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## Winter Field Report, December 2006 to February 2007

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## WINTER FIELD REPORT, December 2006 to February 2007

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### INTRODUCTION

Although temperatures varied substantially during the winter, the winter average temperature was above normal. There were noticeably more individuals of "half-hardy" species reported, possibly as a consequence. These included Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Mourning Dove, Loggerhead Shrike, Hermit Thrush, and Yellow-rumped Warbler.

Otherwise, the period was unremarkable ornithologically.

### ABBREVIATIONS

BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co; CBC: Christmas Bird Count; Cem: Cemetery; FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co; GPD: Gavins Point Dam, Cedar-Knox Cos; HCR: Harlan Co Res, Harlan Co; LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co; LO: L Ogallala, Keith Co; m.ob.: many observers; NC: Nature Center; NOURC: Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee; NWR: National Wildlife Refuge; PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co; Res: Reservoir; S-BOL: Seward-Branched Oak L; SL: Sewage Lagoon(s).

### GAZETTEER

DeSoto NWR: Washington Co; Harvard Marsh WPA: Clay Co; Johnson Res: Gosper-Dawson Cos; Sutherland Res: Lincoln Co; Wildcat Hills: Scotts Bluff-Banner Cos.

### OBSERVERS

AD: Ann Duey, Scottsbluff; AK: Alice Kenitz, Gering; AO: Alan Orr, Cedar Falls, IA; AS: Audrey Sterkel, Sidney; BB: Bob Barry, Missouri Valley, IA; BFH: Bill F. Huser, South Sioux City; B&DW: Bruce & Donna Walgren, Casper, WY; CH: Carolyn Hall, Bassett; CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, Bellevue; DH: Dave Heidt, Norfolk; DK: Dan Kim, Grand Island; DL: Dan Leger, Lincoln; DSt: Dave Stage, Elkhorn/Omaha; DW: Duane Wolff, Norfolk; D&CN: Don and Colleen Noecker, Albion; D&JP: Don & Jan Paseka, Ames; EB: Elliott Bedows, Bellevue; GB: Gary Berthelsen, Lincoln; G&WH: Glen & Wanda Hoge, Alma; JGr: Jan Greer, Council Bluffs, IA; JEt: James Etherton, Doniphan; JF: John Flavin, Chadron; JG: Joe Gubanyi, Seward; JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Lincoln; JJ: Jan Johnson, Wakefield; JK: J. Kirk, Lincoln; JM: John Miller, Lincoln; JR: Juanita Rice, Fairmont; JT: Jerry Toll, Omaha; KD: Kathy DeLara, Mitchell; KK: Ken Kranik, Sterling, CO; KL: Keith Lacy, Lincoln; LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln; LK: Lee Kenitz, Gering; LO: Linda Ollinger, Wilsonville; LR: Lanny Randolph, Gibbon; LRB: Linda R. Brown, Lincoln; L&CF: Laurence & Carol Falk, Nebraska City; L&BP: Loren & Babs Padelford, Bellevue; MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton; NB: Norma Brockmoller,

Winside; PD: Paul Dunbar, Hastings; PJ: Pete Janzen, Wichita, KS; PR: Paul Roisen, Sioux City, IA; RD: Roger Dietrich, Yankton, SD; RE: Rick Eades, Lincoln; RG: Ruth Green, Bellevue; RH: Robin Harding, Gibbon; RL: Richard Luehrs, Kearney; RSg: Ruben Siegfried, Scottsbluff; SJD: Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA; TEL: Thomas E. Labedz, Lincoln; TJW: T.J. Walker, Brady; TS: Terry Sohl, Brandon, SD; WF: William Flack, Madison; WM: Wayne Mollhoff, Ashland; WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA.

#### SPECIES ACCOUNTS

- Greater White-fronted Goose:** Unexpectedly late were 2 at LO 28 Dec (SJD) and 5 at Desoto NWR 3 Jan (BB). First arrivals reported were in Gage and Lancaster Cos 26 Feb (WF); several hundred were between North Platte and York 27 Feb (AO).
- Snow Goose:** Large numbers arrived "overnight" in cen. Nebraska 20 Feb (JET), with 2000 at Fairmont SL 20 Feb (JR) and 7000 at Harvard Marsh two days later (PD).
- Ross's Goose:** Arrival was at the end of Feb. A dark morph bird photographed at Harvard Marsh 26 Feb (PD) was Nebraska's 5th record (<http://ph.groups.yahoo.com/group/NEBirds/photos/browse/88e1?b=17&m=t&o=0>).
- Cackling Goose:** Wintering birds are most numerous in cen. and w. Nebraska; two in Sarpy Co 1 Jan (L&BP) and another (probably the resident bird) there 1 Feb (WF), one at GPD 5 Jan (BFH), and one in Lancaster Co 28 Jan (LE) were easterly. Best count was an excellent 400 at Johnson Res 27 Dec (SJD).
- Canada Goose:** Largest counts were 6381 on the Scottsbluff CBC 16 Dec (fide AK) and 6100 at DeSoto NWR 3 Jan (BB).
- Trumpeter Swan:** Traditional wintering areas in the Sandhills hold large numbers; a Nebraska Game and Parks survey 2 Jan found 100 on the Loup River and 66 on Birdwood Creek (fide JGJ). Unusual were 5-10 at DeSoto NWR through the period; 10 were present 17 Jan, 31 Jan, and 7 Feb (BB).
- Wood Duck:** Unusual mid-winter stragglers were 2-3 on Salt Creek in Lincoln 28 Jan and 4 Feb (LE). There are only 18 reports 6 Jan-17 Feb.
- Gadwall:** Over-wintering is unusual; candidates were 10 at GPD 20 Jan (RD), one in Sarpy Co 1 Feb (WF), and at least one at Scottsbluff SL 5 Feb (KD).
- American Wigeon:** As with Gadwall, over-wintering is unusual; 1-2 were reported from Scottsbluff SL 5 Feb (KD), and Polk and Platte Cos 8 Feb (WF).
- Mallard:** Best counts were 28,700 at DeSoto NWR 20 Dec (BB), 16,000 at Johnson Res 27 Dec (SJD), and 12,000 at Sutherland Res the same day (SJD).
- Northern Shoveler:** The only mid-winter report was from Scottsbluff SL 5 Feb (KD); over-wintering is not expected away from the North Platte Valley. As many as 109 were still present for the Lincoln CBC 17 Dec, a record high (fide LRB).
- Northern Pintail:** Routine reports.
- Green-winged Teal:** A good mid-winter count was the 34-35 over-wintering on a spring-fed stream at FF 27 Jan-11 Feb (CNK). This species is often found in mid-winter.
- Canvasback:** Rather late stragglers were 12 in Sarpy Co 10 Jan (CNK) and 5 in Lincoln 11 Jan (LE). Over-wintering is rare.

- Redhead:** Twelve in Lincoln 1 Jan, dwindling to 4 there on 11 Jan (LE), were late. Fewer than usual were reported for the period.
- Ring-necked Duck:** Usually only casual in mid-winter away from the North Platte Valley, there were several reported. A male apparently over-wintering was on Salt Creek in Lincoln 28 Jan and 4 Feb (LE), 6 probable early arrivals were at a bubbler in Schuyler 7 Feb (WF), and singles were in Colfax Co 7 Feb (WF), and Polk and Platte Cos 8 Feb (WF). As with other diving ducks, spring arrival coincides with ice break-up, sometimes in early to mid-Feb.
- Greater Scaup:** Unusually late for the location was one in Lincoln 9 Jan (JGJ). An excellent count was the 86 at LM as late as 27 Dec (SJD).
- Lesser Scaup:** Rare mid-winter reports away from the North Platte Valley were 13 in Scotts Bluff Co 9 Jan (KD), 2 in Sarpy Co 10 Jan (CNK), and 1-4 at 3 locations in Lincoln 11 Jan-4 Feb (JGJ,LE).
- Black Scoter:** A female/immature was at BOL 1 Dec (LE) for the only report.
- Bufflehead:** A rare mid-winter report at the location was one in Scotts Bluff Co 26 Jan (KK).
- Common Goldeneye:** Best count was a moderate 669 at LM 28 Dec (SJD).
- Barrow's Goldeneye:** A female at Scottsbluff SL 27 Feb (KD) was at a regular wintering location.
- Hooded Merganser:** Routine reports.
- Common Merganser:** Best count was a relatively moderate 11,750 at LM 28 Dec (SJD).
- Red-breasted Merganser:** Rather late, although at a regular wintering location for small numbers, were the 6 at LM 27 Dec (SJD). GPD may be a regular wintering site also: 3-9 were there 20-28 Jan (RD).
- Ruddy Duck:** Rather late were 5 at Ogallala 27-28 Dec (SJD); the only report of a spring arrival was of one in Scotts Bluff Co 28 Feb (AK).
- Gray Partridge:** The 4 west of Creighton 27 Jan were one of only 3 sightings in recent years (MB). No others were reported; numbers in the state are at a low currently.
- Ring-necked Pheasant:** A large aggregation of 100-150 birds, about half males, was present in sw. Dixon Co during the last two weeks of Feb (JJ).
- Sharp-tailed Grouse:** Routine reports.
- Greater Prairie-Chicken:** Best counts were 100+ ne. of Brady 28 Jan (TJW) and 97 in Boone Co 17 Jan (WM).
- Wild Turkey:** Routine reports.
- Northern Bobwhite:** Routine reports.
- Common Loon:** Lingering very late were single juveniles at LM and Sutherland Res 27 Dec (SJD).
- Red-necked Grebe:** A juvenile at LM 27-28 Dec (SJD) was rather late, and one of only about 30 fall records for the state.
- Western Grebe:** Since the 1990s, over-wintering has occurred at LM or Sutherland Res; this winter "a few" were still at the latter location 7 Jan (TJW).
- Clark's Grebe:** One was at LM 28 Dec (SJD); there are only 3 later records, all at LM, two of which involved over-wintering.
- American White Pelican:** Late away from favored wintering sites like Sutherland Res was one on the North Platte River in Lincoln Co 3 Jan (JGJ). Rather early was one at HCR 25 Feb (G&WH); wintering has occurred there.
- Double-crested Cormorant:** A juvenile lingered at LM until 28 Dec (SJD); there are few later reports.

- Great Blue Heron:** Numbers are lowest in Jan; one at Lincoln 11 Jan (JM) was unexpected, although as many as 14 were still present for the CBC there 17 Dec (fide LRB).
- Turkey Vulture:** First reported was one rather early at Alliance 26 Feb (KK). Apparently Nebraska's first documented winter record, pending NOURC approval, was one near Gering 15 Jan (AK, LK, details). This was probably the same bird reported at the Riverside Zoo in Scottsbluff 11 Jan by the zoo's raptor specialist (fide AK).
- Bald Eagle:** A total of 18 northward migrants in 3 kettles were about on time over Sarpy Co 11 Feb (CNK). As is usual, an adult was incubating by 27 Feb in Loup Co (CH).
- Northern Harrier:** An excellent count was 52 at the west end of LM 27 Dec (SJD). Seven were feeding on goose carcasses at Harvard Marsh 26 Feb (PD); this appears to be an unusual food item for harriers.
- Sharp-shinned Hawk:** An excellent CBC tally was the 6 at S-BOL 16 Dec (fide JG).
- Cooper's Hawk:** The 4 on the S-BOL CBC 16 Dec (fide JG) was a good count.
- Northern Goshawk:** The 2 reports, about the norm for a winter, were of singles near Scottsbluff 12 Dec (KD) and near North Platte 6 Jan (TJW).
- Red-shouldered Hawk:** The only report was of one in e. Richardson Co 22 Feb (RE). NE reports are even fewer in winter than in summer, but with a recent "explosion of extra-limital reports" in KS (fide PJ), reports in NE might be expected to increase.
- Red-tailed Hawk:** The 86 on the S-BOL CBC 16 Dec (fide JG) was an excellent CBC total. A pair was finishing a nest near HCR 25 Feb (G&WH).
- Ferruginous Hawk:** Routine reports.
- Rough-legged Hawk:** A good CBC count was the 14 at Harrison 2 Jan (fide WM).
- Golden Eagle:** Routine reports.
- American Kestrel:** Routine reports.
- Merlin:** Routine reports.
- Prairie Falcon:** Easternmost were singles in Seward Co 12 Jan (JGJ) and Sarpy Co 16 Feb (CNK). Although rare, a few occur in extreme e. NE each winter. Best count was 5-6 in Scotts Bluff Co 5 Feb (KD).
- Peregrine Falcon:** The pair that nests on the Capitol Building at Lincoln may be resident; singles were seen 19 Jan (JGJ) and 21 Jan (GB), but 2 together were not seen until 26 Feb (GB). The Omaha pair, Zeus, in his 12th year, and Hera, in her 2nd, wintered in the vicinity ([www.woodmen.com/falcons](http://www.woodmen.com/falcons)).
- King Rail:** One (unseen) near Brady 15 Dec was identified by its single "kek" calls, in contrast to the doubled "kek-kek" calls of Virginia Rail (TJW); if indeed it was this species, it would be the 2nd record in Dec for the state, the other was on 17 Dec near Lewellen.
- Virginia Rail:** As has become expected, 2 were at LO 28 Dec (SJD).
- American Coot:** A few will linger into mid-winter wherever non-moving open water occurs, usually spring-fed or aerated sites. Thus 73 were at Holmes L, Lincoln, 11 Jan, but a storm reduced the number to 2 by 15 Jan (LE). Similarly, a few were at Scottsbluff SL 5 Feb (KD), and 5 were at GPD 16 Jan (MB).

- Sandhill Crane:** Last reported for fall was an adult rather late in Scotts Bluff Co 1 Dec (AD); Dec records are surprisingly few. First returning birds were at Rowe Sanctuary by 5 Feb (fide RL); earliest are often seen in late Jan. Some 1000 were in Hall Co by 22 Feb (PD) and 10,000 were between Chapman and Kearney 27 Feb, where "the season has started with a bang, not a trickle" (DK).
- Killdeer:** Midwinter reports are expected at certain sites in the North Platte Valley, such as the 3 near Morrill 20 Jan (KD), but elsewhere, reports are few. Thus one in w. Douglas Co 4 Feb (DSt) was unusual. One or two had returned to Lancaster Co by 28 Feb (LE, JM).
- Greater Yellowlegs:** Only the 6th record mid-Jan to mid-Feb was one at LO 28 Dec (SJD; details).
- Baird's Sandpiper:** One at PL in late Nov was seen again 1 Dec (LE), only the 4th Dec report for the state.
- Wilson's Snipe:** Reports are fewest mid-Jan to mid-Feb; 2 were in Scotts Bluff Co 15 Jan (KD) and another was near GPD 16 Jan (MB).
- Franklin's Gull:** Singles appear in mid-winter on occasion, usually in alt. plumage, and are probably very early migrants. Singles were at GPD 5 Jan in alt. plumage (BFH) and at BOL 12-15 Jan (LE), the 16th and 17th mid-winter records.
- Ring-billed Gull:** Best count was 1200 at LM 27 Dec (SJD).
- California Gull:** The 34 ads. still at LM 27-28 Dec (SJD) was a good count. Few remain into Jan, although over-wintering of a few birds is expected at LM. Surprising was the appearance of 30 with a group of 500+ Ring-billed Gulls at HCR 23 Feb; the observers lived for many years in Washington and are familiar with this species (G&WH, details). The sighting suggests some movement north-south within the Great Plains; there are fairly regular sightings of this species southward to Texas.
- Herring Gull:** The 293 at LM 28 Dec was considered "fewer than usual" at that time (SJD).
- Thayer's Gull:** The only reports were of one in Lincoln 30 Nov-1 Dec (JGJ,LE) and 3 (2 ads. and a juv.) at LM 27-28 Dec (SJD).
- Glaucous-winged Gull:** A gull photographed at LM 28 Dec looked very much like a juv. of this species, but also had some features reminiscent of Herring Gull; it thus was most likely an introgressant between the two species (SJD); a similar bird was photographed (not nearly as well!) at LO a few years ago (JGJ,WRS).
- Lesser Black-backed Gull:** This now-regular migrant was reported at 3 sites: single adults were at LM 27-28 Dec (SJD), GPD 1 Jan (TS, photo), and BOL 5-12 Jan (JGJ, m.ob.). The BOL bird is the latest ever; there are no records of over-wintering.
- Slaty-backed Gull:** During the period that one was present at nearby L Manawa in Iowa, somewhat surprisingly only a single sighting from Nebraska was received, of a bird at Offutt Base L, Sarpy Co, at 3 pm 21 Dec (RG). No details were provided. Sightings were reported from L Manawa on 21 Dec before and after this sighting; the report would be a first state record for Nebraska if accepted by the NOURC.
- Glaucous Gull:** There were 3 reports involving 4 birds: a juv. was at BOL 10 Dec-12 Jan (LE, JGJ photo, m.ob.), another juv. was at LM 27-28 Dec (SJD), and two (un-aged) were at HCR 25 Feb (G&WH).
- Rock Pigeon:** The 842 on the Ames CBC 3 Jan (D&JP) was among the highest CBC counts, most of which are from Lincoln.

- Eurasian Collared-Dove:** The last county to record this species is Keya Paha; 4 were there 18 Feb (WF). The state's first record was at Shelton in 1997. Best counts were 88 on the Scottsbluff CBC 16 Dec (fide AK), 46 on the Crawford CBC 3 Jan (B&DW), and 40 at Stapleton 28 Jan (TJW). Twigs were being gathered 23 Feb in a Sidney yard where 4 broods were raised last summer (AS).
- Mourning Dove:** More than usual were noted in southern and eastern parts of the state, including 8 as far north as Norfolk on the CBC 23 Dec (fide DW), as well as 39 in Alma 6 Jan, 33 on the Ames CBC 3 Jan (D&JP), and 32 in the observers' Bellevue yard 31 Jan (L&BP). Somewhat unusual were 2 near Doniphan 1 Feb (JEt) and 12 in Scotts Bluff Co 21 Dec (KD).
- Inca Dove:** Only the 6th NE record was one at a Keystone feeder 28 Dec (SJD, photo). All 6 records have been of singles at feeders in winter.
- Barn Owl:** Only the 8th record for Dec-Feb since 1976 was one photographed at LO 28 Dec (SJD). Most depart by late Oct.
- Eastern Screech-Owl:** Routine reports.
- Great Horned Owl:** Routine reports.
- Snowy Owl:** The only report was of a juv. female at LM 27-28 Dec (SJD, photo).
- Barred Owl:** Somewhat westerly were 2 at Rock Creek Station, Jefferson Co, 18 Feb (RE).
- Long-eared Owl:** Best count was 14 on the S-BOL CBC 16 Dec (LE, fide JG). One in deciduous woodland in Washington Co 9 Feb was considered unusual (JT).
- Short-eared Owl:** An excellent count was the 17 at the west end of LM 27 Dec (SJD). An additional 7 reports of 11 birds were received, all from the Platte and Loup Valleys southward.
- Northern Saw-whet Owl:** The only reports were of singles on the DeSoto-Boyer Chute CBC 23 Dec (WRS,EB) and the Norfolk CBC the same day (fide DW).
- Belted Kingfisher:** Routine reports.
- Red-headed Woodpecker:** One on the Norfolk CBC 23 Dec (fide DW) was northerly for the date.
- Red-bellied Woodpecker:** Westernmost was one during Count Week on the Scottsbluff CBC 16 Dec (fide AK). A few have established in Scotts Bluff Co in recent years.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** More than usual were found through the period in the southeast; about 8 in all. Westernmost were 2 males at Rock Creek Station, Jefferson Co, 18 Feb (RE).
- Downy Woodpecker:** Routine reports.
- Hairy Woodpecker:** Routine reports.
- Northern Flicker:** Routine reports.
- Pileated Woodpecker:** This species appears to be consolidating its fairly low numbers in the relatively limited habitat available in the lower Missouri Valley. One or two were reported from a regular location, FF and neighboring Haworth Park, Bellevue, through the period (CNK). Away from this area, one was in the Hummel Park, Omaha, area 8 Dec (fide JGr) and another was in Richardson Co 22 Feb (RE).
- Northern Shrike:** An excellent CBC count was the 8 at S-BOL 16 Dec (fide JG).
- Loggerhead Shrike:** Four were reported for the period, more than usual, although all were from the southeast, as expected. Singles were on the S-BOL CBC 16 Dec, the 2nd in 14 years (fide JG), in Otoe Co 22 Dec (L&CF), in Lancaster Co 29 Jan (LE), and in Richardson Co 22 Feb (RE).

**Blue Jay:** Routine reports.

**Pinyon Jay:** None were reported.

**Clark's Nutcracker:** None were reported.

**Black-billed Magpie:** Low numbers continue to be a concern; the species was missed on the S-BOL CBC 16 Dec for only the 3rd time in 14 years (fide JG), and, even in the west, the 9 found on the Scottsbluff CBC 16 Dec was the lowest tally since 1976 (fide AK).

**American Crow:** Routine reports.

**Horned Lark:** After driving 103 miles on 16 Feb through windy, snow-covered countryside in Lancaster, Gage, and Saline Cos, the 1019 Horned Larks found were concentrated at 3 cattle feedlots in Saline Co (LE). This species is well-known for its attraction to bare ground in snowy conditions, usually along roadsides.

**Black-capped Chickadee:** Some apparently good news for this species was this year's Lincoln CBC tally of 79, up from 26, 27, and 56 in 2003-2005 (fide LRB).

**Tufted Titmouse:** Routine reports.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Reports were consistent with an average, non-invasion winter for this species.

**White-breasted Nuthatch:** Routine reports.

**Pygmy Nuthatch:** Routine reports.

**Carolina Wren:** Westernmost were two pairs, a pair wintering at each of 2 locations in North Platte; they were still present 14 Feb (fide TJW). Other reports were from the east, north to Ames (D&JP).

**Winter Wren:** Four CBCs, all in the southeast as expected, reported Winter Wrens: DeSoto NWR on 23 Dec (fide JT), Lincoln on 17 Dec (fide LRB), Omaha on 16 Dec (D&JP), and S-BOL on 16 Dec (fide JG).

**Marsh Wren:** One was unexpected as far north as the GPD area 16 Jan (MB), while another on the LM CBC 28 Dec (SJD) continues regular CBC occurrences there.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** The 10 on the Ames CBC 3 Jan (D&JP) was a good count for the date; even further north and west were 3 on the Beaver Valley CBC 28 Dec (D&CN) and 2 at LM 28 Dec (SJD). Wintering is expected only in the southeast.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** One on the Scottsbluff CBC 16 Dec was the first there since 1966 (AK); by Dec this species is rare away from the southeast.

**Eastern Bluebird:** Recent years have seen this species becoming more conspicuous in late fall and early winter; thus noteworthy were 5 at Bridgeport in Feb (KK), as many as 65 on the Ames CBC 3 Jan (D&JP), and a count high of 143 on the S-BOL CBC 16 Dec, where the 80 last year was the previous high (fide JG).

**Mountain Bluebird:** Routine reports.

**Townsend's Solitaire:** Easternmost was one on the S-BOL CBC 16 Dec (fide JG).

**Hermit Thrush:** This species does not occur in Jan-Feb every year, and so the 5 reports of 7 birds were a surprise. Probably the same bird was seen twice in a Lincoln yard 31 Jan and 24 Feb (RE), one was in Cedar Co 5 Feb (WF), 3 were at FF 11 Feb (CNK), one was at Dodge Park, Omaha, 20 Feb (fide JT), and one was in Bellevue 22 Feb (EB). One on the Calamus CBC 23 Dec was also unexpected (fide DH).

**American Robin:** Routine reports.

**Varied Thrush:** Three were reported, all in the southeast, including 2 different birds in Lancaster Co. One appeared in mid-Dec near Roca and was still present at



the end of the period (fide DL,LE), and the other was in Lincoln 15-25 Feb (JK, KL). A third was in Nebraska City for a few days up to and including 23 Jan (L&CF, photo). These are only the 9th-11th records since 1991, out of a total of 37 for the state, but 6 of these have been reported 2005-2007.

**Northern Mockingbird:** Over-wintering is rare, with fewest reports in Feb. However, one was in Lancaster Co 28 Feb (LE). The only other report was of one on the Lincoln CBC 17 Dec (fide LRB).

**Brown Thrasher:** The only report was of one at a suet feeder on the S-BOL CBC 16 Dec (fide JG). Dec reports in the southeast are not unusual.

**European Starling:** Best CBC count was a moderate 7872 at Norfolk 23 Dec (fide DW); elsewhere, 4500 were at a cattle feedlot in Lancaster Co 28 Feb (LE).

**Bohemian Waxwing:** The only reports were of a flock of 60 near Chadron 7-8 Feb and a smaller flock there 21 Feb (JF).

**Cedar Waxwing:** Best count was 400 at Brady 23 Feb (TJW).

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** Other than a single female on the LM CBC 28 Dec (SJD), reports were from the southeast. There are few reports after mid-Jan and in Feb, and so surprising were the 4 reports of 6 birds 14 Jan-20 Feb: a female remained in the observer's Bellevue yard 14 Jan-5 Feb (CNK), one was in Platte Co 4 Feb (LR,RH), two were in Lincoln 6 Feb (LE), and two were at Dodge Park, Omaha, 20 Feb (fide JT). These Feb reports are only the 13th-16th for the state.

**Pine Warbler:** Two birds near North Platte 7 Dec were identified from the observer's description as males of this species (TJW); this species is cold-tolerant for a wood-warbler, with at least 5 prior Dec reports.

**Spotted Towhee:** Routine reports.

**American Tree Sparrow:** Routine reports.

**Fox Sparrow:** There are only 4 reports of over-wintering; latest fall dates are in Jan. Thus singles in Nebraska City 17 Feb (L&CF) and near Roca 23 Feb (CNK) were probably early migrants; there were 2 prior late Feb reports.

**Song Sparrow:** Routine reports.

**Swamp Sparrow:** Very rare in late Jan and in Feb, singles in Cass and Sarpy Cos 1 Feb (WF) were thus of significance.

**White-throated Sparrow:** Midwinter reports are rare, even in the southeast, and so of interest was one singing in Lincoln 26 Jan (TEL). A Bellevue feeder hosted at least one for most of the period except 11 Jan-12 Feb (L&BP).

**White-crowned Sparrow:** Rare also in mid-winter, especially in the east, one was in Omaha 11 Jan (L&BP). Wintering is more usual in the west; some 19 remained in a Mitchell yard through 15 Jan (KD).

**Harris's Sparrow:** Less common westward, 7 appeared at a North Platte feeder 8 Jan after a month's absence (TJW), 2 were at Wilsonville 18 Feb (LO), and two were at Keystone 28 Dec (SJD).

**Dark-eyed Junco:** Best tally was the 940 on the S-BOL CBC 16 Dec, including 4 "Oregon" Juncos (fide JG). Best easterly count of "Oregon" Juncos was the 13 on the Lincoln CBC 16 Dec (fide LRB). The only "White-winged" Juncos reported were 2 on the Crawford CBC 3 Jan (B&DW) and one on the LM CBC 28 Dec (SJD); this form is uncommon in winter.

**Lapland Longspur:** Best count was 1000 in Dodge Co 21 Feb, most flying northeast (D&JP). A single flock of 800 was in Lancaster Co 5 Jan (LE).

**Snow Bunting:** More than usual were reported, including 36 on the LM CBC 28 Dec (SJD), 21 on the Harrison CBC 2 Jan (WM), and a total of about 15 in cen. and e. Nebraska (m. ob.).

- Northern Cardinal:** A female wintered near Gering and another was counted on the Scottsbluff CBC 16 Dec (AK); there is a small population in Scotts Bluff Co. First song reported was in Lincoln 25 Jan, 6 days earlier than the observer's previous earliest (RE).
- Red-winged Blackbird:** Wintering flocks are unusual, but several were noted: 300 wintered near Gibbon (LR,RH), birds were present through the period in Scotts Bluff Co (AK), including a surprising 2000 there 25 Jan (RSg), and 3000 were near Alma 19-25 Jan (G&WH), likely very early migrants. First "yard male" noted was in Fairmont 22 Feb (JR).
- Eastern Meadowlark:** Routine reports.
- Western Meadowlark:** First singing birds reported were in Lancaster Co 16 Feb (LE). A good mid-winter count was the 100+ in Washington Co 24 Jan (JT).
- Yellow-headed Blackbird:** Last reported was an adult male near Alma 23 Dec (G&WH).
- Rusty Blackbird:** More than usual were reported, including an excellent CBC tally of 34 at S-BOL 16 Dec (fide JG). Other CBC reports were of 5 at Ponca SP 23 Dec (fide BFH) and 6 at Norfolk the same day (fide DW). A few winter in the southeast; 2 were at an Ames-area feeder 4 Feb (D&JP), one was at Madison 6 Feb (WF), and 12 were at a Clatonia feedlot 16 Feb (LE).
- Brewer's Blackbird:** The only report of this rare winter visitor was of a single on the Lincoln CBC 17 Dec (LE).
- Common Grackle:** Unexpected were the 60 near Alma 19 Jan, with 54 still there 8 Feb (G&WH); wintering occurs in the south and east most years, but usually singles or very small groups.
- Great-tailed Grackle:** Best count was the 80 near Alma 1 Dec (G&WH), while unexpected mid-winter reports were of 1-7 "hanging around Lincoln" 19 Jan-4 Feb (LE).
- Brown-headed Cowbird:** Last were two rather northerly on the Norfolk CBC 23 Dec (fide DW). Two males in Wayne Co 11 Feb (BFH) may have been early migrants or possibly wintered in or near Nebraska.
- Purple Finch:** Numbers were generally low, although 21 were counted on the S-BOL CBC 16 Dec (fide JG). Elsewhere, about 15 were reported from the eastern half of the state (m. ob.). The only report from the west, where rare, was of one near Mitchell 2 Dec (KD).
- House Finch:** Routine reports.
- Red Crossbill:** Routine reports.
- Common Redpoll:** The only reports were of 9 at Boyer Chute NWR 23 Dec (EB,WRS), 2 on the LM CBC 28 Dec (SJD), 8 on the Harrison CBC 2 Jan (WJM), and singles at feeders in Winside 30 Jan (NB) and Lincoln 18 Feb (RE).
- Pine Siskin:** Numbers were low except in the west, where 76 were counted on the Scottsbluff CBC 16 Dec (fide AK) and 50 were at Wildcat Hills NC 22 Feb (AK). Only about 20 were reported elsewhere (m. ob.).
- American Goldfinch:** Best CBC count was the 705 at S-BOL 16 Dec (fide JG).
- House Sparrow:** Routine reports.
- Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** Potentially a first state record, one was photographed near Norfolk 3 Feb (MB) and again there 11 Feb (PR,BFH). This species has been gradually expanding northwestward in Iowa over the last few years; the nearest Iowa record is from Greene Co, in west-central Iowa.