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Fall Field Report, August-November 2004

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Silcock, W. Ross, "Fall Field Report, August-November 2004" (2004). *Nebraska Bird Review*. 383.
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FALL FIELD REPORT, August-November 2004

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INTRODUCTION

The fall season is a mix of summer, fall migration, and winter. Thus there are breeding records of interest, such as Mississippi Kites nesting at Red Cloud, only the 2nd known location in Nebraska, and only the 3rd documented breeding record for Northern Parula, despite its common summer residency. Fall migration generates early arrival dates, high counts, and late departure dates, the last seemingly more numerous as our average temperatures increase. Included in the late departure category were several late shorebirds, Great Egret and White-faced Ibis, and even the latest ever Black-throated Blue Warbler.

Counts of interest were 3000 Double-crested Cormorants at Harlan Co Res and 588 Cattle Egrets at a single Rainwater Basin wetland. At the other end of the scale were low numbers of waterfowl, for reasons much speculated upon by hunters as well as birders, the consensus being that wet fall conditions in the Dakotas were holding geese and ducks there. The best count of Mallards by period's end was only 10,000, and no other puddle ducks had counts over 500. Geese did not arrive in numbers until the last days of the period. One bright spot was the number of Hooded Mergansers reported; there are almost no breeding records for Nebraska, and so one wonders whether these birds are indeed breeding undetected in the state. Also disappointing were low numbers of Long-billed Dowitchers and especially Buff-breasted Sandpipers in the Rainwater Basin.

Arrival of winter birds, especially invasion species, is anticipated each fall; the first of these is usually Red-breasted Nuthatch, which arrives in Aug most years, and this year appeared in numbers, seemingly every feeder hosting at least one. Best single-location count was 15. Exciting was the appearance of several Clark's Nutcrackers, and a Mountain Chickadee was found near Scottsbluff.

Rarities were few, but quality finds were the state's 3rd Common Ground-Dove and 4th fall Gray Flycatcher. Also rare for the locations were Ruby-throated Hummingbird in the Panhandle, westernmost ever Yellow-throated Vireo, a Bullock's Oriole far to the east, and 3 different Evening Grosbeaks near the Missouri River (and none elsewhere).

ABBREVIATIONS

ADF: Arbor Day Farm, Otoe Co; BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co; Cem: Cemetery; Co(s): County(ies); CLNWR: Crescent L NWR, Garden Co; CRP: Conservation Reserve Program (USDA); FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co; GPD: Gavin's Point Dam, Knox/Cedar Cos; HCR: Harlan Co Res, Harlan Co; ICSP: Indian Cave SP, Nemaha/Richardson Cos; L: Lake; LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co; LNB: Lakes North and Babcock, Platte Co; LO: L Ogallala (includes contiguous Keystone L), Keith Co; NC: Nature Center; NGP: Nebraska Game and Parks Commission; NM: National Monument; NNF: Nebraska National Forest, Thomas Co; NOU: Nebraska Ornithologists' Union; NWR: National Wildlife Refuge; PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co; Res: Reservoir; RWB: Rainwater Basin, including parts of Phelps, Hamilton, York, Clay, Fillmore, and Thayer Cos; SCP: Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co; SHP: State Historical Park; SL: Sewage Lagoon(s); SP: State Park; SRA: State Recreation Area; WMA: (State) Wildlife Management Area; WP: Wilderness Park, Lincoln; WPA: (Federal) Waterfowl Production Area; WSR: Wind Springs Ranch, Sioux Co.

GAZETTEER

Carter Canyon: Scotts Bluff Co; Chadron SP: Dawes Co; Dead Timber WMA: Dodge Co; DeSoto NWR: Washington Co; Enders Res: Chase Co; Fort Robinson SHP: Dawes/Sioux Cos; Harvard WPA, Clay Co; Jeffrey L: Lincoln Co; L Alice: in North Platte NWR, Scotts Bluff Co; Niobrara Marsh: Knox Co; Ponca SP: Dixon Co; Rock Creek L SRA: Dundy Co; Sandhills: large area of sand-based prairie in north-central Nebraska; Schramm Park SRA: Sarpy Co; Smith L WMA: Sheridan Co; Sutherland Res: Lincoln Co; Wehrspann L: Sarpy Co; Winters Creek L: Scotts Bluff Co.

OBSERVERS

AK: Alice Kenitz, Gering; AR: Allan Reyer, Bellevue; AS: Audrey Sterkel, Sidney; BFH: Bill F. Huser, South Sioux City; BP: Babs Padelford, Bellevue; BT: Barb Tebbels, Kearney; CC: Carol Carpenter, Verdon; CE: Corey Ellingson, Bismarck, ND; CG: Carlos Grandes, Geneva y España; CH: Carolyn Hall, Bassett; CHy: Carr Heaney, Omaha; CJO: Charles J. Otte, Junction City, KS; CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, Bellevue; DB: Duane Bright, Bellevue; DD: Dean Drawbaugh, Scottsbluff; DDB: Deb DeButts, Fremont; DP: Don Paseka, Ames; DS: David Swanson, Vermillion, SD; DSt: Dave Stage, Elkhorn; EB: Elliott Bedows, Bellevue; EW: Edge Wade, Columbia, MO; GH: Glen Hoge, Alma; GM: Georgianne Meyer, Bellevue; GW: Gertrude Wood, Lincoln; HKH: Helen K. Hughson, Mitchell; JD: Jon Dinan, Lincoln; JED: James E. Ducey, Omaha; JG: Joe Gubanyi, Seward; JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Blair; JJ: Jan Johnson, Wakefield; JK: Josef Kren, Lincoln; JM: Jim Meyer, Elkhorn; JP: Jan Paseka, Ames; JSt: Jon Strong, Omaha; JT: Jerry Toll, Omaha; KCR: Kathleen Crawford-Rose, Bellevue; KD: Kathy DeLara, Mitchell; KP: Kevin Poague, Lincoln; LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln; LF: Laurence Falk, Nebraska City; LFr: Lonnie Frimann, Scottsbluff; LH: Lynea Hinchman, Michigan City, IN; LO: Linda Ollinger, Wilsonville; LP: Loren Padelford, Bellevue; LR: Lanny Randolph, Gibbon; MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton; MJ: Michelle Johnson, Lincoln; MM: Marty Mathieson, Shelton; MUS: Moni

Usasz, Lincoln; NB: Norma Brockmoller, Winside; NF: Nancy Fish, Superior; PD: Phyllis Drawbaugh, Scottsbluff; PDu: Paul Dunbar, Hastings; PS: Phil Swanson, Omaha; RB: Roland Barth, Bellevue; RD: Russell Duerksen, Bennet; RE: Rick Eades, Lincoln; RG: Ruth Green, Bellevue; RH: Robin Harding, Gibbon; RR: Roy Reinarz, Jefferson; RS: Rick Schmid, Omaha; SF: Steve Finley, Lincoln; SJ: Stephen Jones, Boulder, CO; TEL: Thomas E. Labedz, Lincoln; TJW: T.J. Walker, Brady; TM: Tracy Morfeld, Omaha; TP: Theresa Pester, Lincoln; TR: Tommie Rogers, Mound City, MO; WF: Willem Flack, Madison; WH: Wanda Hoge, Alma; WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Greater White-fronted Goose: Fewer than usual were reported, the best count only 150 in Holt Co (JED). Rare in mid-summer, probably the same bird was seen in the eastern RWB 7 and 14 Aug (JGJ).

Snow Goose: Summer stragglers were reported as usual; the 7 birds were found statewide (JGJ,KD,CNK,LE,BP,LP). Migrants were first noted 28 Sep over Bellevue (EB), with flocks in the 10,000+ range not noted until the end of the period (GH,WH,LR,RH,TJW).

Ross's Goose: Still only casual in the Panhandle, although verging on regular, 6 were at Enders Res 16 Nov (TJW).

Canada Goose: Routine reports.

Cackling Goose: Few were reported as observers come to grips with this new species. Two at BOL 14-25 Nov were photographed (WRS,CE,JSt); 4 were in Douglas Co 25 Nov (BP,LP), 3 were in Platte Co 28 Nov (LR,RH), 3 were at Crystal Cove, Dakota Co, 15 Nov (BFH), and at least one small bird was at Stapleton SL 4 Nov (TJW). Identification as Cackling Geese by small size alone may be questionable, as the smallest Canada Goose subspecies, *parvipes*, overlaps Cackling Goose in measurements. Cackling Geese (subspecies *hutchinsii* occurs in Nebraska) have short necks, short bills, and steep foreheads, giving the head a blocky shape. The steep foreheads may be the most helpful in identifying Cackling Geese in the field. Although the extent of variation in *hutchinsii* is not clearly understood, some, probably older birds, may have darker breasts and thus resemble the Cackling Goose subspecies *minima* (another of the subspecies included within Cackling Goose). The subspecies *minima*, usually found west of the Rockies, is yet to be confirmed in Nebraska, although it has apparently occurred on the Atlantic Coast. Three Cackling Geese with dark breasts, one with a pale ring between the dark neck and breast, were in Seward Co 16 Nov (JG).

Trumpeter Swan: Best count was 35 at 5 locations in the Sandhills 15 Nov; 19 of these were at Swan L, Arthur Co (JED). An unusually large brood was the 7 young with 2 adults in Grant Co 14 Sep (RG).

Tundra Swan: None were reported; migrants occur rarely in Nov.

Wood Duck: Best count was 68 at Smith L WMA 31 Aug (SJ), and 2 were still at Jeffrey L as late as 20 Nov (TJW).

Gadwall: Routine reports.

American Wigeon: Thousands were on Winters Creek L 7 Nov (PD,DD).

American Black Duck: Perhaps only casual in occurrence in the state in recent years, the only report this fall was of one in Seward Co 16 Nov (JG).

Mallard: Broods of downy young were in Clay Co 28 Aug and 3 Sep (JGJ), rather late for small ducklings. Best count, rather low for this species in fall, was

10,000 at both Enders Res 14-16 Nov (TJW) and in Platte Co 28 Nov (LR,RH)

Blue-winged Teal: Routine reports.

Cinnamon Teal: Routine reports.

Northern Shoveler: Best count was a mediocre 450 at BOL 21 Nov (WRS).

Northern Pintail: Routine reports.

Green-winged Teal: Routine reports.

Canvasback: An excellent count was the 1000 on Mother L, Cherry Co, 12 Nov (JED).

Redhead: Early were 9-18 in the eastern RWB 7-9 Aug (BP,LP,JGJ) and 4-10 on Alma SL from 1 Aug through the period (GH,WH).

Ring-necked Duck: Routine reports.

Greater Scaup: The only report was of a female at Stagecoach L, Lancaster Co, 21 Nov (WRS).

Lesser Scaup: Best count, and the only concentration noted, was a fall record of 1230 on Lancaster Co lakes 21 Nov (WRS). Unexpectedly early were singles in Clay Co 9 Aug (BP,LP) and near Alma 1 Sep (GH,WH); also a little early were 8 on Sutherland Res 28 Sep (TJW).

Surf Scoter: A surprise, and only report, was a juvenile on a small pond at SCP 15-17 Oct (KP,LH,TEL). This species is a rare migrant in fall.

White-winged Scoter: The 5 birds reported in the expected short period 10-21 Nov was a good showing: 3 males at Wellfleet L, Lincoln Co, 10 Nov (TJW), a first-winter female at BOL 14-21 Nov (WRS,CE), and a first-winter bird at Niobrara Marsh 19 Nov (MB).

Black Scoter: Rounding out the scoters was a female at Wehrspann L 30 Oct (CHy).

Long-tailed Duck: None were reported; arrival is generally in mid-Nov.

Bufflehead: The only concentration reported was the 580 in Lancaster Co 21 Nov (WRS).

Common Goldeneye: Fewer than 100 were reported before the end of the period: 50 on the Scottsbluff SL 9 Nov (PD,DD), 20 near Alma 20 Nov (GH,WH), one at BOL 20 Nov (LE), 6 at PL 21 Nov (WRS), and 12 at Jeffrey L 21 Nov (TJW).

Hooded Merganser: This species was widely reported, with best count the 39 in Lancaster Co 21 Nov (WRS). Apparently summering were immature/female-plumaged birds: 2 in Lancaster Co 1 Aug (LE) and one in Clay Co 3 Sep (JGJ).

Common Merganser: Like Common Goldeneye, not much in evidence before the end of the period, with 13 at Jeffrey L 21 Nov (TJW) and 25 in Platte Co 29 Nov (LR,RH). One in Scotts Bluff Co 2 Oct (AK) may have been a molt-migrant, a regular phenomenon at L Alice.

Red-breasted Merganser: All reports, a total of fewer than 20 birds, were from Lancaster Co 13 Nov (LE) through 21 Nov (WRS,CE).

Ruddy Duck: One of few duck species appearing in good numbers, 400 were at CLNWR 4 Oct (TR,EW) and hundreds at North Platte SL 20 Oct (TJW). A male at BOL 1 Aug (LE) may have been breeding, not unprecedented in Lancaster Co, as may have been the 4-6 near Alma through the period (GH,WH).

Gray Partridge: The only report was of the population in Sioux Co, which continues to survive; 5 were seen in central Sioux Co 7 Sep (HKH) and 7 were seen several times during the fall at WSR (HKH).

Ring-necked Pheasant: Routine reports.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Best count was the 55 near Loup City 4 Oct (TR,EW). One with 34 prairie-chickens in east-central Custer Co 13 Nov (LR,RH) is a reminder that these species hybridize with some regularity.

Greater Prairie-Chicken: The above-mentioned group of 34 in Custer Co was the best count (LR,RH). CRP grassland hosted one in Red Willow Co 18 Oct

(TJW), an encouraging sign. Reports were widespread; this species seems to be doing well at present. Noteworthy was the continued presence in the east of up to 10 at SCP (KP). Hayes Co had 8 birds 25 Oct (TJW), where few are reported, and one in southwest Red Willow Co 18 Oct (TJW) was one of very few reports from that county. These birds may have been dispersing to some extent after breeding.

Wild Turkey: Best count was 100+ in southeast Lincoln Co 30 Aug (TJW).

Northern Bobwhite: This species is at a low point in its population cycle; in addition to its presence in Lancaster Co through the period (LE), only two were reported. These were singles in northern Lincoln Co 29 Aug (LR,RH,TJW) and at Smith L WMA 31 Aug (SJ), the latter in an area where the species is rare.

Pacific Loon: The only rare loon was one of this species at BOL 21 Nov (WRS; details).

Common Loon: Only 3 were reported: singles at Willow Creek Res, Pierce Co, 25 Oct (BFH), and at BOL 13 and 27 Nov (LE).

Pied-billed Grebe: Last reported were 1-2 at PL 20-21 Nov (LE,WRS).

Horned Grebe: Some 24 were reported statewide 16 Oct-21 Nov; peak count was 10 at BOL 21 Nov (WRS).

Red-necked Grebe: The only report was of one in Sarpy Co 26 Oct (CHy).

Eared Grebe: Routine reports.

Western Grebe: Fall buildup was noted as usual at LM and Sutherland Res, where thousands were present at each place 28 Sep (TJW). None were reported from the east.

Clark's Grebe: The only report was of 3 at Smith L WMA 31 Aug (SJ); as yet breeding has not yet been noted at this location.

American White Pelican: Following the failure of nesting at Chase Lake NWR in central North Dakota during the summer, the large numbers reported in Nebraska then were not duplicated this fall, suggesting that most birds had moved on. There were, however, some higher-than-usual numbers in Aug, with 500+ at PL and BOL by 26 Aug (GW) and 300 at Ponca SP 23 Aug (BP,LP). More usual were the hundreds at Sutherland Res 28 Sep (TJW). Lingering were 40 at HCR 27 Nov (GH,WH) and 2 at LNB 28 Nov (LR,RH).

Double-crested Cormorant: Best count was a remarkable 3000 on a sandbar at HCR 2 Oct (GH,WH); another good count was 1200 at BOL 3 Oct (LE). The highest fall counts are in the 3000-5000 range, all from HCR. The 80 early birds at Scottsbluff SL for a few days through 1 Aug (KD) may have been from a failed nesting colony.

Least Bittern: The only report was of one at FF 21 Aug (EB).

American Bittern: Routine reports.

Great Blue Heron: Routine reports.

Great Egret: Best count was the 27 in the eastern RWB 7 Aug (JGJ); 18 were at Harvard WPA 12 Sep (PDu). Unexpected were some late birds: singles in Buffalo Co 4 Nov (LR,RH), at Niobrara Marsh 20-21 Nov (MB), and at BOL 21 Nov (WRS). The latter two sightings are the 2nd and 3rd latest ever.

Snowy Egret: An excellent 50 or so were reported, best count the 19 in the eastern RWB 7 Aug, including a single-location RWB record of 12 at Clay Co Wetland #85 (JGJ). Another good count was the 15 at PL and BOL 26 Aug (GW).

Little Blue Heron: The only reports were of 2-3 immatures in the eastern RWB 7-14 Aug (JGJ,BP,LP) and one at Abomination Marsh, Douglas Co, 7 Aug (JT).

Cattle Egret: An amazing tally was the record for fall of 591 in the eastern RWB 7 Aug, including 588 at Clay Co Wetland #132 (JGJ,BP,LP); most had departed by 28 Aug (JGJ). Another good count was the 122 at Harvard WPA 12 Sep

(PDu). Up to 4 lost souls were still in Scotts Bluff Co 15-18 Nov (KD,AK,PD, DD), establishing a new late date for Nebraska. Another was at Chilibaba Pond, Scotts Bluff Co, 19 Sep (KD). This species is rare in the Panhandle.

Green Heron: One in eastern Lincoln Co 23 Aug (TJW) was near the western edge of the summer range.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Routine reports.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: Three juveniles were reported, all from the RWB, as expected in recent years. One was at near Glenvil 28 Aug (JGJ) and two were at Harvard WPA 12 Sep (PDu).

White-faced Ibis: Best counts were 28 surprisingly far east at Jack Sinn WMA, Lancaster/Saunders Cos, 2 Sep (SF), and 22 at Harvard WPA 9 Oct (PDu). Record late by one day was a juvenile *Plegadis* sp. in Buffalo Co 13 Nov (PDu).

Turkey Vulture: Large aggregations were 100-150 in Lincoln 12 Sep (fide MM), 129 at Ponca SP 25 Aug (BP,LP), 120 flyovers in 3 hours at FF 25 Sep (EB), and 80-100 at Chadron 16 Sep (RG). One in Otoe Co 26 Nov (LF) provided one of few Nov sightings for the state.

Mississippi Kite: A significant finding was a nesting pair at Red Cloud, only the 2nd known site in the state. The intrepid pair overcame a major obstacle: one of them was injured in Jul but was rehabilitated and released at the nest site 23 Aug, at which time the other adult and a nearly-fledged young bird were still present (BT). Along with the observations at the Hitchcock Nature Center Hawkwatch nearby in Iowa, this species is being seen in the Missouri Valley in Sep more often. Singles were near Blair 10 Sep (JGJ), and in western Douglas Co 10 and 14 Sep (DSt).

Bald Eagle: Adults were noted at a few sites where breeding probably occurred. Two were east of the North Platte airport for the 3rd year (TJW); an adult and an immature were near Fort Niobrara NWR, Cherry Co, 20 Oct (JED); an adult and an immature were in Greeley Co 6 Nov (LR,RH); 2 adults with 3 immatures were near Fremont 21 Nov (DDB, MJ); an adult was near Schramm Park SRA 25 Aug (CNK); one was near Brady 5 Nov (TJW); and another was at Enders Res 14-15 Nov (TJW). It's difficult to call any sighting of this species routine, but breeding pairs are now numerous across the state.

Northern Harrier: A good count was the 28 seen in 600 miles of driving in southwest Nebraska 21-22 Oct (TJW).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: One was very early in Otoe Co 2 Aug, and singles were also early at FF 22 Aug and Smith L WMA 31 Aug. It is curious that 2/3 of the reported sightings of this species for summer are from the southeast, where summering birds would be least expected. The Hitchcock Nature Center Hawkwatch had 948 Sharp-shins in fall 2003, the earliest on 2 Sep. Given the relatively large numbers of Cooper's Hawks in the southeast, in the absence of identification details I suspect small Cooper's seen in Aug are being misidentified as Sharp-shins. Best count was 8 at Ponca SP 15 Sep (BP,LP).

Cooper's Hawk: Routine reports.

Northern Goshawk: The two reports were of one over Ashland 21 Nov (WRS) and a juvenile harassing Rock Pigeons under an overpass in Douglas Co 28 Nov (JT).

Red-shouldered Hawk: The only reports were from FF 14 and 29 Aug (BP,LP); this is a regular site.

Broad-winged Hawk: One seen in Cass Co 14 Aug (CNK) may have been an early migrant, although summering there is possible. A good count was the 35 which flew over FF in 3 hours 25 Sep (EB).

Swainson's Hawk: Best counts were on schedule in late Sep: 450 in Washington

Co 28 Sep (JM), 200 near St Paul 27 Sep (fide KP), and 150 near Gibbon 29 Sep (LR,RH). Strangely rare in summer in the eastern RWB, one was seen there 28 Aug (JGJ). A rare rufous morph bird (underparts entirely rufous) was seen in Lincoln Co 29 Aug (LR,RH).

Red-tailed Hawk: One of 12 Red-tails seen in southeast Nebraska 6 Nov was a Harlan's (WRS); another was near Lakeside 7 Nov (JED).

Ferruginous Hawk: About 11 were reported, including 5 seen in 600 miles of driving in southwest Nebraska 21-22 Oct (TJW). Easterly was one at a prairie-dog town in Franklin Co 3 and 23 Oct (LR,RH).

Rough-legged Hawk: Earliest were an adult female over FF 25 Sep (EB) and a single in Sherman Co 26 Sep (LR,RH). Although there are about 40 summer and early fall records of this species in the period 21 May-13 Sep, none are documented, and probably none are valid. Continuing this dilemma was a juvenile female buteo purported to be this species found injured 6 Aug near Sutherland Res. It died 10 Aug, was tested for West Nile Virus and found to be negative, but no photo was taken and the remains were incinerated. It is virtually impossible for a juvenile Rough-legged Hawk to be in Nebraska as early as this, considering the species' breeding phenology.

Golden Eagle: There were two easterly reports: one was in Rock Co 16 Oct (JED), and a juvenile was as far east as western Otoe Co 29 Oct (RE); juveniles are the most likely age class to be seen eastward in fall.

American Kestrel: Routine reports.

Merlin: About 12 were reported statewide, earliest ones far to the east in Otoe Co 22 Aug (LF) and Dixon Co 23 Aug (JJ).

Prairie Falcon: Earliest eastward were one rather early in Dixon Co 12 Sep (JJ) and another in Jefferson Co 22 Sep (RE).

Peregrine Falcon: Routine reports.

Virginia Rail: An immature at Walnut Creek L, Sarpy Co, 22 Aug (CHy) was a bit early, and one along the Niobrara River near Nenzel 16 Nov (JED) may have been attempting to winter.

Sora: Singles in Lincoln Co 20 Oct (TJW) and Dodge Co 25 Oct (DP) were rather late.

American Coot: Best counts were moderate: 1070 at BOL 9 Oct (LE) and 1000 at Winters Creek L 10 Oct (KD).

Sandhill Crane: Large numbers flew over the state in mid-Oct, such as the steady stream of groups of 25-250 flying over most of the day at Wilsonville (LO). Rather early was one somewhat easterly in Lancaster Co 13 Sep (GM, details) and one over Alma 29 Nov (GH,WH) was rather late.

Whooping Crane: The only report was of 6 birds 17 miles south of Long Pine 7 Oct (CH).

Black-bellied Plover: Adults in fall are rare; only the 4th such record for the eastern RWB was one at North Lake Basin, Seward Co, 28 Aug (JGJ). Few were reported overall; last were 2 rather late in southwest Cherry Co 11 Nov (JED).

American Golden-Plover: Adults of this species are rare in fall also; a molting bird was at North Lake Basin, Seward Co, 28 Aug (JGJ). A good fall count was a group of 35 presumed juveniles in a harvested soybean field in Dixon Co 12 Oct (JJ), and a juvenile at PL 14 Nov (WRS,CE) was rather late.

Semipalmated Plover: A good fall tally was 8 at CLNWR 4 Oct (TR,EW).

Piping Plover: The only reports were of 2 at HCR 8-11 Aug (CG,GH,WH) and 2 at Ponca SP 24 Aug (BP,LP); both are regular summer locations.

Killdeer: Best counts were 125 at a Sarpy Co sod farm 4 Aug (BP,LP) and 100 at Scottsbluff SL 11 Aug (PD,DD).

- Black-necked Stilt:** Most have gone by the end of Jul, but 2 were still in Grant Co 14 Sep (RG), second latest ever for the state.
- American Avocet:** Best count was an excellent 265 at Gillet L, Garden Co, 30 Sep (JED). Rather late were 3 in Grant Co 3 Nov (JED). Up to 42 were at BOL 21 Aug-30 Oct (LE).
- Greater Yellowlegs:** Routine reports.
- Lesser Yellowlegs:** Routine reports.
- Solitary Sandpiper:** Best count was 12 in Lancaster Co 7 Aug (LE).
- Willet:** None were reported; departure is in Sep.
- Spotted Sandpiper:** One at Brewers Bridge, Cherry Co, 22 Oct was rather late (JED).
- Upland Sandpiper:** Routine reports.
- Long-billed Curlew:** The only report of this early-departing species was of one at Smith L WMA 31 Aug (SJ).
- Marbled Godwit:** The only report was of 2 at LM 12 Aug (JSt); most may have moved through Nebraska early due to breeding failure, as discussed in the Summer Report.
- Sanderling:** Routine reports.
- Semipalmated Sandpiper:** Best count was 40+ in the Schramm Park SRA area 25 Aug (CNK). A report of one rather late at Jeffrey L 31 Oct (TJW) was forwarded to the NOU Records Committee; late dates for this species are not well understood due to the few documented sightings in Oct.
- Western Sandpiper:** About 9 were reported 12 Aug (KD) through 9 Oct (GH,WH). The only bird whose age was noted was a juvenile in the eastern RWB 3 Sep (JGJ). This species is more numerous in fall than in spring.
- Least Sandpiper:** Best counts were 60+ near Schramm Park SRA 25 Aug (CNK) and 45 at Holmes L, Lincoln, 8 Sep (LE). A few very late birds were found, 13 at PL 14 Nov (WRS,CE), 6 still there 27 Nov (LE), and 11 at BOL 20 Nov (LE). These are the latest records except for two in Dec.
- White-rumped Sandpiper:** Good details were provided for one at Holmes L, Lincoln, 5 Sep (RD), only the 4th documented fall record for Nebraska.
- Baird's Sandpiper:** Very late were 3 at PL 14 Nov (WRS,CE); 2 were still there 20 Nov (LE). There are 5 later records, including 2 for Dec.
- Pectoral Sandpiper:** Good numbers were reported in early Aug, including 200 in the eastern RWB 7 Aug (JGJ) and 150-200 there 5 Aug (CG). Rather late was one at PL 14 Nov (WRS,CE); there are 4 later records, including one in Dec.
- Dunlin:** The only reports were of one near Verona 23 Oct (JGJ) and 6 near Alma 25 Oct (GH,WH).
- Stilt Sandpiper:** Routine reports.
- Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** Jorgensen noted that his study of this species in the eastern RWB revealed this to be the poorest fall in years for the species, with only 49 found, 10 of these juveniles on 3 Sep. A good count in addition was the 27 in the Waco-Utica area 2 Aug (CG). Additional sightings were of 5-13 at Sarpy Co sod farms 4-22 Aug (BP,LP), 2 near Schramm Park SRA 25 Aug (CNK), 5 at Harvard WPA 29 Aug (PDu), 6 at Louisville 12 Sep (CNK,BP,LP), and one in Richardson Co 13 Sep (CC).
- Short-billed Dowitcher:** The only reports were of 16 at Abomination Marsh, Douglas Co, 7 Aug (JT) and a juvenile at Harvard WPA 12 Sep (PDu).
- Long-billed Dowitcher:** Numbers were amazingly low in the the eastern RWB this fall (JGJ). Best count was only 76, at Harvard WPA 15 Oct (PDu).
- Wilson's Snipe:** Migrants, usually young birds, can depart breeding areas early; one in the eastern RWB 9 Aug and 3 there 12 Aug (CG) were likely early migrants.

Two at Jack Sinn WMA, Lancaster/Saunders Cos, 7 Aug (LE) were likely also early migrants; breeding there is possible, however. An amazing count was the estimated 200, based on 80 flushed by walking, at Harvard WPA 6 Nov (PDu).

American Woodcock: None were reported; most migrants pass through in Oct.

Wilson's Phalarope: Routine reports.

Red-necked Phalarope: None were reported; high counts are in Sep.

Franklin's Gull: Best count was an impressive 30,000 at HCR 24 Sep (GH,WH), where the species stages in fall.

Bonaparte's Gull: Best count was the 50 at Winters Creek L rather early on 5-6 Sep (KD); most do not arrive until mid-Oct.

Ring-billed Gull: Most reports were from BOL, where 35 were present at the start of the period (LE), increasing to 1240 there 21 Nov (WRS).

Herring Gull: Best count was the 95 at BOL 21 Nov, mostly adults, but including 8 first-winter and one second-winter bird (WRS).

Thayer's Gull: The only report was of an adult at GPD 28 Nov (JJ).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: The only report was of a first-winter bird at GPD 12 Nov (DS fide MB), only the 20th fall record for this species.

Sabine's Gull: None were reported; most pass through in late Sep and early Oct.

Black-legged Kittiwake: None were reported; most reports are in Nov.

Caspian Tern: Only 3 were reported: 2 at BOL 7 Aug (LE) and one near Schramm Park SRA 27 Aug (CNK).

Common Tern: None were reported; migration peaks in mid-Sep.

Forster's Tern: Only 30 were reported, very low for this species, 8 Aug (CG) through 25 Sep (LE). Best count was 18 at BOL 14 Aug (LE).

Least Tern: Routine reports.

Black Tern: Rather late were one in Scotts Bluff Co 23 Sep (PD,DD) and 2 near Winside 26 Sep (NB). Few were reported.

Rock Pigeon: Routine reports.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: Counts of this species are becoming larger; best this fall were the 65 in north Kearney 31 Oct (LR,RH) and 30-40 in the observer's Brady yard 5 Oct (TJW). Generally associated with towns, isolated singles are unusual, such as one miles from town in Clay Co 23 Oct (JGJ). A photo (see <http://www.rosssilcock.com/RedDoveEdit.jpg>) was submitted of a reddish dove in Kearney that appears to be carrying genes of this species and White-winged Dove (hybridization between these two species likely occurred in Kearney in 2001). Although the reddish appearance and very white primaries could conceivably result from leucism or even an admixture of genes from a reddish Rock Pigeon, it was pointed out by Kevin McGowan that this bird resembles what breeders of Ringneck Doves call a Tangerine Ringneck (see http://www.rupert-fish.co.uk/interests/dove_breeding/ECD-breeding.html). As McGowan adds, "This is a clear reminder that many of the collared-doves appearing around the country are not actually spreading from the expanding breeding population but are escaped caged birds." We are aware that releases of captive Ringneck Doves in some numbers has happened recently in the Morrill area (KD).

Mourning Dove: A bit late was a brood about to fledge in Clay Co 28 Aug (JGJ), and one in Scotts Bluff Co was tardy 12 Nov (AK), although wintering occurs rarely in the North Platte Valley. One in Dixon Co 29 Nov (JJ) was tardy also for the northeast.

Inca Dove: For the record, a single was in Madison 15 Oct 2000; details provided suggested that this bird, as well as a few Canyon Towhees, was brought from Arizona and released (WF).

Common Ground-Dove: One in a Clay Co corn stubble field 26 Nov was closely-observed and well-described (JD). This is the 6th report for Nebraska, only the 3rd documented. Two of the documented records are in Nov, when northward vagrancy appears to peak, but one is in Jun. One of the undocumented records is in Jun, and likely correct.

Black-billed Cuckoo: The only reports were of singles in Lancaster Co 14 and 21 Aug (LE).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: A record-tying count was 8 in Cass Co 14 Aug (CNK), and last was one in Otoe Co 24 Sep (LF).

Barn Owl: The only report was of one on the grounds of Fort Robinson SHP 15 Oct (TJW), a rather late date. Departure is generally completed by mid-Oct.

Eastern Screech-Owl: Routine reports.

Great Horned Owl: One at Rock Creek L SRA 25 Oct was very light gray (TJW). Although the earliest known arrival date for the very pale northern subspecies is 11 Nov, it may be more likely that this bird was one of the occasional pale birds known to occur among the generally darker resident birds.

Burrowing Owl: An excellent count was the 14 at Buffalo Creek WMA, Scotts Bluff Co, 1 Aug (KD).

Barred Owl: Near the west edge of the range in the southeast was one at Homestead NM, Gage Co, 9 Nov (RE). A surprise was one seen outside an office window in downtown Omaha 9 Nov (fide TP).

Long-eared Owl: None were reported.

Short-eared Owl: Three were reported from areas where summering occurs: Dawes, Sheridan, and Lincoln Cos (TJW,JED). One in Dixon Co 19 Nov (JJ) may have been on the move.

Common Nighthawk: Best counts in the east were widely spaced, suggesting that fall migration is protracted: 100 were seen between Omaha and Blair 25 Aug (GJ) and 140 over Bellevue 26 Sep (CNK). Last were 2 in Bellevue 10 Oct (CNK).

Common Poorwill: Easternmost were one in Thomas Co 25 Sep (fide AK) and a rather late road-killed bird in southeast Lincoln Co 1 Oct (TJW).

Whip-poor-will: None were reported; last dates are in mid-Sep.

Chimney Swift: Best count was a record 205 at FF 19 Sep (BP,LP), and last was one in Nebraska City 27 Oct (LF), the 2nd-latest fall date ever.

White-throated Swift: A good count was the 31 at Scotts Bluff NM, Scotts Bluff Co, 5 Sep (PD,DD).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Best count was the 12 at the observer's feeders in Elkhorn during the latter half of Aug (DSt); generally good numbers were noted throughout the east, west to Bassett 9 Aug and 13 Sep (CH) and North Platte 11 Sep (TJW). Unexpected were two Panhandle reports: one was seen at WSR 11 Sep (AK) and another possibly this species, with no visible rufous, was at the observer's Mitchell feeder 12 Sep (KD). There are only two documented fall records for the Panhandle, but the species may occur in small numbers each fall, as suggested by recent records in Colorado.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird: None were reported after the single near Mitchell 16 Jul (see Summer Report).

Rufous Hummingbird: None were reported after the single at WSR 29 Jul (see Summer Report).

Belted Kingfisher: Routine reports.

Lewis's Woodpecker: The only report of this locally-distributed species was of one in a newly-burned area in the southeast part of Chadron SP 11 Oct (RE), a rather late date for the species.

Red-headed Woodpecker: A good acorn crop at FF resulted in a record fall tally of 100+ there 4 Sep (EB). Last was surprisingly far west, in Scotts Bluff Co 10 Oct (AK), rather late at that location. At Alma, Red-headed Woodpeckers displaced Red-bellies during the summer, but the latter returned when the Red-heads departed (GH,WH).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Routine reports.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Some 22 were reported, 14 of these, including 10 juveniles, by one observer in Lincoln (RE). Earliest was a rather early juvenile in Dixon Co 25 Sep (JJ). Rare westward were singles at Brady 31 Oct (TJW) and near Halsey 4 Nov (TJW), both rather late dates away from the east.

Northern Flicker: First red-shafted birds reported from the east were at ADF 24 Sep (LF) and in Lincoln 29 Sep (TP), both rather early dates that far east.

Pileated Woodpecker: The only reports were of singles at the usual location, FF, 18 Aug (BP,LP) and 4 Sep (EB), and another about a mile north of FF at Mt. Vernon Gardens, Omaha, 6 Sep (DB).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: About 28 were reported statewide 8 Aug (LR,RH) through 24 Sep (LF); best count the 6 at FF 4 Sep (EB), the high fall count. Panhandle reports are rare; one was in Carter Canyon 4 Sep (AK) and 2 were at Winters Creek L 5 Sep (KD).

Western Wood-Pewee: Seven were reported from the Panhandle, last one at Riverside Park, Scottsbluff, 14 Sep (AK).

Eastern Wood-Pewee: One at SCP 11 Oct (RD, details) was rather late; there are only 3 later dates, none documented, through 20 Oct. Confusion at this time with Eastern Phoebe is possible.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: There were two reported, including one banded 7 Aug at Boyer Chute NWR, Washington Co (RS). Possibly the same bird was in the area 12 Aug (CNK). These are significant in that the former documents the early fall date for the state. Data for migration of empids in the east is scanty.

Alder Flycatcher: A welcome addition to our scanty knowledge of fall passage of this species was the banding of one at Boyer Chute NWR, Washington Co, 7 Aug (RS). There are few documented fall records.

Willow Flycatcher: Routine reports.

Least Flycatcher: This species arrives early in fall; first was one in Dixon Co 13 Aug (JJ). Four others were reported through 26 Sep, also in Dixon Co (JJ).

Hammond's Flycatcher: None were reported; passage through the Panhandle is 25 Aug-21 Sep.

Gray Flycatcher: Details were provided by experienced birders of one in Carter Canyon 5 Oct (TR,EW). There are 3 other fall reports, possibly all of the same bird, 24 Aug-4 Sep 2002, and a single spring record.

Dusky Flycatcher: None were reported; passage through the Panhandle is 24 Aug-20 Sep.

Cordilleran/Pacific Slope Flycatcher: Two were reported, both at locations where breeding does not occur: singles at Smith L WMA 31 Aug (SJ) and at WSR 11 Sep (AK). It has been suggested that both taxa may occur on the western Great Plains in fall.

Eastern Phoebe: Last was one rather late in Stanton Co 27 Oct (DP,JP), and one at Fort Robinson SHP 12 Oct (TJW) was a mild surprise so far west. A good count was the 6 in Otoe Co 24 Sep (LF).

Say's Phoebe: Rather late were singles in Sherman Co 3 Oct (TR,EW) and in Hayes Co 4 Oct (TJW).

Great Crested Flycatcher: Routine reports.

Cassin's Kingbird: A good count was the 15-20 in Carter Canyon 4 Sep (AK).

Western Kingbird: Routine reports.

Eastern Kingbird: Best count was 38 near Rulo 30 Aug (TR).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: Seemingly becoming regular in small numbers, mostly in the south-central, the only report for the period was of one at Deshler 13 Sep (fide NF).

Northern Shrike: First were 3 birds in southwest Nebraska 21 Oct (TJW). Good numbers, about 22, were reported during the period, including one as far southeast as Rulo 26 Nov (TR).

Loggerhead Shrike: One at North Platte SL 20 Oct (TJW), rather late for the location, barely departed before the Northern's arrived, a typical pattern. Unexpected, however, was a very late Loggerhead near Nenzel 17 Nov (JED).

Bell's Vireo: Routine reports.

Yellow-throated Vireo: A major surprise was one at Rock Creek L SRA on the very late date of 25 Oct (TJW, details), the latest and also the westernmost documented record for the state. Two additional Oct reports are undocumented, one each from Sarpy Co and, surprisingly, Lincoln Co.

Plumbeous Vireo: None were reported; most depart by mid-Sep.

Cassin's Vireo: None were reported; passage through the Panhandle is 20 Aug-21 Sep.

Blue-headed Vireo: Rare westward, one was reported in Grant Co 25 Sep (fide AK). Of 7 reported, last was in WP 3 Oct (LE).

Warbling Vireo: One in Scotts Bluff Co 2 Oct (AK) was rather late for the Panhandle; resident Warbling Vireos (western subspecies) depart in Sep, with latest date 13 Sep, suggesting that this sighting might have been of the eastern subspecies. There are only 3 Panhandle records later than 13 Sep: 30 Sep, 2 Oct (this fall), and 8 Oct.

Philadelphia Vireo: The only report was from the Panhandle 6 Sep, a bird at Winters Creek L carefully studied at close range and key features noted (KD). There are 4 other documented Panhandle records: 3, 7, and 28 Sep, and an amazing banding record 17 Nov.

Red-eyed Vireo: Routine reports.

Blue Jay: Migration peaks during the last week in Sep, and so hundreds over FF 25 Sep (EB) were right on time.

Pinyon Jay: None were reported; this species is resident in the Panhandle.

Clark's Nutcracker: Obviously endowed with some sort of nutcracker attractant, the observer (TJW) has racked up 4 of these birds this summer and fall. Following a single adult in southeast Lincoln Co 30 Aug (TJW, photos), 3 more were found at a more expected location near Crawford 13 Oct (TJW). Incursions usually are led by birds appearing in late Aug; time will tell whether more will follow this winter.

Black-billed Magpie: Fort Robinson SHP is a good place to see this species; 19 were there 13 Oct (TJW). Southeasterly was one near BOL 25 Nov (JSt).

American Crow: Best count was a moderate 220 at BOL 20 Nov (LE).

Horned Lark: The abundance of this species in Panhandle grasslands is indicated by the 600 estimated there 6 Aug (PD,DD).

Purple Martin: Westernmost were 2 in Lincoln Co 14 Aug (LR,RH). This species departs early; flocks were noted at Bassett 8 Aug (CH) and in Cass Co 14 Aug (CNK). Last were 5 rather late at Nebraska City 30 Sep (LF).

Tree Swallow: Best count was an excellent 750 at BOL 3 Oct (LE), a new fall high. Uncommon in the Panhandle (but increasing), one was found dead in a bluebird nest box on Old Stage Hill Rd, Scotts Bluff Co, 10 Oct (KD).

Violet-green Swallow: None were reported; most have gone by mid-Aug.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Routine reports.

Bank Swallow: Routine reports.

Cliff Swallow: Routine reports.

Barn Swallow: Major movement was underway in the east in early Oct; thousands comprised a virtually pure flock at LNB 9 Oct, and additional thousands were at Wilkinson WMA, Platte Co, the same day (TJW). Somewhat dwarfed by comparison was the count of 750 at BOL 3 Oct (LE). A second brood hatched near Gibbon 2 Aug (LR,RH), rather late.

Black-capped Chickadee: There was some indication that numbers are recovering in areas where birds had disappeared in the last year or so, although at Superior none have been seen since last fall (NF).

Mountain Chickadee: A hopeful sign (along with the nutcrackers) for things to come this winter was the presence of one east of Scottsbluff 27 Sep (fide AK).

Tufted Titmouse: Routine reports.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: This species was widely reported, sometimes in good numbers, the best showing in several years. Best counts were 15 in the Phillips Cem 21 Nov (LR,RH) and 10 at the observer's Elkhorn feeder 15 Nov (DSt). About 124 were reported. Banding at NNF indicated that an influx was underway as many of the banded birds were larger than the local residents there (RG). Another banded 20 Oct in Bellevue was a hatch year male (RG). First to arrive were about on time for first fall sightings of this species, 15 Aug in Lincoln (MUs), and 21 Aug in southeast Lincoln Co (TJW).

White-breasted Nuthatch: Routine reports.

Pygmy Nuthatch: One was in Carter Canyon 4 Sep (AK), where it occurs regularly in low numbers, but good numbers were noted at Chadron SP, where 14 were counted 15 Sep (RG) and 8 on 11 Oct (RE). Breeding has occurred east to Sheridan Co.

Brown Creeper: One at Smith L WMA 31 Aug (SJ) may have been summering; despite many summer reports, breeding has not yet been confirmed in the northwest. Elsewhere, first arrival was one at WP 3 Oct (LE).

Rock Wren: The 18 at Buffalo Creek WMA, Scotts Bluff Co, 1 Aug (KD) was an excellent count. Unexpected eastward was one at the Orleans Cem 3 Oct (GH,WH), and rather late was one in Chase Co 25 Oct (TJW); there are only 3 later records.

Carolina Wren: One was building a nest as late as 7 Aug in Bellevue (AR). This species is not hard to find in the southeast currently; 3 were at WP through the period (LE) and 7 were found in Nemaha and Richardson Cos 7 Nov (WRS,JSt).

House Wren: Rather late was one at ADF 20 Oct (LF).

Winter Wren: About 12 were reported, the earliest one at DeSoto NWR 6 Sep (CJO), 3rd earliest on record. Five were located at 3 locations in the Niobrara River Valley in northeast Cherry Co 20-22 Oct (JED), and one was near Nenzel 17 Nov (JED), rather late so far north.

Sedge Wren: These birds put in their usual Aug appearance in numbers, including 5 singing at Wehrspann L 3 Aug, where nesting was likely (CHy). Only 3 were reported after Aug, however: singles in Jefferson Co 25 Sep (RR), at FF 2 Oct (EB), and, rather late, one in Lincoln 25 Oct (LE).

Marsh Wren: The abundance of this species in the Sandhills is reflected by the 57 counted at Smith L WMA 31 Aug (SJ). Two were near Nenzel along the Niobrara River 16-17 Nov, where wintering occurred last year (JED).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Routine reports.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Routine reports.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Routine reports.

Eastern Bluebird: Excellent counts were 100+ at Winside 26 Sep (NB) and 200-300 in groups of 2-30 in Lincoln Co 20 Oct (TJW). Westerly were 12 at Enders Res 16 Nov (TJW).

Mountain Bluebird: First migrants detected were 2 in Perkins Co 21 Oct (TJW) and 6 in northeast Cherry Co 22 Oct (JED). Six had arrived in the cedar canyons of southeast Lincoln Co, where they winter, by 30 Oct (TJW), and 20 were in Custer Co 31 Oct (LR,RH). Winter status in the Niobrara Valley and in Custer Co is not well understood.

Townsend's Solitaire: Rather early for fall movement were 5 in southern Garden Co 28 Aug (TJW) and one in Carter Canyon 4 Sep (AK). Several had reached north-central Nebraska by early Nov (TJW,JED). Best count was 14 in Carter Canyon 5 Oct (TR,EW).

Veery: None were reported; passage is in Sep.

Swainson's Thrush: About 15 were reported statewide 31 Aug (SJ) through 2 Oct (AK), best count 3 at West Lawn Cem, Gering, 22 Sep (AK). Almost a routine migration.

Hermit Thrush: Some 9 were reported 3 Oct (JT) through 26 Oct (EB), all but one in the east. The exception was one in Perkins Co 22 Oct (TJW).

Wood Thrush: None were reported; most depart by the end of Sep.

American Robin: The usual huge numbers were noted in central Nebraska cedar habitat, with thousands at Jeffrey L 31 Oct (TJW), at Chester Island WMA, Lincoln Co, 7 Nov (TJW), and at Wellfleet WMA, Lincoln Co, 10 Nov (TJW). A mere 1600 were in northeast Custer Co 13 Nov (LR,RH).

Gray Catbird: Four were reported from the Panhandle through 11 Sep (SJ,AK,HKH). Last elsewhere was one at NNF 4 Nov (TJW), rather late for the location.

Northern Mockingbird: Routine reports.

Sage Thrasher: The only reports were of 2 at Smith L WMA 31 Aug (SJ) and 2 in extreme southeast Sioux Co 6 Sep (LFr, fide AK), looking in on the Curve-billed Thrasher, no doubt.

Brown Thrasher: Routine reports.

Curve-billed Thrasher: The long-staying (now-resident?) individual at the Frimann Ranch was still there 6 Sep (LFr, fide AK).

European Starling: Routine reports.

American Pipit: Rather late, and a good count, were the 120 on the Merrick-Hamilton Co line 16 Nov (LR,RH). Also a bit late were the 45 at Harvard WPA 6 Nov (PDu).

Sprague's Pipit: Now reported regularly as observers discover and check appropriate habitat, 6 were found at SCP 16 Sep-11 Oct (KP,RD), and one in a grazed pasture in Lancaster Co 3 Oct (LE).

Bohemian Waxwing: Suggestive of wide-spread occurrence this winter, the two reports were both from the east. Singles with Cedar Waxwings were at DeSoto NWR 15 Nov (CE) and at BOL 20 Nov (LE).

Cedar Waxwing: Flocks form by late Aug; 65 were at Smith L WMA 31 Aug (SJ). Best count was 150 in a single flock at ICSP 7 Nov (JSt,WRS).

Tennessee Warbler: Rather inconspicuous in fall, the only report was of one at WP 25 Sep (LE).

Orange-crowned Warbler: As usual, widely-reported and definitely not inconspicuous, best counts were 18 at ADF 10 Oct (LF) and 17 at WP 3 Oct (LE). Reports were from 31 Aug at ADF (LF) through 20 Oct at North Platte (TJW).

Nashville Warbler: Also widespread, about 22 were reported from Thomas Co (fide

AK) eastward 8 Sep (BP,LP) through 13 Oct (AR).

Northern Parula: One of only 3 confirmed breeding records was an adult feeding a young bird at FF 20 Aug (BP,LP). Inconspicuous in fall, the only report was of one at FF 7 Sep (RB).

Yellow Warbler: Last were 2 in Sidney 1 Oct (AS).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: None were reported; most move through in Sep.

Magnolia Warbler: None were reported; most move through in Sep.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: A surprise was a male in an Omaha yard 30 Oct (PS), latest fall date by 10 days. It was the only report for this regular but rare fall migrant.

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler: The only reports were of 2 at Chadron SP 15 Sep (RG), where breeding occurs, and 2 near Mitchell 31 Oct (KD), the latter rather late.

Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler: Two at Smith L WMA 31 Aug (SJ) were not identified to subspecies; at that date and location they may have been either subspecies. Elsewhere, first was one at SCP 16 Sep (KP), and best counts were 54 in Lancaster Co 9 Oct (LE) and 50 at Dead Timber WMA 10 Oct (JSt). Last reported were 6 at Mormon Island SRA, Hall Co, 16 Nov (RE). Nov and later sightings are uncommon.

Black-throated Green Warbler: The 4 reported were singles in Lincoln 7 Sep (MUS), at Ponca SP 14 Sep (BP,LP), at Dead Timber WMA 4 Oct (RE), and 12 Oct at Bellevue (BP,LP).

Townsend's Warbler: None were reported; movement through the Panhandle is in late Aug and Sep.

Blackburnian Warbler: None were reported; most move through in Sep.

Yellow-throated Warbler: None were reported; inconspicuous in fall, most have gone by Sep.

Bay-breasted Warbler: The only report was of one at SCP 11 Oct (RD).

Black-and-white Warbler: Only one was reported, at Walnut Creek L, Douglas Co, 7 Sep (SF).

American Redstart: Routine reports.

Prothonotary Warbler: The only report was of one seen well in southeast Otoe Co 30 Aug (LF). Few are seen in fall, with latest dates in early Sep.

Ovenbird: Routine reports.

Northern Waterthrush: Only two were reported, singles near Bartley on the Republican River 4 Sep (LR,RH) and at Dead Timber WMA 4 Oct (RE).

Louisiana Waterthrush: None were reported; most have gone by Sep.

Kentucky Warbler: None were reported; most have gone by mid-Sep.

Connecticut Warbler: Only casual as a fall migrant, one was at FF 4 Sep (EB, details), a rather early date.

Mourning Warbler: None were reported; most move through in Sep and early Oct.

MacGillivray's Warbler: The two reports were of singles in Sidney 30 Aug (AS) and at WSR 11 Sep (fide AK).

Common Yellowthroat: A good count was 8 in Dixon Co 12 Sep (JJ).

Wilson's Warbler: Another of the few warblers common statewide in fall, reports ranged from 28 Aug in Lancaster Co (LE) through 16 Oct near Gering (AK) and at FF (BP,LP), with no high counts noted.

Canada Warbler: The only report was of one near Rulo 30 Aug (TR).

Yellow-breasted Chat: Rather late was one in Carter Canyon 2 Oct (AK).

Summer Tanager: The only reports were of singles near Rulo 30 Aug (TR) and at FF 4 Sep (EB). There are very few fall reports away from Schramm Park SRA.

Scarlet Tanager: The only reports were a good count of 5 at FF 4 Sep (EB), a

young female at a Bellevue birdbath 26 Aug (BP,LP), and a single at FF 8 Sep (BP,LP).

Western Tanager: Earliest migrant was an immature male at Sidney 29 Aug (AS), and last one at West Lawn Cem, Gering, 2 Oct (AK). These dates define the period of regular migration.

Spotted Towhee: Earliest to appear east of the breeding range were singles rather early in Clay Co 25 Sep (JGJ) and at SCP 30 Sep (KP), while last reported from the breeding range was one at Fort Robinson SHP 14 Oct (TJW). An excellent count, indicative of fall movement, was the 21 at Chadron SP 15 Sep (RG).

Eastern Towhee: Routine reports.

American Tree Sparrow: Earliest were 6 rather early for the location in Jefferson Co 25 Sep (RR) and 2 at WSR 29 Sep (HKH). Best count was 100 in Lincoln Co 2 Nov (TJW).

Chipping Sparrow: Only 10 were banded at NNF, where usually up to 400 are banded (RG). Last was a juvenile at Rock Creek L SRA 25 Oct (TJW).

Clay-colored Sparrow: Good numbers were reported statewide 4 Sep (AK) through 26 Oct (LF), best count hundreds in Lincoln and Custer Cos 27 Sep (TJW).

Brewer's Sparrow: None were reported; most depart by late Sep.

Field Sparrow: Five at Smith L WMA 31 Aug (SJ) were only the 19th fall Panhandle report. Although Field Sparrows are known to summer at Smith L WMA, breeding has not been documented. Migrants appear in late Aug.

Vesper Sparrow: Migration clearly peaked in late Sep and early Oct; thousands were in Lincoln and Custer Cos 27 Sep (TJW) and hundreds in Lincoln and Hayes Cos 4 Oct (TJW). Last were at 3 locations in the southeast 17 Oct (CNK,TEL,LF).

Lark Sparrow: Routine reports.

Lark Bunting: Best count was an excellent 266 in Kimball Co 4 Aug (PD,DD). Flocking begins in late Jul.

Savannah Sparrow: Reports were widespread 29 Aug (LR,RH,TJW) through 28 Oct (LF), with best count 200 in Dixon Co 3 Oct (JJ).

Grasshopper Sparrow: Routine reports.

Henslow's Sparrow: The only report was of one carefully studied at WP 30 Oct (RE, details).

LeConte's Sparrow: Some 24 were reported from the south and east as expected 25 Sep-24 Oct (JGJ,RD, DP,JP,LE), best count 13 in Lincoln 24 Oct (LE).

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: The only reports were of singles at BOL 9 Oct (LE) and SCP 11 Oct (RD).

Fox Sparrow: All reports were from the east, as expected, from 26 Sep (NB) through 15 Nov (LF); best counts were 11 at Wood Duck WMA, Stanton Co, 27 Oct (DP,JP) and 8 (banded) at SCP 16 Oct (JK).

Song Sparrow: An uncommon migrant in the Panhandle, one was at WSR 11 Sep (AK), and another near Fort Robinson SHP 12 Oct was reddish with gray coloration (TJW), possibly of the western subspecies *montana*. Best counts were 15-20 in Lincoln Co 19 Oct (TJW) and 14 in one brush pile at ICSP 14 Nov (WRS).

Lincoln's Sparrow: Another species reported statewide, despite being uncommon in the Panhandle, from 11 Sep in the northwest (AK) through 14 Nov in the southeast (WRS). Best count was 25 in the observer's Dixon Co yard 3 Oct (JJ).

Swamp Sparrow: Of interest were the 9-10 birds summering in sedges rather than the usual cattails along the Cedar River in Greeley Co 8 Aug (LR,RH). Breeding does occur at Smith L WMA, where 7 were found 31 Aug (SJ). One at Rock Creek L SRA 25 Oct (TJW) was westerly.

White-throated Sparrow: First were at least 3 found in Thomas, Arthur, and Loup Cos 25 Sep (fide AK), and 2 in Dixon Co 26 Sep (JJ).

White-crowned Sparrow: First were 3 at Chadron SP 15 Sep (RG), and best count an excellent hundreds at Arnold L SRA, Custer Co, 5 Oct (TJW) and 170 still there 31 Oct (LR,RH). Numbers were high overall.

Harris's Sparrow: This species had a better showing this fall than in recent years, with good numbers reported, including 150 at Arnold L SRA, (the sparrow capital this fall) 31 Oct (LR,RH). First was one in Thomas Co 25 Sep (fide AK). One banded at SCP May 2004 was recaptured there 16 Oct (JK). Rare in the Panhandle in fall, and thus of interest, were 2 at Fort Robinson SHP 13 Oct (TJW).

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: Two at Chadron SP 15 Sep (RG) may have been local breeders or migrants; the eastern extent of the breeding range is unclear. Clearly migrants were the 2 in Perkins Co 30 Oct (TJW) and one easterly in Lincoln Co 9 Nov (TJW). Lincoln Co is at the east edge of the migration range.

Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco: First was one at WSR 11 Sep (AK), and, in the east, one at Winside 26 Sep (NB). Hundreds were in Lincoln Co 2 Nov (TJW).

Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco: No Pink-sided Juncos were reported. Earliest Oregon was at Sidney 1 Oct (AS), and, eastward, the only report was of one at ADF 17 Oct (LF).

McCown's Longspur: The only report was of 22 at WSR 25 Oct (HKH), a rather late date.

Lapland Longspur: Numbers reported were thought to be better than last year at this time (GH,WH,TJW).

Chestnut-collared Longspur: None were reported; most leave by mid-Oct.

Snow Bunting: The 3 reports were from the northeast (RE,MB,LR,RH), including hundreds near Niobrara 21 Nov (MB).

Northern Cardinal: This species is spreading slowly in Scotts Bluff Co; apart from the usual location east of Scottsbluff, there were several reports in Sep and Oct west of Gering (fide AK). A late nest with 3 eggs was found at North Platte 3 Aug (TJW). In the Verdon area, cardinals were thought to produce 4-5 broods each season (CC).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Routine reports.

Black-headed Grosbeak: A description was received of 2 birds near Valley 20 Oct that were probably this species (TM). Later fall records indeed tend to be easterly, but are few.

Blue Grosbeak: Routine reports.

Lazuli Bunting: Adults were feeding young in Scotts Bluff Co 1 Aug (KD). A surprise was a pure-looking singing male in Dixon Co 2 Aug (JJ); this is about the 4th summer record from the east.

Indigo Bunting: Routine reports.

Dickcissel: One in Clay Co 25 Sep (JGJ) was tardy.

Bobolink: Three at FF 21 Aug included a molting male, a juvenile, and a female (EB). One in Dixon Co 26 Sep (JJ) was rather late.

Red-winged Blackbird: Routine reports.

Eastern Meadowlark: Routine reports.

Western Meadowlark: Routine reports.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Migrants appear in early Aug; two were at HCR 4 Aug (GH,WH), where breeding does not occur. Best counts were 200-300 in Scotts Bluff Co 6 Sep (KD) and hundreds there 12 Sep (KD).

Rusty Blackbird: The only reports were of 4 at Jack Sinn WMA,

Lancaster/Saunders Cos, 24 Oct (LE) and one that barely made it into the fall season: it was with starlings on the observers' Dodge Co farm 30 Nov (DP,JP).

Brewer's Blackbird: An excellent count was the estimated 2000-3000 in an almost pure flock near McCook 18 Oct (TJW). Easterly were 12 in Clay Co 23 Oct (JGJ).

Common Grackle: Very large flocks, each estimated at 100,000, were noted flying southward over Brady 5 Oct (TJW) and FF 25 Sep (EB), marking peak migration. Lingering was one near Olive Creek L, Lancaster Co, 21 Nov (WRS); the latest birds are typically singles.

Great-tailed Grackle: Uncommon in the southwest, a small group was near McCook 18 Oct (TJW).

Brown-headed Cowbird: Best count was a flock in Lancaster Co 14 Aug (LE); flocks begin to form as early as late Jun. Rather late was a flock present at the observer's feeder all fall through 23 Nov (CNK); a single was in Lincoln with other blackbirds 27 Nov (LE). Only a few are still present in Dec, those in the extreme southeast.

Orchard Oriole: One in Clay Co 25 Sep (JGJ) was rather late.

Baltimore Oriole: Routine reports.

Bullock's Oriole: A carefully-observed bird fitting the description of an adult male was at FF 4 Sep (EB, details); the description did not suggest any hybrid characters. Although only the 2nd record of an adult male east of the Panhandle, immatures, often difficult to identify and the age group most prone to wander, may be overlooked.

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch: None were reported; arrival is in late Oct.

Purple Finch: Only about 21 were reported, west to Halsey, where a male was attending a feeder 19 Oct and 3 Nov (RG,TJW). First was rather early at WSR 27 Sep (HKH), and best count 11 in Otoe Co 26 Nov (LF).

House Finch: In the "what the heck are those?" department were the 30-40 in a Red Willow Co CRP grassland 18 Oct (TJW).

Red Crossbill: A few were reported: at least one at a regular location in Thomas Co 25 Sep (fide AK), one at the feeders at Wildcat Hills NC, Scotts Bluff Co, 3 Nov (AK), 3 a bit further east at North Platte 12 Nov (TJW), and 4 females surprisingly far to the east at the Brownville Cem 12 Nov (WRS,JSt).

White-winged Crossbill: Unexpected was a female at the observer's Elkhorn feeder 15 Nov (DSt), the only report. Most reports of this species are from the east in Nov.

Common Redpoll: The only reports were from the extreme northeast; two were at GPD 27 Nov (JJ) and 2 in Dixon Co 28 Nov (JJ).

Pine Siskin: Siskins were widespread in good numbers this fall. A few appeared away from potential breeding locations in early Sep, mostly in the Panhandle, and reached the east by 15 Sep, when one was seen at Ponca SP (BP,LP). Best count was 60 in Dundey Co 25 Oct (TJW). Dozens were at an Elkhorn feeder 15 Nov (DSt). The first seen by the observer for 3-4 years in Lancaster Co were found this fall (LE).

American Goldfinch: Adults with dependent young first appeared in the observer's Mitchell yard 25 Aug (KD), and a group of 15 in Sarpy Co had begging young as late as 9 Oct (CNK).

Evening Grosbeak: At least 4 birds appeared at two widely-spaced feeders this fall. A male on 12 Oct, a female on 14 Oct, and 2 females the next day, were at a Sidney feeder (AS), and, more surprisingly, a juvenile male appeared at a Bellevue feeder 25-30 Oct (KCR,CNK). The latter is an early date for the east.

House Sparrow: Routine reports.