was noted at Lake Ilo N.W.R., Dunn 15 May (DMF). Pine Siskins nested widely in North Dakota after several down years. An Evening Grosbeak was late 23 May in Glasgow, MT (SD). Providing the first record for South Dakota, a Eurasian Tree Sparrow was found dead near Huron, Beadle 29 Apr (p.a., RT). The specimen was preserved (DAT).

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