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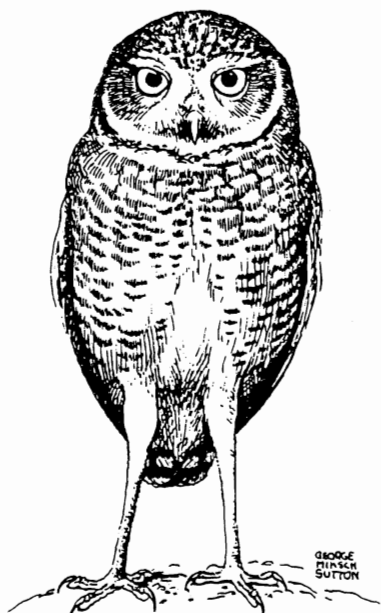
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WINTER FIELD REPORT, December 2001 to February 2002

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INTRODUCTION

This winter was generally mild with most parts of the state at least somewhat dry. The most interesting avian phenomena were a major incursion of White-winged Crossbills and a warm-up in late January which resulted in several waterfowl species putting in very early appearances. Because of the latter, it was difficult to assess the status (wintering or migrant) of birds reported in late January to early February from major reservoirs and waterfowl concentration spots without some information on ice conditions. Thanks to Larry Einemann, I had detailed information about ice conditions at Branched Oak L, but I would appreciate a few notes on other reservoirs during the winter.

Jan Johnson pointed out that my reporting of records from the Wakefield School feeders that she maintains did not make it clear that these feeders are in fact in Wayne County, as are the southern 3 blocks of the town. My apologies; I believe (hope) that this may only be a problem in the Winter 2000-2001 report, recently published in Nebraska Bird Review.

This winter offered many items of interest; a brief summary follows. Surprising late sightings included the 2nd-latest ever American Bittern; the 4th-latest Baltimore Oriole; and 5 species of shorebirds--most of which were spotted at Pawnee L--that were as much as 3 weeks later than previous latest dates. In contrast, several waterfowl species had influxes in late January, noticeably Greater White-fronted Goose. The Eurasian Collared-Dove continues to increase, although so far it has avoided major population centers in the east. A major invasion of White-winged Crossbills occurred, and Snowy Owls were more in evidence than usual. Noticeable for their absence were American Black Duck and Evening Grosbeak. Rarities were unspectacular; the best were 5 species usually not encountered in a winter report: Cinnamon Teal, Sage Thrasher, Pine Warbler, Smith's Longspur, and Lesser Goldfinch. Also good finds were Tufted Duck, Mew Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Mountain Chickadee, and Varied Thrush.

I encourage as many of you as can to report electronically, either by email to me (address above) or to NEBIRDS (go to yahoogroups.com).

ABBREVIATIONS

ADF: Arbor Day Farm, Otoe Co; BBS: Breeding Bird Survey; BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co; CBC: Christmas Bird Count; CCM: Clear Creek Marshes, Garden and Keith Cos; Cem: Cemetery; FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co; GSP: Grandpa's Steakhouse Pond, Kearney; HCR: Harlan Co Res, Harlan Co; ICSP: Indian Cave SP, Nemaha and Richardson Cos; LM: L McConaughy Keith Co; LO: L Ogallala, Keith Co; m.ob.: many observers; NC: Nature Center; NM: National Monument; NNF: Nebraska National Forest; NWR: National Wildlife Refuge; PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co; RWB: Rainwater Basin, southcentral Nebraska; SCP: Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co; SL: Sewage Lagoon(s); SP: State Park; UNK: University of Nebraska-Kearney; UNMC: University of Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha.

GAZETTEER

Boyer Chute NWR: Washington Co; DeSoto NWR: Washington Co; L Minatare: Scotts Bluff Co; Rowe Sanctuary: Buffalo Co; Sutherland Res: Lincoln Co; Twin Lakes: Seward Co.

OBSERVERS

AB: Alison Beringer, Princeton, NJ; AK: Alice Kenitz, Gering; AS: Audrey Sterkel, Sidney; B: Birdline; BFH: Bill F. Huser, South Sioux City; BG: Betty Grenon, Omaha; BKP: Brandon K. Percival, Pueblo West, CO; BP: Babs Padelford, Bellevue; CF: Carol Falk, Nebraska City; CNK: Clem N. Claphake, Bellevue; CW: Chris Wood, Fort Collins, CO; DD: Dean Drawbaugh, Scottsbluff; DF: Doug Faulkner, Fort Collins, CO; DH: Dave Heidt, Norfolk; DP: Don Paseka, Ames; DS: Dave Stage, Elkhorn; DSw: Dave Swanson, Vermillion, SD; EA: Elizabeth Allen, Omaha; EB: Ed Brogie, Wayne; ECT: Edna Claire Thomas, Morrill; EH: Esther Hansen, Yankton, SD; GSH: Gerard S. Harbison, Lincoln; GW: Gertrude Wood, York; HKH: Helen K. Hughson, Mitchell; HW: Harley Winfrey, Gering; JC: Jay Carlisle, Yankton, SD; JE: Justin Enger, Yankton; JE: Joe Fontaine, Fort Collins, CO; JG: Joe Gubanyi, Seward; JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Blair; JJ: Jan Johnson, Wakefield; JP: Jan Paseka, Ames; JT: Jerry Toll, Omaha; GH: Glen Hoge, Alma; KCR: Kathleen Crawford-Rose, Bellevue; KL: Kathy Larson, Mitchell; KN: Kay Niyo, Evergreen, CO; LB: Laurel Badura, Kearney; LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln; LF: Laurence Falk: Nebraska City; LP: Loren Padelford, Bellevue; LR: Larry Randolph, Gibbon; LW: Leona Weed, Alliance; MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton; MM: Marty Mathieson, Shelton; MO: Mark Orsag, Crete; MUs: Moni Usasz, Lincoln;

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SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Common Loon: The only report was of a basic adult seen on the LM CBC on 16 December (SJD, JF). This date is somewhat tardy, although there are a handful of winter records.

Pied-billed Grebe: the one identified at Conestoga L, Lancaster Co, on 22 December (LE) was rather late; additional late birds were found in southeastern Garden Co on 17 December (SJD, JF) and at PL on 16 December (JG).

Horned Grebe: A count of 79 tallied at BOL on 2 December (JGJ) was good for December, while the 4 spotted at LM on 17 December (SJD, JF) were lingering a bit.

Red-necked Grebe: This species has become somewhat expected at LM in recent falls, when individuals have remained as late as early January. This fall 1-2 juveniles were present between 16 and 17 December (SJD, JF, KN).

Eared Grebe: A juvenile seen at LO on 17 December (SJD, JF, KN) represents the latest fall record to date; 2 birds were found there on 16 December.

Western Grebe: A crash in alewives at LM during a relatively mild fall was thought to be the reason for a moderate mid-December count at LM of 122 on the LM CBC on 16 December (SJD, JF). Rather late were 2 spotted at Sutherland Res on 17 December (SJD, JF, KN). LM and Sutherland Res are the only likely locations for this species to remain after early December.

Clark's Grebe: The only sightings were of one included on the LM CBC on 16 December (SJD, JF) and 2 identified there (on LM) the next day (SJD, JF, KN). This report represents only the 6th December record, including a late date of 2 January.

American White Pelican: It seems that singles or small groups (1-4) linger well into December wherever significant open water occurs. There were reports after mid-December of one seen on the DeSoto NWR CBC on 22 December (fide JT); 3 located on the Missouri River at Niobrara on 22 December (MB); one indicated on the BOL CBC on 16

December (JGJ); and one noted on the LM CBC on 16 December (SJD) and seen again the next day (SJD, JF, KN). The three spotted at HCR on 26 January (GH, WH) were early arrivers, as none was reported after 15 December; numbers had grown to 17 on 23 February (GH, WH).

Double-crested Cormorant: The latest were 3 identified at BOL on 22 December (LE) and 6 found on the DeSoto NWR CBC the same day (fide JT). These dates are rather late, although there a few wintering attempts on record.

American Bittern: For a heron, this species is prone to linger rather late at times, but the one photographed sitting on a grill on a deck after a snowstorm at Center, Knox Co, on 27 November (MB) had to be a little disturbed. There is only one later record, for 17 December.

Great Blue Heron: December reports are not unusual, but new CBC count highs included the 6 noted at Scottsbluff on 15 December (fide AK) and the 7 spotted at BOL on 16 December (fide JG). A bit more unusual was the single (wonder why?) identified at BOL on 19 January (LE). Away from the North Platte Valley, mid-winter reports are rare.

Greater White-fronted Goose: Probably the same puff of "warm" weather which brought 3 pelicans to HCR on 26 January deposited 8 white-fronts at Twin Lakes on 24 January (JG). Until this sighting, the earliest arrivals had occurred in the first week of February; the 50+ counted at GSP on 2 February (LR, RH) fit this profile. As many as 1,000 were found at HCR by 26 February (GH, WH). The latest for fall was one seen on the Calamus-Loup CBC on 29 December (fide RH).

Snow Goose: The best counts of fall and spring migrants reached 33,035 on the DeSoto NWR CBC on 22 December (fide JT) and 20,000 at HCR on 17 February (B). The 28,910 on the BOL CBC on 16 December was a high count (JG). The first large group of migrants for spring was the 1,000 spotted over BOL on 27 January (LE), an early date for such a large count. Earlier, and probably all migrants, were the 2 seen at HCR on 20 January (GH, WH), the 4 found at Twin Lakes on 24 January (JG), and the 4 spotted at the North Platte City Park on 26 January (JG, TEL).

Ross's Goose: The best count totaled 50 at HCR on 27 February (B). The three seen at HCR on 20 January (GH, WH) were migrants with Snows, and one identified there on 16 January with Canadas (GH, WH), probably was as well. The 4 Snow Geese spotted at North Platte City Park (see above) were found with 4 Ross's Geese (JG, TEL).

Canada Goose: The best count of wintering birds was the 7,000 which must have packed GSP on 2 Feb (LR, RH). About 2,000 wintered in northern Saunders Co (TH), while the winter flock at BOL peaked at 2,500 on 27 January (LE). The best fall count was the 8,683 tallied on the Scottsbluff CBC on 15 December (fide AK); 8,000 of these were seen at L Minatare (SJD). The first migrants found at South Sioux City, Woodbury Co, appeared on 13 February (BFH).

Trumpeter Swan: The peak count in the LM area reached 26 on 17 December, when 23 adults and 3 juveniles were present (SJD, JF, KN); 25 were there on 26 January (JG, TEL). Two birds were reported at

DeSoto NWR on 5 February (SM); possibly the same two were spotted near Waterloo, Douglas Co, on 17 February (B).

Tundra Swan: The only report was of an immature spotted on the Missouri River near Ponca SP on 8 December; it was being buzzed by an immature Bald Eagle (BFH).

Wood Duck: The two seen on Kiwanis Pond, Douglas Co, on 4 January (B) were unexpected for this rather late date, while the one counted on the Scottsbluff CBC on 15 December (fide AK) was unusual in December that far west.

Gadwall: Uncommon in mid-winter, 3 were identified below Keystone Dam, Keith Co, on 20 January (LR, RH). The 215 found at LO on 16 December (SJD) represents a good count for the date.

American Wigeon: At least one wintered at the Alma South SL (GH, WH); wintering is rare away from the North Platte Valley, where "hundreds" were located in the Morrill-Mitchell area on 7 January (KL, PD, DD). About 10 birds probably wintered in the LM area (LR, RH, JG, TEL). As many as 141 were still found at LO on 16 December (SJD, JF).

American Black Duck: None was reported; this species appears to have slipped to less-than-regular status in the state; it has been considered a rare regular winter visitor in the east ("Birds of Nebraska").

Mallard: The largest counts were of fall migrants: 15,500 at Sutherland Res on 17 December (SJD, JF, KN), and 15,00 at L Minatare on 15 December (SJD, JF).

Cinnamon Teal: A remarkable record was of a male seen in alternate plumage at Medicine Creek Res, Frontier Co, on 9 December (LR, RH). There are, however, two prior December records: 20 December 1980 in Scotts Bluff Co, and one shot in Cass Co in December 1975.

Northern Shoveler: At least 4 were present throughout the period on the Alma South SL (GH, WH); this species is only casual in midwinter away from the North Platte Valley. Two were spotted south of Morrill on 7 January (KL, PD, DD), and 2 were identified at Winters Creek L, Scotts Bluff Co, on 18 January (KL), more expected winter locations.

Northern Pintail: Routine reports.

Green-winged Teal: A good count was the 891 tallied at the west end of LM on 17 December (SJD, JF, KN).

Canvasback: Casual in midwinter, 1-2 were spotted at the Scottsbluff SL on 12 January and on 1 February (JF, KL, m.ob.). The five seen on LO on 20 January (LR, RH) may have been wintering; 38 were spotted there on 17 December (SJD, JF, KN). Early migrants were the 11 identified at Alma South SL on 25 January (GH, WH) and the 2 noted in Cass Co on 27 January (CNK).

Redhead: The 30 found on LO on 20 January (LR, RH) were probably wintering, but the 9 seen at Scottsbluff SL on 31 January (KL, PD, DD) may have been early migrants.

Ring-necked Duck: A good count was the 106 tallied on L Ogallala on 16 December (SJD, JF). Unexpected in midwinter was one seen at Alma

South SL between 11 to 15 January (GH, WH). Probably wintering were the 15 spotted on LO on 20 January (LR, RH); only one was located there on 26 January (JG, TEL). Also early were the 2 identified in Cass Co on 27 January (CNK).

Tufted Duck: A male, probably the same bird which was present the past two winters, was spotted at LO on 16 December (SJD, JF) and again on 19 January (DS), but was not found on 26 January (JG, TEL); it may have left with the "warm" push of southerly air at about that time.

Greater Scaup: The best count was the 54 found at LO on 16 December (SJD, JF). No other reports were received until 20 January, when 5 were present (LR, RH), and on 9 February, when 2 were spotted there (CW, BKP); these birds were probably wintering. Unexpected in midwinter were 2 noted at Scottsbluff SL on 12 January (JF, DF). The latter represents one of only 3 midwinter reports away from LO.

Lesser Scaup: The two birds spotted at LO on 20 January (LR, RH) and the one discovered on the Alma East SL on 11 January (GH, WH) may have been wintering. The best count totaled 403 on the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD).

White-winged Scoter: Only 3 were reported: a juvenile male (SJD, m.ob.) and an adult (LR, RH) identified at LO on 16 December, and a first-year bird seen at Holmes L, Lincoln, on 24 February (LE). The latter sighting is the 2nd-earliest ever for spring.

Long-tailed Duck: At least 5 were reported in December: one found on the Lincoln CBC on 15 December (Don Showen fide TEL) was on Pfizer Pond, Lincoln, where it was seen again on 24 December (TEL); two were located on LO on 17 December (JT), and 2-3 were spotted at the GPD Marina (if not partly in Nebraska, it's close!--DSw, JE, EH). The only spring report was of a female found below GPD on 16 February (JC), the earliest spring sighting to date.

Bufflehead: An excellent count was the 800 tallied for the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD); 785 were located on LO (SJD, JF). The one seen at Alma SL on 7 January, followed by 3 discovered there on 15 January (GH, WH), were probably wintering, but were not reported in December; maybe they were on HCR. Also probably wintering was one seen at GSP on 2 February (LR, RH).

Common Goldeneye: The best count reached 830 at Sutherland Res on 17 December (SJD, JF, KN). As many as 80 spotted at GSP on 2 February (LR, RH) were probably wintering.

Barrow's Goldeneye: The only report was of an adult female spotted at LO on 17 December (SJD, JF, KN); LO is a regular wintering location, with occurrence dates between 13 November and 1 April.

Hooded Merganser: The best count was the 21 tallied on the BOL-Seward CBC on 16 December (fide JG). Midwinter reports included 2 spotted at Winter's Creek L, Scotts Bluff Co, on 18 January (KL), where such records are few; and 1-3 seen at LO between 19 and 20 January (MB, DS, LR, RH). The 5 identified at GSP on 2 February (LR,

RH) may have wintered there, but the one discovered at BOL on 9 February (LE) was probably an early migrant.

Common Merganser: the best count was the 20,000 located at HCR on 17 February (B); 12,000 were estimated there on 15 December for the HCR CBC (fide JGJ). The 600 found at BOL on 27 January (LE) were probably early migrants.

Red-breasted Merganser: Considered "casual" in midwinter ("Birds of Nebraska"), this species appears to winter regularly in small numbers with Common Merganser flocks at large reservoirs such as HCR and LM. The one spotted at HCR between 15 and 20 January (GH, WH) fits in this category. An excellent count for the rather late date was the 32 reported on the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD).

Ruddy Duck: A single seen at LO and reported on the LM CBC on 16 December (SJD, JF) was still there on 19 January (MB, DS); another was found at a sandpit at exit 179 (North Platte East) along I-80 on 16 January (TEL, JG). These signify only the 9th and 10th midwinter reports--half of them from LO/LM.

Bald Eagle: The best count was the 51 recorded on the HCR CBC on 15 December (fide JGJ). Our National Bird was reduced to hanging around deer carcasses in Otoe Co (LF, CF); and 17 were attracted to dead fish being thrown out at a small lake near Offutt Air Base in Sarpy Co (BP, LP). High counts for the respective localities were 27 found at GPD on 25 January (JJ), and a record Scottsbluff CBC count of 19 made on 15 December (fide AK).

Northern Harrier: Males generally predominate in winter in Nebraska; "almost all" of the 29 counted between Bellevue and Red Cloud on 9 January were males (CNK).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Routine reports.

Cooper's Hawk: Routine reports.

Northern Goshawk: Three were reported, a normal winter: singles were found on the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD) and the Norfolk CBC on 27 December (fide MB, LR, RH), and a juvenile was seen in Morrill Co on 1 January (JG).

Red-shouldered Hawk: The only reports were from FF, where at least one bird was present on 15 December, and between 1 and 22 February (BP, LP, fide BG); it may have wintered, but there were no January reports.

Red-tailed Hawk: Two *harlani* were reported: one on the BOL-Seward CBC on 16 December (fide JG), and the other found in Dixon Co on 27 December (JJ). Two "very dark" red-tails were spotted in Boone Co on 4 January (WM); no information was provided on either tail color or pattern.

Ferruginous Hawk: the farthest east was the one seen at the Meat Animal Research Center, Clay Co, on 26 January (JGJ); this location is the easternmost regular wintering site in the state.

Rough-legged Hawk: There were good numbers in the east: 9 were counted in the eastern RWB on 7 January (JGJ), and 8 were spotted in Knox Co on 5 January (MB).

Golden Eagle: Most easterly birds in winter are immatures, and so an adult identified in Dixon Co on 3 February (BFH) was unexpected. Also a little easterly was one (no age given) seen on the Calamus-Loup CBC on 29 December (fide LR, RH).

American Kestrel: The best count was 8 tallied in Otoe Co on 4 January (LF, CF).

Merlin: As has become the norm in recent years, Merlins were widely reported statewide. The only sightings identified to subspecies were the 2 *richardsonii* spotted in Clay Co on 26 January (JGJ).

Prairie Falcon: Easternmost was one spotted near Blair on 22 December (JGJ), possibly the same bird that appeared to have wintered in Dodge Co, where there were sightings on 2 and 29 December and on 2 February (DP, JP). Another bird was seen at BOL on 25 January (JG).

Peregrine Falcon: Rare in December, one was reported on the BOL-Seward CBC on 16 December (fide JG). This sighting was the only report for the period.

Gyr Falcon: There was a single report; while the date and location were as expected, the details provided were more suggestive of a Ferruginous Hawk.

Gray Partridge: The only reports came from the small but persistent population in s Sioux and northern Scotts Bluff Cos, where 7 were seen on 15 January (HKH) and 5 were spotted on 15 February (HKH).

Ring-necked Pheasant: A good tally was the 72 on the Norfolk CBC on 27 December (fide LR, RH); this count, however, is a far cry from the Norfolk CBC record of 510.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Routine reports.

Greater Prairie-Chicken: Few reports were received from marginal areas; of interest of late is the small population in southeastern Nebraska. This population extends northeast to southern Otoe Co, where 7 were seen on 4 January (LF, CF). Ten birds were found in Keya Paha Co on 28 December (DS), and 1-2 were spotted around Calamus Res between 29 and 30 December (LR, RH).

Wild Turkey: A few large counts were made: 182 on the DeSoto NWR CBC on 22 December (fide JT); 80 near Alma on 1 January even though none was found on the CBC on 15 December (GH, WH); and 76 on the Calamus-Loup CBC on 29 December (LR, RH). This species occurs statewide in numbers.

Northern Bobwhite: The best counts were 25 on the Norfolk CBC on 27 December (fide LR, RH) and 22 at BOL on 15 December (LE).

Virginia Rail: The now-expected few wintering birds in the North Platte Valley were again reported: one seen on the LM CBC on 16 December (SJD, JF), and 5 identified at CCM in Garden Co on 17 December (SJD, JF, KN).

American Coot: The 250 tallied at LO on 20 January (LR, RH) apparently wintered; 484 were found there on 16 December (SJD, JF). The 6 located at GSP on 2 February (LR, RH) also probably wintered.

Sandhill Crane: Arrival in central Nebraska sometimes occurs as early as late January, but this year none was reported there until 16 February, when flyovers were seen (LR, RH) and several hundred flew over the next day (LR, RH). Unexpected was an immature seen at Winters Creek L, Scotts Bluff Co, on 18 January (KL); its provenance is unknown, but it seems unlikely that it wintered there. This sighting represents the first January record for Scotts Bluff Co.

Killdeer: Away from the North Platte Valley, reports in midwinter are few. Singles were found at Blair on 1 January (JGJ) and at Boyer Chute NWR on 27 January (JT). The first spring arrivals were reported on 23 February in Dodge and Lancaster Cos (LE, DP, JP).

Greater Yellowlegs: The only report was of one spotted along I-80 between mile markers 158 and 164 in Lincoln Co on 27 December (RP; details). This sighting marks the 5th record after mid-December; the latest occurred on 15 January.

Lesser Yellowlegs: The four birds spotted on 13 December and one identified on 14 December along the Elkhorn River in Dodge Co were described as being "the size of nearby Killdeer" (DP, JP; details); this report is the latest fall record by about 3 weeks, but read on!

Spotted Sandpiper: Two birds spotted at PL on the Lincoln CBC on 15 December (MO) represent another shorebird surprise, tying the previous latest date. There are only two November records and now two for December; one bird was photographed at HCR between 14 and 15 December 2000.

Calidris sp.: A small black-legged peep was identified at PL on 18 December (JG); the observer carefully studied the leg color and thought it more likely to be a Western than a Semipalmated at that date (or possibly either of two other much rarer black-legged stints) and noted: "late fall [Western Sandpiper] migrants are usually males with shorter bills that are hard to distinguish from the other [black-legged] species." The latest Nebraska record for Western Sandpiper is presently 29 October, and, if that species was spotted, the sighting becomes the latest by about 3 weeks.

Least Sandpiper: One located at PL was reported on the Lincoln CBC on 15 December (MO); the observer noted that the bird "clearly had yellow legs" and was "as dark on the back as a nearby Pectoral Sandpiper." It could not be found on 18 December (JG). This report is only the 2nd December record, the other report is of 2 birds seen on 19 December 1998 at LM.

Pectoral Sandpiper: Rounding out the plethora of lingering shorebirds located at PL was a Pectoral Sandpiper found on 15 December on the Lincoln CBC (MO), photographed on 19 December (JG), and still seen there on 22 December (LE). This sighting represents Nebraska's latest by about 2 weeks.

Common Snipe: Midwinter reports away from the North Platte Valley included 3 birds spotted in Lincoln on 4 January (TEL) and a single seen in Boone Co, rather far north for 4 January (WM). As is usual, several were reported on CBCs statewide.

American Woodcock: This species probably arrives most years in late February, at least in the southeast; but the 2 found at ICSP on 24 February (WM) provided only the 3rd February record and the 2nd earliest ever. (Who else but Wayne would look for woodcocks in February?)

Franklin's Gull: The only report was of 150 noted on the Omaha CBC on 15 December; the birds were seen early on a somewhat foggy morning on a Platte River sandbar; they were accompanied by an immature Herring Gull, and had "quite a lot of black" on their heads (KCR). While there have been a few reports of singles spotted in winter in recent years, this many Franklin's Gulls found at this date is highly unusual. Migrants generally leave by the end of Nov.

Bonaparte's Gull: The last birds were 2 adults spotted at Sutherland Res on 17 December (SJD, JF, KN). The last report of any numbers was the 50 found at GPD on 9 December (JJ).

Mew Gull: There were two reports of this rare but probably regular spring and fall migrant. A basic-plumaged adult was spotted at LO for the LM CBC on 16 December (SJD, JF; details); another adult was identified at GPD Marina on 22 December (DSw) and below the dam on 25 December (SV). These sightings are the 5th and 6th fall records to date, and 15th and 16th overall.

Ring-billed Gull: A good count was the 2,360 totaled on the HCR CBC on 15 December (fide JGJ).

California Gull: A few lingered into winter in the LM area: 29 were counted on the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD), and an adult was identified in the area on 9 February (CW, BKP). Another adult was spotted at L Minatare on 15 December (SJD, JF).

Herring Gull: The best count was the 174 tallied on the HCR CBC on 15 December (fide JGJ).

Thayer's Gull: All but one of the reports occurred in December; about 11 birds were reported, including an adult and a juvenile noted at L Minatare on 15 December (SJD, JF); one listed on the HCR CBC on 15 December (fide JGJ); 3 adults noted on the LM CBC on 16 December (SJD, JF); 2 adults and a 2nd basic spotted at Sutherland Res on 17 December (SJD, JF, KN); and 2 adults seen at GPD between 22 and 25 December (DSw, SV). The 3 adults reported in the LM area were found again on 9 February (CW, BKP).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: The only report was of a 4th basic-plumaged bird spotted at LM from 16 to 17 December (SJD, JF, m.ob.) This sighting represents the 15th fall record and the 31st overall, all since 1992.

Glaucous Gull: Surprisingly, only 2 were reported, both adults, seen at LM on 9 February (CW, BKP).

Great Black-backed Gull: A 2nd-year bird was noted at Martin Bay, LM, on 19 January (MB, DS); this sighting is the 8th winter report, the 17th overall.

Rock Dove: Routine reports.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: This species is being seen virtually statewide. It is well-established in the Panhandle and central Platte Valley, and Elmwood in the east, with numbers increasing season-by-season. The best populations currently reside in Buffalo and Hall Cos: 18 were spotted at Pleasanton on 3 February (B); 15 were seen at Wood River on 17 January (MM); and a flock of 12 flew over the UNK Campus on 15 December (LR, RH). The observer's first for Dixon Co were 2 identified at Wakefield on 27 January (JJ); only small numbers have been reported thus far from the northeast. The two found at Chadron on 6 January (SA) appear to be the first for Dawes Co. A single first seen last fall near Seward was seen again on 17 January (JG), and two were located at Johnson on 23 February (DS), a part of the state where sightings are still rare. Four birds were also found at Alliance on 18 February (B). Reports from regular locations included Elmwood (4 birds, GW), Ogallala (5, fide SJD), and Mitchell (3, KL,PD,DD).

Mourning Dove: Wintering birds were reported, as expected, from the south and east, with the best count of 35-40 made at Walnut Creek L, Sarpy Co, on 2 February (RW, AB). The first migrants appeared at South Sioux City on 9 February (BFH) and at Alma on 21 February (GH, WH). The one seen at Scottsbluff between 13 and 15 February (PD, DD) was unexpectedly early for the Panhandle, although wintering occurs there on occasion.

Eastern Screech-Owl: An interesting survey was done at DeSoto NWR by Jerry Toll, wherein he used a BBS-like route and tapes. On 11 January, he found 20 screech-owls in 35 stops.

Great Horned Owl: Routine reports.

Snowy Owl: This winter was good for Snowy Owl observers, perhaps not so good for the owls. Four singles were reported, two in the LM area. A juvenile male was found on the LM CBC just s of Kingsley Dam, Keith Co, on 16 December (JF, SJD), and a juvenile female was located on the ice off Marina Landing at the west end of LM the next day (SJD, JF, KN). One (unaged) was seen at Niobrara Marsh, Knox Co, on 22 December (MB), and another (also unaged) was spotted north of Oshkosh on 21 February (HW, SW).

Barred Owl: Jerry Toll's owl survey using tapes at DeSoto NWR on 11 January yielded 4 Barred Owls. Northerly and westerly reports included singles identified at BOL on 16 December (fide JG) and on 9 February (LE) and on the Norfolk CBC on 27 December (fide LR, RH). The latter is the 3rd Norfolk CBC report.

Long-eared Owl: A regular roost near Keystone yielded 12 birds for the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD). The only other report was of one spotted at Niobrara SP, Knox Co, on 5 January (MB). This species probably occurs statewide in winter.

Short-eared Owl: A few were reported, notably 3 sightings between 13 December and 16 January of one bird apparently wintering in the Wakefield area (JJ). Other singles were noted on the DeSoto NWR CBC on 22 December (fide JT); in Madison Co on 30 December (WM); in Lancaster Co on 30 December (B); and in Antelope Co on 26 January (MB).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: None was reported.

Belted Kingfisher: Routine reports.

Red-headed Woodpecker: As in most winters, a few winter in the southeast; 1-2 were located at ADF during the period (LF, CF); an adult was found at Dodge Park, Omaha, on 20 January (JT); and another was seen at ICSP on 24 February (WM).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Near the west edge of the Platte Valley range, one was found on the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD). This species occurs throughout the Republican River drainage; 2 males were spotted at Medicine Creek Res, Frontier Co, on 9 December (LR, RH).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: At least two may have wintered: an immature made good use of a birdbath on several occasions in Bellevue (BP, LP), and another spotted at Hillcrest Cem, Omaha, on 12 January (BP, LP) may also have wintered. Another discovered at Tecumseh Cem on 23 February (DS) was rather early to be a migrant. Five others were found in December, most notably two identified as far north as the Meadville Bridge in Brown Co on 28 December (MB, DS), a late date for the location.

Downy Woodpecker: Routine reports.

Hairy Woodpecker: Routine reports.

Northern Flicker: Various odd introgressants were reported: a salmon-shafted bird with a very dark red, almost black, malar stripe was wintering in an Omaha yard (RB); one with the front half of the malar stripe red and the rear black was identified at Mitchell on 9 January (KL); and a yellow-shafted bird with red malar stripes was spotted in southwestern Dixon Co on 3 February (JJ).

Pileated Woodpecker: The resident birds at FF were reported on 11 January and on 22 February (BP, LP). Of interest was one bird found near the cave at ICSP on 23 February (DS); there have been occasional reports from this seemingly suitable location over the years, but a regular presence does not appear to have been established.

Northern Shrike: The best count was 4 noted on the Calamus-Loup CBC on 29 December (fide LR, RH).

Loggerhead Shrike: The only report was of the first for spring: it was discovered in Lancaster Co on 23 February (LE), about on time.

Blue Jay: The 73 counted on the Scottsbluff CBC on 15 December was a new count high (fide AK).

Pinyon Jay: None was reported.

Clark's Nutcracker: The only report (belated) of this casual winter visitor was of one spotted in a Morrill yard during the 2nd week of November (ECT).

Black-billed Magpie: A good count was the 126 registered on the Scottsbluff CBC on 16 December (fide AK). This species is clearly moving slowly southeastward into eastern Nebraska. Easternmost were 2 found near Willis in Dakota Co on 6 January (BFH); 2 seen at Newcastle, Dixon Co, on 2 February (BFH); 2 noted southeast of West Point on 2 February (LE); up to 5 spotted on the observers' farm in Dodge Co throughout the period (DP, JP); 3 located near Lincoln on 17 February (Mus); and at least one found during the count week of the BOL-Seward CBC (fide JG). This latest report leaves only the lower Missouri River counties as well as Johnson, Pawnee, and Gage Cos magpie-free.

American Crow: There was a large roost observed in the UNMC, Omaha, containing "hundreds or maybe thousands" on 27 January (DC, ES). The Omaha CBC on 15 December counted 758 crows (fide BG), and the Norfolk CBC tallied 653 on 27 December (fide LR, RH).

Horned Lark: Numbers were not great, according to most reports'; the mild, open winter probably was to blame. The best count totaled a mediocre 576 in Buffalo Co on 2 February (LR, RH).

Black-capped Chickadee: Excellent numbers were present in Ponca SP, where 70 were banded on 26 January (MB, EB).

Mountain Chickadee: One came regularly to a Morrill feeder from the week ending 26 January throughout the period (ECT, fide AK). Usually several appear in a given winter, although a single sighting in a winter is not unprecedented in Nebraska.

Tufted Titmouse: Routine reports.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: This species was widely reported statewide at feeders and in natural habitats, but nowhere in the large numbers suggestive of an "invasion." The best counts reached 13 on the BOL-Seward CBC on 16 December (fide JG) and 12+ at NNF, Halsey, on 6 January (LR, RH).

White-breasted Nuthatch: The one spotted at LM on 17 December (JE) was described as an "eastern"; this taxon identifies the expected one as it breeds sparingly in the LM area.

Pygmy Nuthatch: The only report was of two spotted at the Wildcat Hills NC on 1 January (JG). The species is resident there.

Brown Creeper: This species is uncommon in the Panhandle, and so one seen at the Gering Cem between 22 and 27 January (KL, AK, SA) was unexpected. It probably winters regularly in the North Platte Valley as far west as the LM area, where 7 were counted on the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD).

Carolina Wren: The small group located at Methodist Cove, HCR, appears to be persisting; one was spotted there on 7 January (GH, WH). Rather far north, and apparently only the 2nd northeast Nebraska winter record, was one noted wintering at Ponca SP; it was banded on 26

January (MB, EB), and seen there on 8 December and again on 2 February (BFH). Only 5 others were reported: one at FF on 22 February (BP, LP); one at a Bellevue feeder on 1 January (BP, LP); 2 at another Bellevue feeder throughout the period (KCR); and one at Pioneer Park, Lincoln, on 16 February (LE). The latter population was almost wiped out by the severe winter of 2000-2001.

Winter Wren: The one found at Neale Woods, Washington Co, on 25 January (CNK) was not unexpected, but three westerly reports were. One of a western subspecies was heard and seen at LO on 9 February (CW, BKP); this sighting is the 2nd record of a western bird for Nebraska; the other was spotted in Monroe Canyon on 21 January 2001 (SJD). There are, however, several westerly winter sightings, most of which are probably western birds. Also somewhat far west for the species in Nebraska was one identified at Plum Creek Res, Dawson Co, on 2 December (LR, RH), while the 1-2 reported wintering below the BOL dam were not too far from the expected winter range along the Missouri Valley.

Marsh Wren: The only report was from a regular North Platte Valley wintering locality: one spotted at LO on the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Rare in midwinter in the Panhandle, 1-2 were seen at West Lawn Cem, Gering, on 12 January (JF, DF, KL) and another was found in Carter Canyon, Scotts Bluff Co, on 14 February (B, fide AK). Northerly for the date was a single found near Meadville on 28 December (MB, DS). A good Dec count was the 14 tallied on the BOL-Seward CBC on 16 December (fide JG).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: As with Golden-crowned Kinglets, there were reports from west of the usual southeast Nebraska winter range, where it is only casual. About the 6th Panhandle winter record was one seen in Carter Canyon, Scotts Bluff Co, on 14 February (KL). One was found on the LM CBC on 16 December (SJD), close to the Panhandle. Not as surprising were the 2 noted on the HCR CBC on 15 December (fide JGJ), and the one seen at Methodist Cove, HCR, on 7 January (WH, GH) was an unexpected midwinter sighting at that location. The only other report was of one spotted at Bellevue on 30 December (B).

Eastern Bluebird: A few were found rather far north for midwinter: 2 were seen at Verdigre Cem on 5 January (MB) and 5 were spotted at Niobrara SP on 2 February (MB). The best count totaled 51 on the BOL-Seward CBC on 15 December (fide JG), while the 45 tallied at HCR CBC on 15 December was a high count (fide JGJ).

Mountain Bluebird: Unexpected were 3 found at Niobrara SP between 5 and 10 January, the observer's first for Knox Co (MB, DH); this sighting represents only about the 7th winter report away from the western Platte Valley. The main wintering area for the species in Nebraska is the Platte Valley east to Lincoln Co and the cedar parklands to the south.

Townsend's Solitaire: A few winter as far east as the Missouri Valley, where they are rare; a good count was the 5 tallied on the BOL-Seward CBC on 16 December (fide JG); and the one spotted at Niobrara SP on 2 February was the observer's first for Knox Co (MB). One seen at HCR on 7 January (GH, WH) represents a rare find for the location.

Hermit Thrush: The only report was of one seen on the BOL-Seward CBC on 16 December (fide JG); while there are many December reports, wintering occurs only casually.

American Robin: Very large numbers regularly winter in extensive cedar parklands such as those in the area from Creighton north to the Missouri River; "thousands" were found there on 28 December and on 5 Jan (MB,DS), although numbers had declined to "only hundreds" by 2 February (MB). Another such area is in Custer Co and neighboring cos to the north; 7,039 were counted on the Calamus-Loup CBC on 29 December (fide LR, RH).

Varied Thrush: Marking the 6th record since 1991 was the one which paid a brief visit to a Hastings yard on 2 December (B). This sighting marks only the 32nd Nebraska record, 24 of which occurred in the period between 1972-1991.

Northern Mockingbird: Numbers are lowest in midwinter, especially north of the Platte River, where one appeared at Alliance on 19 February (LW). The only other reports were of singles seen at CCM in Garden Co on 17 December (SJD, JF, KN) and near Rowe Sanctuary on 3 February (B).

Sage Thrasher: This species winters on rare occasions northeast of its regular summer range; only Nebraska's 2nd such record was one spotted in the cedars around the Scotts Bluff NM buildings between 14 December to 27 January (VN, AK, m.ob.). The other record was of one identified at Aurora from October 1960 to February 1961 ("Birds of Nebraska").

Brown Thrasher: The one spotted at Kearney on 6 January (LB) marks only the 5th January record west of Grand Island. Most January to March records are from southeastern Nebraska.

European Starling: An excellent count was the 11,628 tallied on the Norfolk CBC on 27 December (LR, RH), albeit a little shy of the record Nebraska CBC count of 101,384 at Lincoln in 1975.

Cedar Waxwing: The best count was the 443 registered on the Calamus-Loup CBC on 29 December (LR, RH). Large flocks were scarce this winter.

Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler: Although there are many December records, overwintering is rarely noted, generally occurring only in the southeast. This year, "several" spotted at ICSP on 23 February (DS) may have been wintering, but a real surprise was the one found at Niobrara SP, Knox Co, on 2 February (MB); one had also been seen there on 5 January (MB). These February records are only the 9th and 10th such records for the state. The only other January report was of 2 found at HCR on 1 January (GH, WH). About 36 were reported for December, including 17 noted on the HCR CBC on 15 December (fide JGJ); 4

westerly birds seen on the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD); and 2 northerly birds identified on the Calamus-Loup CBC on 29 December (LR, RH).

Pine Warbler: This hardy species has a bent for wintering north of its usual summer range; a male was spotted at the observers' feeder in Bellevue, feasting on peanuts and bathing regularly, from 18 December throughout the period (BP, LP). There are two other December records of single birds found at feeders, but this report is Nebraska's first wintering record.

Common Yellowthroat: Another warbler which can hang around a while in fall, one was identified at Conestoga L, Lancaster Co, on 15 December for the Lincoln CBC (JG, TEL). This sighting represents the first December record for Nebraska; there are none for November, and 3 for late October ("Birds of Nebraska").

Spotted Towhee: There are only 10 Panhandle records for midwinter, and so the one noted on the LM CBC on 16 December, the count's first, was unexpected (fide SJD). The few additional reports, of 4 birds, came from the Kearney area southeastwards, as expected (KP, LE, LR, RH).

Eastern Towhee: One lingered until 14 December at SCP feeders (KP), but it was not seen subsequently (KP). No others were reported; normal departure is in November.

American Tree Sparrow: The best counts were on CBCs: 746 at DeSoto NWR on 22 December (fide JT) and 605 at Calamus-Loup on 29 December (fide LR,RH).

Fox Sparrow: This species occasionally remains into CBC time; 3 were found on the BOL-Seward CBC on 16 December (fide JG, LE), an excellent count for December. Presumably one of these was the bird seen at BOL on 9 February (LE).

Song Sparrow: Routine reports.

Lincoln's Sparrow: The only report was of one spotted in Lincoln on 15 December (LE). There are about 25 December reports in all, most from the southeast, for this species.

Swamp Sparrow: Another sparrow which can linger into December, one was reported during Count Week on the DeSoto NWR CBC (fide JT).

White-throated Sparrow: This species winters occasionally at feeders in the southeast; this year there were 4 such reports. At least one was wintering at a Lancaster Co feeder with other *Zonotrichia* sparrows (GSH); another was identified at a Nebraska City feeder between 6 January and 4 February (LF, CF); one of two which appeared at a Bellevue feeder on 14 January remained through the end of the period (BP, LP); and another wintered at a different Bellevue Feeder (KCR). This species is rare in the Panhandle; the 2 noted on the Scotts Bluff CBC on 15 December represented a first count record for the species (fide AK), and the latest fall record for the Panhandle.

White-crowned Sparrow: A few winter in Nebraska, but generally in low numbers. A few were wintering in Lincoln with other *Zonotrichia* sparrows (GSH), and 1-3 wintered at Alma, the fewest for the last 4

years to do so (GH, WH). As many as 18 may have wintered at Morrill; the high count was made on 20 January (KL).

Harris's Sparrow: Routine reports.

Dark-eyed Junco: No "White-winged" Juncos were reported. Observers should report ratios of juncos in flocks if possible; interesting distributional data may result. As expected in the east, only 2 "Oregon" Juncos were counted among 116 otherwise "Slate-colored" Juncos on the BOL-Seward CBC of 16 December (fide JG). On the HCR CBC on 15 December, of 15 juncos identified to form, 10 were "Oregons" and 5 "Slate-colored" (fide JGJ); to the west, an equal mix of "Oregon" and "Slate-colored" was located at feeders in Mitchell (KL). Unusual (and poorly-documented) to the east, 2 "Pink-sided" Juncos were spotted at Wolf L, Saunders Co, on 16 December (TH), and one was seen there on 27 January (TH). "Slate-colored" Juncos with various white markings are not uncommon; one with white patches on its head was identified at Sidney (AS), and one with white eyerings was reported at an Omaha feeder on 21 December (EA).

Lapland Longspur: The best count reached 1, 000 in Dixon Co on 18 February (JJ).

Smith's Longspur: An intriguing report was of a buffy bird making a "clacking" sound in Scotts Bluff Co on 14 December (HKH). Although the observer expressed some doubts based on the time of year, fall reports of this species are statewide, in contrast to spring, when reports are confined to the southeast. There are two other December reports, both on Lincoln CBCs.

Snow Bunting: Few were reported: 30 were found on the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD); one was identified near York on 24 January (GW); and 5 were spotted at Harvard Marsh, Clay Co, on 2 February (GW).

Northern Cardinal: Reports from Scotts Bluff Co suggest that range expansion (albeit of very low numbers) continues in the western North Platte Valley. Unexpected away from the immediate valley were 1-2 found at L Minatare between 14 and 15 December (KL, PD, DD); and one was discovered at Riverside Zoo, Scottsbluff, on 15 February (PD, DD). The Scottsbluff CBC on 15 December reported 2 (fide AK).

Red-winged Blackbird: The best count was of returning birds: the 10,000 tallied near Gibbon on 28 February (LR, RH) was an excellent spring count. Midwinter flocks are unusual; 227 were counted at Boyer Chute NWR on 18 January (JT), and 30 were located at Twin Lakes on 24 January (JG). The one spotted at a Mitchell feeder on 1 January (KL) was a bit slow in leaving at that location.

Eastern Meadowlark: Routine reports (see next species).

Western Meadowlark: Wintering meadowlarks are difficult to identify unless they sing, generally a rare event in midwinter. Essentially all wintering meadowlarks are Westerns; there are no documented mid-winter records of Eastern Meadowlark. Singing was heard throughout the period in Lancaster Co; all songs heard were those of Westerns (LE). Harding (RH) and Randolph (LR) provided some interesting thoughts on

winter meadowlarks in sc Nebraska: "If we wait long enough one will give the last few notes of their song very weakly all winter long (they have always been western meadowlarks)." About on time for first song were 9 birds found singing in Sarpy Co on 8 February (BP, LP); most general singing starts around mid-February.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: A juvenile female lingered until 15 December near Gering (SJD, m.ob.); and a male spotted in a mixed-species blackbird flock in Boone Co on 4 January (WM) was rather late for the northerly location.

Rusty Blackbird: All reports came from the east, as expected, although one spotted at an Alma feeder between 18 and 26 February (GH, WH) was rather westerly. Last in fall were 2 identified in a Papillion yard between 27 and 30 December (PS), and first in spring were 3 seen at BOL on 16 February (LE). A flock of 52 found at Boyer Chute NWR on 27 January (JT) may have wintered in the area, although spring migrants can be rather early.

Brewer's Blackbird: The only report was a surprising one of 14 found in Boone Co on 14 January (WM); these birds were part of a mixed-species blackbird flock. Three of only 6 midwinter reports in all from the north originated in Boone Co.

Common Grackle: The usual reports were received of small numbers wintering, including one found at a Blair feeder (JGJ), and up to 5 seen at an Alma feeder between 24 January and 26 February (GH, WH). Most surprising were as many as 33 located at South Sioux City during the winter; the peak count of 33 was made on 3 February (BFH). Five spotted at Grafton on 24 January (JGJ) may have wintered in the area. A report of 10 to 12 discovered near Centura on 2 February with Great-tailed Grackles (MM) was unexpected; these species rarely mix.

Great-tailed Grackle: The afore-mentioned mixed-species blackbird flock in Boone Co yielded 7 of this species on 4 January (WM), only the 2nd midwinter report from the northeast. The only other reports were of 11 spotted in a mixed-species flock with Common Grackles near Centura on 2 February (MM), and one seen at Ceresco on 2 December (JGJ).

Brown-headed Cowbird: Where was that Boone Co mixed-species blackbird flock on CBC day? The flock contained 12 of this species on 4 January (WM), only the 5th midwinter record from the north, all from Boone Co. Also unusual were 2-7 discovered wintering at a feedlot east of Gering (SJD, KL, m.ob.), the first January-February record for the Panhandle. Three birds located south of Scottsbluff on 7 January (KL, PD, DD, AD) were the 2nd, if indeed they were not from the Gering feedlot. Not as unusual, but still a good find, were 1-2 seen in Seward Co on 24 January (LE) and on 16 February (JG), possibly the same birds, with a Red-winged Blackbird flock at Twin Lakes. Good counts for late dates were the 37 noted on the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD) and the 20 tallied on the DeSoto NWR CBC on 22 December (fide JT).

Baltimore Oriole: An immature survived by eating peanuts at an Omaha feeder until 11 December (B); it was not seen thereafter. This report is not unprecedented, as there are several records of Baltimore Orioles lingering in fall, the latest dates being 12 December, "through" December, and 14 January, all also in the Douglas-Sarpy Cos area.

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch: None was reported.

Purple Finch: More than usual were reported this winter, with a total of about 22, including westerly reports of 3 noted on the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD), where it is rare, and a female seen at Alma on 24 January (GH, WH).

House Finch: The best count was the 50 found in the observer's yard on 29 January (JJ).

Red Crossbill: A few wandered east, most surprisingly the 20 which provided a new count high on the BOL-Seward CBC on 15 December (fide JG). A male was spotted in the Fort Calhoun Cem (but alive) on 17 January (JGJ), and 6 were seen near Meadville on 28 December (MB,DS).

White-winged Crossbill: One of the surprises of the winter was a statewide invasion by this species, which is an irregular winter visitor to Nebraska. A rough tally indicates that about 75 birds were reported, most at feeders; the largest flocks were the 16 seen at Hillcrest Cem, Omaha, (BP, LP, m.ob.) and the 12 identified at a Bassett feeder (CH). Surprisingly for a species most often reported in Nebraska in November, none was noted until 20 December, when 3 appeared at Petersburg (fide WM), and one was discovered at an Omaha feeder at 90th and Blondo (B). At the end of the period, most of the birds attending feeders were still present. Cemeteries with spruce plantings had flocks of 5-16: Hillcrest Cem in Omaha (see above), Tekamah Cem (JGJ), Lutheran Cem in Norfolk (MB, LR, RH), and the Evergreen Cems in both York (GW) and Sidney (CW, BKP).

Common Redpoll: Reports came from 5 locations: 5 were spotted with Pine Siskins at Wind Springs Ranch, Sioux Co, between 9 January and 18 February (HKH); one was identified at the observer's southwestern Dixon Co feeders on 15 February throughout the period (JJ); another one was located at the Wakefield School Official Feeder in Wayne Co on 15 February (JJ); 3 were seen at Wolf L, Saunders Co, on 10 February (TH); and one was found on the LM CBC on 16 December (WRS, KN).

Pine Siskin: This species was reported statewide, often in numbers: 477 were tallied on the LM CBC on 16 December (fide SJD), including a single flock of at least 150 (WRS, KN); and 163 were found on the Scottsbluff CBC on 15 December (fide AK).

Lesser Goldfinch: A goldfinch with a greenish back stood out from adjacent American Goldfinches seen briefly by an observer experienced with the species at her Morrill feeder on 13 January (ECT, fide AK); there are a few winter reports from northeast Colorado (Andrews and Righter, "Colorado Birds"). There are also 2 Nebraska reports for November.

American Goldfinch: The best counts included a hefty 1,064 on the Calamus-Loup CBC on 29 December (fide LR, RH) and 802 on the Scottsbluff CBC on 15 December, the latter a count high (fide AK). Pending the official statewide tally, this winter's may be the highest CBC total (total of all counts) for a single year.

Evening Grosbeak: None was reported. This species has been scarce or absent in recent years.

House Sparrow: Routine reports.

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2001-2002 Christmas Bird Counts
Introduced and Compiled by Janis Paseka

A total of 12 counts are recorded on Tables Two and Three, three more than last year's effort. The Beaver Valley and Grand Island counts are run most years, but we sometimes miss receiving data from them. DeSoto-Boyer is run every year but does not always get published here, perhaps because the tally is listed as an Iowa count according to the Audubon Society; however, the area covered is partially in Nebraska, and the participants are mostly Nebraska birders.

The counts reported a total of 138 species this year, up from 133 in 1999 and from 117 in 2000. Nearly 230,000 individual birds were counted, compared to approximately 240,000 in 1999 and nearly 138,000 in 2000. Lake McConaughy topped the list with 103 species, 10 more than the lake's 2000 total. Branched Oak registered the highest tally of individual birds, with nearly 41,000 counted. DeSoto-Boyer was second with nearly 39,000 birds. These counts both owed their high totals of individuals to Snow Goose counts in the 30,000 range. 43 species were seen in only one circle; and 17 species were seen in all 12 circles. 24 species were reported as single individuals.

As usual, the Omaha count had the highest number of counters: 35 in the field and 3 feeder watchers. Lincoln came in second with 28 field observers and 1 feeder watcher. At total of 164 field observers and 21 feeder watchers participated in this year's count.

This year's weather varied from darned cold--5° at the start of the Crawford count and only 20° at the warmest location, at the start of the Calamus-Loup count--to temperate. Seven of the counts ended up with high temperatures in the 40s and 50s. Counters at DeSoto-Boyer will no doubt remember for a long time to come how difficult it is to drive, to walk, and to record numbers in heavy snow. Not all the counts listed wind data, although wind can play a major role on a count day. The Harlan County count recorded south winds of 20 to 40 miles per hour, which no doubt make the observers' day interesting.

The Counts Produced The Following Highlights:

We accomplished a Grebe Sweep this year: all six species on the Nebraska list were seen for the first time in recent memory (ever?). Five species were spotted at Lake McConaughy and the sixth (a Pied-billed) was identified at Omaha. Also, single White Pelicans were recorded in five count circles this year.

An unusually high number of Greater White-fronted Geese were observed this year: a total of 48 individuals at five counts. Snow Geese numbers were also sky high: nearly 62,000, compared to 742 in 2000 and 1,872 in 1999.

Ducks were also well represented, with 22 species present. Highlights included the Tufted Duck, White-winged Scoter, a Barrow's Goldeneye at Lake McConaughy, and a Long-tailed Duck at Lincoln.

Bald Eagles were counted at every location, with a total of 212 observed. Goshawks were found at Lake McConaughy and Norfolk and seen during the week of the count at DeSoto. Three Ferruginous Hawks were identified at Lake McConaughy, and every count reported Rough-legged Hawks. And a lone Peregrine Falcon showed up at the Branched Oak count.

We had a high number of turkeys on this year's count, with 586 tallied. (No estimate on the number counting.) Only one Sharp-tailed Grouse appeared: at Lake McConaughy.

Five species of shorebirds were recorded: Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Common Snipe.

Eight gull species were represented, including Mew, Thayer's, and Lesser Black-backed Gulls spotted at Lake McConaughy.

Six owl species were noted, including one Snowy identified at Lake McConaughy. Only five Carolina Wrens were found, and no Winter Wrens were recorded. A total of six late Ruby-crowned Kinglets were tallied at four counts.

Pinyon Jays and Mountain Bluebirds were absent from all counts, but 117 Townsend's Solitaires were spotted. American Robins totaled over 11,000.

One lone Pine Warbler was identified during the week of the count, in Omaha. One Common Yellowthroat was discovered in Lincoln, and 28 Yellow-rumped Warblers were found in 6 count circles.

Lapland Longspurs were spotted only at Lake McConaughy, as were Snow Buntings. Only six Rusty Blackbirds were found (at Norfolk), and only one Brewer's Blackbird (at Omaha).

An impressive number of both crossbill species was reported: 68 Red C at 5 counts; and 8 White-winged at two counts.

2001 CBC Participants

Beaver Valley: Belle Esau, Mitzi Fox, Wayne Mollhoff, Colleen Noecker, and Don Noecker (compiler) (5).

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2001 CBC Site Data Note:

Many compilers listed observers and also "feeder watchers." Table One, 2001 CBC Site Data, lists field observers first and feeder watchers second. Thus under "Observers" for Beaver Valley, for example, the count is listed as "4 + 1."

Table One: 2001 CBC Site Data

Site Name	Date	Species	Individuals	Observers	Party Hrs	Low Temp	High Temp	Sky	Rain	Snow	Wind
Beaver Valley	15 Dec	32	317	4+1	7	30	45	Pt cldy	None	None	n/a
Branched Oak/Seward	16 Dec	73	40,998	11+1	47.75	39	47	Cldy am; clr pm	None	None	NW 0-10
Calamus-Loup	29 Dec	51	19,548	14	68.5	10	20	Pt cldy	None	None	n/a
Crawford	29 Dec	35	1,357	4	19.25	5	36	Clr to cldy	None	None	Calm
DeSoto-Boyer	22 Dec	63	38,735	13	42	12	19	Cldy	None	Heavy	n/a
Grand Island	22 Dec	68	20,718	11	38	15	25	Cldy	None	Light	5-10
Harlan Co	15 Dec	60	17,768	5	20	30	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	20-40
Lake McConaughy	16 Dec	103	18,402	11+11	44.5	19	44	Clr	None	None	n/a
Lincoln	16 Dec	71	18,675	28+1	85.25	37	55	Clr	None	None	S 0-30
Norfolk	27 Dec	53	16,510	15+4	57	11	26	Pt cldy	None	None	n/a
Omaha	15 Dec	65	11,275	35+3	66.5	36	53	Pt cldy	None	None	n/a
Scottsbluff	15 Dec	54	25,371	13	29.5	19	43	Pt cldy to cldy	None	None	n/a
Totals		138	229,674	164 + 21	525.25						

Table 2: 2001 Christmas Bird Count

Species	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak	Calamus Loup	Crawford	DeSoto Boyer	Grand Island	Harlan Co
American White Pelican		1			1	1	1
Double-Crested Cormorant		4			6		5
Great Blue Heron		7					
Great White Fronted-Goose			1		20	22	1
Snow Goose		28,910			33,031	12	1
Ross' Goose		8			1	1	
Canada Goose		2,081	1,990		378	7,749	301
Wood Duck				2		3	
Gadwall		15	6			3	4
American Wigeon		2	4			4	3
Mallard	5	4,840	1,553	2	1,016	5,298	1,212
Northern Shoveler		26					13
Northern Pintail		2				1	3
Green-winged Teal		6	1			6	

Species	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak	Calamus Loup	Crawford	DeSoto Boyer	Grand Island	Harlan Co
Canvasback		14				3	2
Redhead		2				3	5
Ring-necked Duck						2	
Lesser Scaup	10					2	2
Bufflehead		1					3
Common Goldeneye		1	30		94	23	
Hooded Merganser		21			6		1
Common Merganser		38	675		2	3	12,000
Ruddy Duck		1			2		
Osprey						2	
Bald Eagle	4	3	23	2	34	21	51
Northern Harrier	7	8	7		3	14	8
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	2			5		1
Cooper's Hawk		1	3	1			
Red-tailed Hawk	5	39	15	2	28	25	32
Rough-legged Hawk	2	1	2	6	2	9	3
Buteo sp.		1					

Species	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak	Calamus Loup	Crawford	DeSoto Boyer	Grand Island	Harlan Co
Golden Eagle	1		1	1			
American Kestrel	1	7	4		1		1
Merlin	1			1	1	3	
Prairie Falcon						1	
Peregrine Falcon		1					
Ring-necked Pheasant	4	5	4	13	12	61	
Greater Prairie Chicken			2				
Wild Turkey			76		182	147	
Northern Bobwhite		45	12			1	
American Coot		9				2	6
Killdeer		1			1		
Common Snipe			1		1		
Franklin's Gull						1	
Bonaparte's Gull							1
Ring-billed Gull		315			58		2,360
Herring Gull		15					174
Thayer's Gull							1

Species	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak	Calamus Loup	Crawford	DeSoto Boyer	Grand Island	Harlan Co
Rock Dove	1	11	15	37	70	436	27
Mourning Dove		2			48	8	
Eastern Screech-Owl		1			1	5	
Great Horned Owl	2	4	5		1	1	2
Barred Owl		1			1		
Long-eared Owl		1					
Short-eared Owl					1		
Belted Kingfisher		2			1	4	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	2	22	2		12	14	7
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		1			1		
Downy Woodpecker	7	33	9	11	35	24	7
Hairy Woodpecker	3	3		3	4	3	1
Northern Flicker	4	52	57	7	45	29	17
Loggerhead Shrike			1			1	
Northern Shrike		3	4	2	1	3	
Blue Jay	2	54	8	2	17	55	2
Black-billed Magpie				35		9	16

Species	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak	Calamus Loup	Crawford	DeSoto Boyer	Grand Island	Harlan Co
American Crow	52	560	3,880	20	214	593	108
Horned Lark			431		159	277	12
Black-capped Chickadee	14	122	91	40	97	82	25
Tufted Titmouse					8		
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	13	4	2	3	6	
White-breasted Nuthatch	2	44	1	4	17		17
Brown Creeper		7	1	1		2	2
Golden-crowned Kinglet		14			5	7	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet							2
Eastern Bluebird		51	8		3	16	45
Townsend's Solitaire		5	9	10		3	
Hermit Thrush		1					
American Robin	3	819	7,039	147	820	591	263
European Starling	80	1,496	861	273	480	4,082	509
Cedar Waxwing	1	302	443	20	1	2	16
Yellow-rumped Warbler			2		3	1	17
American Tree Sparrow	18	170	605	149	776	293	52

Species	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak	Calamus Loup	Crawford	DeSoto Boyer	Grand Island	Harlan Co
Field Sparrow						1	
Fox Sparrow		3					
Song Sparrow	1	2	3		14	4	7
White-throated Sparrow					2	1	
Harris' Sparrow		10	7		4	40	15
White-crowned Sparrow						21	10
Dark-eyed Junco	7	294	205	161	550	155	118
Lapland Longspur			154		1		
Northern Cardinal		90	6		59	29	6
Red-Winged Blackbird	1	22	1	7	220	58	46
Meadowlark sp.		17			3	38	4
Common Grackle	1		2			1	1
Brown-headed Cowbird					20		
Purple Finch				12			
House Finch	8	34	23	34	17	142	16
Red Crossbill		20		41			1
White-winged Crossbill				1			

Species	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak	Calamus Loup	Crawford	DeSoto Boyer	Grand Island	Harlan Co
Pine Siskin		4		97	1		2
American Goldfinch	14	196	1,064	88	16	44	165
House Sparrow	60	69	197	123	119	234	35
TOTAL SPECIES	35	76	54	38	66	71	63
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	317	40,998	19,548	1,357	38,735	20,718	17,768

Table Three: 2001 Christmas Bird Count

Species	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Scottsbluff	Total	Number of Counts
Common Loon	1					1	1
Pie-billed Grebe				5		5	1
Horned Grebe	2					2	1
Red-necked Grebe	2					2	1
Eared Grebe	2					2	1
Western Grebe	122					122	1
Clark's Grebe	1					1	1
American White Pelican	1					5	5
Double-Crested Cormorant						15	3
Great Blue Heron	7	7			6	27	4
Great White Fronted-Goose		4				48	5
Snow Goose	1	6		11		61,972	7
Ross' Goose						10	3
Canada Goose	4,417	6,794	6	786	8,683	33,185	10

Species	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Scottsbluff	Total	Number of Counts
Trumpeter Swan	26					26	1
Wood Duck				1	1	7	4
Gadwall	302	26		8	1	365	8
American Wigeon	148				100	261	6
Mallard	1,096	332		432	8,715	24,501	11
Northern Shoveler		7				46	3
Northern Pintail	1				12	19	5
Green-winged Teal	10	12			2	37	6
Canvasback	39			12		70	5
Redhead	126	10		2	4	152	7
Ring-necked Duck	106	2		3		113	4
Tufted Duck	1					1	1
Greater Scaup	54					54	1
Lesser Scaup	403	9		25	9	460	7
White-winged Scoter	1					1	1
Long-tailed Duck		1				1	1
Bufflehead	800	6		33		843	5

Species	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Scottsbluff	Total	Number of Counts
Common Goldeneye	785	10		264	96	1,303	8
Hooded Merganser				21		49	4
Common Merganser	2,834	20		17	3	15,592	9
Red-Breasted Merganser	32					32	1
Ruddy Duck	1	8		327		339	5
Osprey						2	1
Bald Eagle	16	1	8	30	19	212	12
Northern Harrier	9	8	6		4	74	10
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	3	3	2	2	22	9
Cooper's Hawk	1	3	4		1	14	7
Goshawk	1		1			2	2
Red-Shouldered Hawk				1		1	1
Red-tailed Hawk	27	54	61	77	16	381	12
Ferruginous Hawk	3					3	1
Rough-legged Hawk	6	2	8	1	3	45	12
Buteo sp.		6			2	9	3
Golden Eagle	2				2	7	5

Species	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Scottsbluff	Total	Number of Counts
American Kestrel	26	12	15	14	25	106	10
Merlin	2		1		1	10	7
Prairie Falcon	4				2	7	3
Peregrine Falcon						1	1
Raptor sp.		1				1	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	17	72	1	3	193	11
Sharp-tailed Grouse	1					1	1
Greater Prairie Chicken	1					3	2
Wild Turkey	6		5	101	69	586	7
Northern Bobwhite	15	5	25			103	6
Virginia Rail	1					1	1
American Coot	484	15				516	5
Killdeer	9	9		2		22	5
Spotted Sandpiper		2				2	1
Least Sandpiper		1				1	1
Pectoral Sandpiper		1				1	1
Common Snipe	3		2	2	2	11	6

Species	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Scottsbluff	Total	Number of Counts
Franklin's Gull				150		151	2
Bonaparte's Gull						1	1
Mew Gull	1					1	1
Ring-billed Gull	884	1,119		798	2	5,616	7
California Gull	29					29	1
Herring Gull	66	1		5		261	5
Thayer's Gull	3					4	2
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1					1	1
Rock Dove	43	592	862	144	166	2,404	12
Eurasian Collared-Dove	5					5	1
Mourning Dove	2	41		28		129	6
Eastern Screech-Owl	1		5	1		14	6
Great Horned Owl	8	3	3			29	9
Snowy Owl	1					1	1
Barred Owl				2		4	3
Long-eared Owl	12		6			19	3
Short-eared Owl	2					3	2

Species	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Scottsbluff	Total	Number of Counts
Belted Kingfisher	7	5	4	3	5	31	8
Red-headed Woodpecker				17		17	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	38	24	101		223	10
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker						2	2
Downy Woodpecker	25	42	31	96	8	328	12
Hairy Woodpecker	10	4	11	20		62	10
Northern Flicker	33	32	46	50	38	410	12
Loggerhead Shrike						2	2
Northern Shrike	4		1		1	19	8
Blue Jay	3	153	109	40	73	518	12
Black-billed Magpie	86		31		126	303	6
American Crow	363	776	653	758	25	8,002	12
Horned Lark	87		62			1,028	6
Black-capped Chickadee	84	245	131	373	24	1,308	12
Tufted Titmouse				63		71	2
Red-breasted Nuthatch		10	10	11	1	62	10
White-breasted Nuthatch	13	47	40	169		354	10

Species	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Scottsbluff	Total	Number of Counts
Brown Creeper	10	22	6	15		66	9
Carolina Wren				5		5	1
Marsh Wren	1					1	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	7	14		13		60	6
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	1		2		6	4
Eastern Bluebird		97	5	19		244	8
Townsend's Solitaire	70				20	117	6
Hermit Thrush						1	1
American Robin	381	453	370	85	123	11,094	12
European Starling	804	5,208	11,628	4,078	1,771	31,270	12
Cedar Waxwing	6	115	208	295		1,409	11
Yellow-rumped Warbler	4		1			28	6
Common Yellowthroat		1				1	1
Spotted Towhee	1	1				2	2
American Tree Sparrow	126	483	345	71	84	3,172	12
Field Sparrow						1	1
Fox Sparrow						3	1

Species	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Scottsbluff	Total	Number of Counts
Song Sparrow	26	1	8	8	9	83	11
Lincoln's Sparrow		1				1	1
White-throated Sparrow		3		2	2	10	5
Harris' Sparrow	5	35	57	4		177	9
White-crowned Sparrow	5	13			55	104	5
Dark-eyed Junco	781	517	376	415	235	3,814	12
Lapland Longspur	12		12			179	4
Snow Bunting	30					30	1
Northern Cardinal	22	104	44	135	2	497	10
Red-Winged Blackbird	1,192	82	107	9	3,512	5,257	12
Meadowlark sp.	19	2	7		1	91	8
Yellow-headed Blackbird					1	1	1
Rusty Blackbird			6			6	1
Brewer's Blackbird				1		1	1
Common Grackle	1		1			7	6
Brown-headed Cowbird	37	1	3		6	67	5
blackbird sp.		15				15	1

Species	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Scottsbluff	Total	Number of Counts
Purple Finch	3	22	2	10		49	5
House Finch	151	132	28	60	114	759	12
Red Crossbill		5			1	68	5
White-winged Crossbill			7			8	2
Common Redpoll	1					1	1
Pine Siskin	477	5		12	163	761	8
American Goldfinch	415	293	56	162	802	3,315	12
House Sparrow	99	467	987	867	218	3,475	12
TOTAL SPECIES	106	74	56	68	57	138	
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	18,402	18,675	16,510	11,275	25,371	229,668	

Notes

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