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Spring Field Report, March-May 1997

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SPRING FIELD REPORT, MARCH-MAY 1997

Compiled by

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INTRODUCTION

First a correction: in the Fall Seasonal Report (NBR 63:101) the account on Whooping Crane listed 2 reports 25 Nov; these should have been **25 Oct**.

This report includes observations, designated (B), reported to the Nebraska Birdline (402-292-5325), operated by Loren and Babs Padelford. While these are anonymous submissions, many are reported to us subsequently by the original observers; those which are not but are significant but unsubstantiated, are indicated herein as such by a phrase like "no details submitted". We have also used this phrase for other unsubstantiated reports herein. Hopefully, observers involved will send us a few details about the sighting. If observers prefer, they may submit reports to Ross Silcock by E-mail at rsilcoc@sidney.heartland.net.

You may also note that we have used the new taxonomic order according to the AOU 41st Supplement recently published. Most notable change for Nebraska is the splitting of "Solitary Vireo" into 3 species, as discussed under Solitary Vireo. Turkey Vulture is now considered a relative of the storks ("Turkey Stork"?), and follows White-faced Ibis. There are other changes also, including re-ordering of the Passerine families.

This spring was notable for a late warbler migration, with several species lingering. On the other hand, very early sparrows were noted, along with record early American Golden-Plover and House Wren, and 2nd earliest White-throated Swift and Cassin's Kingbird. Species reported in low numbers and thus of concern included Purple Finch, but huge numbers of Western Grebes occurred at LM.

Among significant reports herein, the following stand out: a Tricolored Heron, without details however, in Lancaster Co, potential 1st state record Emperor Goose, 1st state record Garganey, Barrow's Goldeneye in the east, 5 Snowy Plovers in the RWB, several Mountain Plovers, including a nest, sw of the Kimball airport, 45 Whimbrels in a flock in Lancaster Co, the 7th Laughing Gull for the state, the 3rd Little Gull for the state, Iceland and Great Black-backed Gulls at LM, Violet-green Swallow at HCR, a late Townsend's Solitaire in the extreme east, the 9th and 10th ever spring Sage Thrasher records, only the 6th White-eyed Vireo since 1990, 1st state record Cassin's Vireo, the 1st Panhandle Golden-winged Warbler, the 6th eastern Western Tanager in Omaha, also tying the record earliest date ever, and the discovery of McCown's Longspur in Knox Co after the big 10 Apr snowstorm and Smith's Longspurs at the same time in Washington Co.

We were almost overwhelmed by many excellent reports from outstanding and active observers. We processed well over 3000 records (thank goodness for computers) from which to distill this report. Believe it or not, it's fun though and fascinating to see the "big picture" emerge for each species. Keep 'em coming!

ABBREVIATIONS

Initials in parentheses refer to the observers, listed at the end of this report. * = documentation submitted and passed to NOU Records Committee. Please refer to Nebraska Bird Review 54:74 for

information about writing documentations, and the Official List of Birds of Nebraska (NBR 65:3) for birds which should be documented. It is also important to document birds which are out-of-season. The best current source of early and late occurrence dates is Dr. Paul Johnsgard's "The Birds of Nebraska and Adjacent Plains States" reprinted in 1997 and available from the author at UNL.

ADF: Arbor Day Farm; **BOL:** Branched Oak L; **BSC:** Boy Scout Camp; **Cem:** Cemetery; **CLNWR:** Crescent Lake NWR; **Co(s):** County(ies); **CPBS:** Cedar Point Biological Station; **FF:** Fontenelle Forest; **FL:** Funk Lagoon; **HCR:** Harlan Co Res; **ICSP:** Indian Cave SP; **L:** Lake; **LM:** L McConaughy; **MM:** Mile Marker; **NAMC:** North American Migration Count; **NE:** Nebraska; **NM:** National Monument; **NOURC:** Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee; **NPNWR:** North Platte NWR; **NWR:** National Wildlife Refuge; **R:** River; **Res:** Reservoir; **RWB:** Rainwater Basin, an area of Federal, State, and private basins and wetlands mainly in Phelps, Kearney, Clay, Fillmore, Hamilton, and York Cos; **SL:** Sewage Lagoons; **SP:** State Park; **SRA:** State Recreation Area; **UNL:** University of Nebraska at Lincoln; **WHNC:** Wildcat Hills Nature Center; **WMA:** Wildlife Management Area (State); **WPA:** Waterfowl Production Area (Federal).

GAZETTEER

ADF: Nebraska City, Otoe Co; **Ashford BSC:** Dakota-Thurston Cos; **Branched Oak L:** SRA, Lancaster Co; **Carter Canyon:** Scotts Bluff Co; **Clear Creek:** WMA, Keith-Garden Cos; **CLNWR:** Garden Co; **County Line Marsh:** WPA, Fillmore Co; **CPBS:** Keith Co; **Crystal Cove L:** South Sioux City, Dakota Co; **Cunningham L:** Omaha, Douglas Co; **Father Hupp Marsh:** Thayer Co; **FF:** Sarpy Co; **Freeman Lakes:** WPA, York-Seward Cos; **Funk Lagoon:** WPA, Phelps Co; **Hansen Marsh:** WPA, Clay Co; **Harvard Marsh:** WPA, Clay Co; **Hord L:** SRA, York Co; **Holmes L:** Lincoln, Lancaster Co; **Hultine Basin:** WPA, Clay Co; **Indian Cave SP:** Nemaha-Richardson Cos; **Jack Sinn Marsh:** WMA, Lancaster-Saunders; **James Ranch,** Sioux Co; **Kissinger Basin:** WMA, Clay Co; **L George:** Rock Co; **L McConaughy:** Keith Co; **L Minatare:** SRA, Scotts Bluff Co; **L Ogallala:** Keith Co; **Long Canyon:** Banner Co; **Long L:** SRA, Brown Co; **Mallard Haven:** WPA, Fillmore Co; **Nathan's L:** Washington Co; **Neale Woods:** Douglas Co; **North Lake Basin:** WMA, Seward Co; **NPNWR:** Scotts Bluff Co; **Oliver Res:** SRA, Kimball Co; **Ponca SP:** Dixon Co; **Private Marsh:** 2 miles e FL, Kearney Co; **Real Basin:** WPA, Fillmore Co; (Lillian Annette) **Rowe Sanctuary:** Buffalo Co; **Schramm SP:** Sarpy Co; **Sinninger Lagoon:** WPA, York Co; **Sowbelly Canyon:** Sioux Co; **Stagecoach L:** SRA, Lancaster Co; **Sutherland Res:** SRA, Lincoln Co; **Twin Lakes:** WMA, Rock Co; **Wilderness Park:** Lincoln, Lancaster Co; **Willow Creek:** SRA, Pierce Co; **Wolf L:** Saunders Co; **Wood Duck:** WMA, Stanton Co.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Common Loon: Earliest was a single at LM 30 Mar (SD) and high count 7 there 4-13 Apr (SD). At L Ogallala, 2 basic-plumaged birds were present 16-31 May (JH,EH,SD,JGJ,GJ).

Pied-billed Grebe: Earliest was a single at BOL 19 Mar (LE). High count was only 24 at Holmes L 14 Apr (LE).

Horned Grebe: Earliest was a single at Crystal Cove L on 1 Apr (BFH). High counts include 10 at LM 13 Apr (SD) and 9 birds 2 miles w of Wood Duck 15 May (DH). Latest was a single at Sinninger Lagoon 19 May (JM).

Eared Grebe: Earliest was a single at Hord L 22 Mar (DH). High count was 230 at CLNWR 9 May (MF). Last away from a breeding area was a single at a farm pond in Madison Co 30 May (DH).

Western Grebe: Huge numbers were found at LM this spring. By 30 Mar, 367 had already arrived (SD); this count grew to 4900 by 13 Apr (SD) and numbers reached 14,500 on 19 Apr (SD). Next highest count was 123 at NPNWR 16 Apr. Rare in the RWB, a single at Mallard Haven 17 May (JGJ) was the only one found in the east.

Clark's Grebe: Reports continue to increase. This spring 7 reports totaling 44 birds were received, all from the west. Earliest were 3 at LM on 12 Apr (SD); high count there was 23 on 26 Apr (SD).

American White Pelican: Earliest were 25 at FL 30 Mar (LR,RH). High counts, both from FL, were 480 on 20 Apr (LR,RH) and 500 on 27 Apr (LR,RH).

Double-crested Cormorant: Earliest were 6 at Willow Creek 21 Mar (DH). High count was 1500 at BOL 27 Apr (LE). Eight active nests at L George and two at Twin Lakes 24-25 May (JGJ) were at previously unknown breeding locations.

American Bittern: As expected, most were reported from CLNWR. Earliest was a single there 20 Apr, high count 11 there 13 May (MF). The only reports away from CLNWR were of migrant birds: 1 at North Lake Basin 25 Apr (JGJ), 1 at Harvard Marsh 25 Apr (JGJ), 2 at North Lake Basin 2 May (JGJ), and 1 in Pierce Co 3 May (DH).

Least Bittern: The only reports were of singles in Pierce Co 10 May (DH) and at North Lake Basin 31 May (JH,EH).

Great Blue Heron: Earliest and probably wintering nearby was a single in Cass Co 8 Mar (GW). By 16 Mar, 4 had already moved north to CLNWR (MF), a non-wintering locale. High count was 50 in the LM area 13 Apr (SD).

Great Egret: Fewer reports were received than expected for several heron and egret species, including this one. Earliest was a single at Father Hupp Marsh 19 Apr (JGJ), a tad later arrival date than usual. High count was 10 at Pilger SRA, Stanton Co, 3 May (DH).

Snowy Egret: The only reports were of singles at Tamora Basin, Seward Co, 7 May (JGJ) and at CLNWR 7-13 May (MF).

Tricolored Heron: A report was received of a single in w Lancaster Co 22 May; no details were provided for what would be only the 3rd NE record.

Little Blue Heron: Surprisingly, no reports were received.

Cattle Egret: High count was a mere 12 at Ponca SP 17 May (JJ). Earliest was a single at Father Hupp Marsh 19 Apr (JGJ) and latest were 4 at Gifford Farm (pasture adjacent to FF) 25 May (BP,LP). Only one was found in the w, a loner at Clear Creek 26 Apr (SD).

Green Heron: About a half-dozen singles were found in the eastern quarter, but a single near the CPBS 13 May (JH) was rather far west. Earliest was a single at ADF 5 May (LF,CF) and high count was 3 at Rowe Sanctuary 31 May (LR,RH).

Black-crowned Night-heron: A major movement was detected in late Apr, when 84 were found in the e RWB 26 Apr (JGJ) and 11 at BOL 27 Apr (LE). Earliest were 2 at Hultine Basin 18 Apr (JGJ).

Yellow-crowned Night-heron: No reports were received.

White-faced Ibis: Earliest were 13 at Oliver Res and 2 at LM, both on 18 Apr (SD). High count was 20 at Clear Creek 19 Apr (SD). Numbers in the e half of the state were neither impressive nor disappointing, and none were found e of the RWB. Furthest e was a single at North Lake Basin 24-26 May (JH,EH) and high count in the e was 12 at Kissinger Basin 7 May (JGJ).

Turkey Vulture: Earliest were 2 flying over the Elkhorn R in Stanton Co 14 Mar (DH). High count was 9 at Ponca SP 9 May (JJ).

Tundra Swan: No reports were received.

Trumpeter Swan: The pair which wintered (see Winter Report) at Wolf L remained until 7 Mar (TH). Also in the e, a single was at Wood Duck 14 Apr (DH) and another was seen almost daily in a field in Buffalo Co 29 Mar-12 May (LR,RH); details were provided for both of

these reports. In the w, a pair was 3 miles w of Hyannis 4 May (WM) and nesting was noted at Doc L, Grant Co, 2 and 4 May (WM). Finally, 2-5 were at CLNWR 9-15 May (MF).

Greater White-fronted Goose: High counts were 600 at Private Marsh and 500 at FL, both on 8 Mar (LR,RH). In the e, 140 were at Wolf L 8 Mar (TH) and 70 were in sw Otoe Co 23 Mar (LF,CF). Latest was a single at FL 24 May.

Snow Goose: High count was 400,000 at FL 8 Mar (LR,RH). Many small groups were noted in May at numerous sites in the RWB. Large counts and lingering groups are to be expected as long as the flyway population continues to skyrocket.

Ross' Goose: Reports are too numerous to list. Most observers usually report the few Ross' that can be picked out amongst the Snow Geese, and generally underestimate the true number present. However, counts of 500 at FL 29 Mar (SD), 250 at Sutherland Res 29 Mar (SD), and 187 at Cochran L, Scotts Bluff Co, 19 Apr (SD,WRS) likely better represent the species' abundance. Late birds included 2 at Ayr L, Adams Co, 16 May (JGJ), 1 at Rolland Basin WPA, Fillmore Co, 17 May (JGJ), and 1 at North Harvard Basin, Clay Co, 21 May (BP,LP).

Emperor Goose: A major surprise was the picking up of a dead adult of this species among other cholera-afflicted geese and ducks at Harvard Marsh 17 Mar (*Will Meeks). The bird showed no signs of captivity, but there are no records of vagrants to our knowledge away from the west coast. The documentation has been forwarded to the NOURC.

Canada Goose: At Wood Duck, 8 nesting pairs were noted during May (DH).

Wood Duck: Earliest was a single at Wolf L 2 Mar (TH). High count was 67 at NPNWR 16 Apr (LK).

Green-winged Teal: High count was an impressive 8500 at Harvard Marsh 3 Apr (JGJ).

American Black Duck: No reports were received.

Mallard: High counts included 23,792 at NPNWR 11 Mar (LK) and 3500 at Pintail Marsh WMA, Hamilton Co, 3 Apr (JGJ).

Northern Pintail: High counts included 3000 at Private Marsh 8 Mar (LR,RH) and 440 at NPNWR 11 Mar (LK).

Blue-winged Teal: Earliest was a single at Cunningham L 11 Mar (JGJ). High counts included 200 at Father Hupp Marsh 3 May (JGJ) and 100 at Arbor L 6 May (LE).

Garganey: Again this year a vagrant birder made an excellent find in the central Platte Valley. Last year it was the Common Crane, this year a male Garganey, found 3 miles s of Kearney 28 Mar (*Bill and Mary Kay DeBaets). The documentation has been forwarded to the NOURC, and if accepted would be Nebraska's 1st record.

Cinnamon Teal: Up to 30 individuals were found from FL westward. Very early was a single at CLNWR 6 Mar (MF) and high count was 8 there 12 Apr (SD). Fewer drifted eastward this spring than in the previous two years; none were found in the eastern quarter and the species was unusually scarce in the e RWB (JGJ). Furthest e and the only ones found in the e RWB were singles at Father Hupp Marsh 3 May (JGJ), Sinninger Lagoon 8 May (JGJ), and Weis Lagoon, Fillmore Co, 17 May (JGJ).

Northern Shoveler: This species returned in numbers in early Mar. High count was 1000 at Johnson Lagoon WPA, Phelps Co, 20 Apr (LR,RH).

Gadwall: High counts included 397 at CLNWR 4 Apr (MF) and 276 at NPNWR 16 Apr (LK).

American Wigeon: High counts included 700 at Johnson Lagoon WPA, Phelps Co, 20 Apr (LR,RH), 300 at Kissinger Basin 29 Mar (JGJ,GJ), and 286 at NPNWR 27 Mar (LK).

Eurasian Wigeon: For the 6th straight spring, this species was found in the RWB, this year a male at Kissinger Basin 29 Mar (JGJ,GJ).

Canvasback: High counts included 203 at NPNWR 16 Apr (LK) and 421 at Mallard Haven 4 Apr (JGJ). Latest away from the Sandhills were singles at Wood Duck (DH) and BOL (LE), both on 5 May, and 3 at Freeman Lakes 10 May (JGJ). In the Sandhills, 28 were still present at CLNWR 9 May (MF), where a few breed.

Redhead: High counts included 2338 at NPNWR 11 Mar (LK) and 1400 at FL 8 Mar (LR,RH). At CLNWR, 89 were found 9 May (MF); hopefully this represents a healthy breeding population. This species is the most likely pochard to be found away from breeding areas in May and Jun, and this year several were found at various reservoirs and marshes, including 4 at Wood Duck 5 May (DH), 3 at BOL 5 May (LE), and 5 at the Alma SL 31 May (JGJ,GJ).

Ring-necked Duck: High counts included 160 at NPNWR 16 Apr (LK) and 100 at Hedgefield L, Lancaster Co (LE). This species is rare anywhere in the state by the end of the period; late birds included 3 at Mallard Haven 17 May (JGJ), 1 near Long L 24 May (JGJ), and 2 at L George 24 May (JGJ).

Greater Scaup: The 11 at LM 30 Mar (SD) likely wintered, but migrants apparently arrived soon after as 23 were there and on the adjacent waterways 13 Apr (SD). All other reports include: 1 at Cunningham L 16 Mar (BP,LP), a female at Oliver Res 16 Apr (SD), and 2 at Mallard Haven 26 Apr-8 May (JGJ), the latter a rather late date.

Lesser Scaup: High counts included 637 at CLNWR 4 Apr (MF) and 450 at FL 9 Mar (LR,RH). Like the Redhead, several were reported away from breeding areas, but unlike the Redhead, most were north of the Platte Valley: 1 was at Wood Duck 31 May (DH), 15 were at Twin Lakes 24 May (JGJ), and 10 were at Doolittle L, Holt Co, (JGJ).

Common Goldeneye: High counts included 48 at NPNWR (LK) 16 Apr and 59 at CLNWR 17 Mar (MF).

Barrow's Goldeneye: Following the the discovery of a pair at L Ogallala in Feb (see Winter Report), a sub-adult male was found at LM 30 Mar (*SD). Even more significant was a female photographed at Cunningham L 3 Mar (JGJ*), the first report for the e third of Nebraska in 10 years.

Bufflehead: High counts included 186 at NPNWR 16 Apr (LK) and 125 at CLNWR 17 Mar (MF). Late birds included 1 at Clear Creek 19 May (SD), 3 near Long L 24 May (JGJ), 1 at Doolittle L, Holt Co, 25 May (JGJ), and 2 at CLNWR 27 May (MF).

Hooded Merganser: High counts included 10 at Cunningham L 15 Mar (JGJ) and at Swan L, Cherry Co, 16 Mar (LR,RH). Late were 2 e of Bayard 30 May (AK).

Common Merganser: High count was 3000 at LM 12 Apr (SD). At L Ogallala, 17 were present on 19 May (SD) and 24 on 31 May (JGJ), possibly returning molt-migrants which may not have bred. A male, presumed to be injured, remained 1 mile w of Wood Duck until the end of the period (DH).

Red-breasted Merganser: Earliest were 2 at LM 5 Mar (BP,LP). High counts included 34 at Cunningham L 24 Mar (JGJ) and 54 at L Ogallala 12 Apr (SD), the latter report proving that L Ogallala is about the only locale away from the e quarter where this species is to be expected with any regularity.

Ruddy Duck: Very early so far n were 2 at Wood Duck 2 Feb (DH). High count was 166 at CLNWR 9 May (MF). Several groups were found s of the Platte R late in the period: 6 were at FL 25 May (LR,RH), 17 at Stagecoach L 29 May (LE), 6 at Champion L SRA, Chase Co, 31 May (JGJ,GJ), and 38 at the Alma SL 31 May (JGJ,GJ).

Osprey: As many as 10 were found statewide in the period 2 Apr-9

May. Furthest w were singles at L Ogallala and L Minatare 12 Apr (SD).

Mississippi Kite: Returning for another year were 2 soaring over Ogallala 31 May (JGJ,GJ).

Bald Eagle: A pair was noted nesting in Scotts Bluff Co 26 Apr (AK) and another pair with two young birds was at CLNWR 23 May (MF).

Northern Harrier: Good counts included 21 in s Kimball Co 14 Apr (SD), 11 in s Cheyenne Co 16 Apr (SD), and 7 at Sacramento-Wilcox WMA, Phelps Co, 5 Apr (LR,RH).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Eight singles were found in 7 cos, latest of which was one at CLNWR 23 May (MF).

Cooper's Hawk: One report of breeding activity would have been nice, but three such reports were received. Nesting was noted in Cass Co in May (JM), a nest was under construction in Omaha at Towle Park in late Apr but was unfortunately abandoned in early May (NR), and a pair was performing courtship flights at Carter Canyon 27 Apr (SD). Additionally, 8 singles were found in 7 cos.

Red-shouldered Hawk: Only known to occur regularly at FF, a single was found there 17 Mar (BP,LP) and a pair 10 May (BP,LP) and 30 May (DH).

Broad-winged Hawk: This species has a well-defined migration period, the end of Apr and the first half of May. This year 6 were found in 6 cos, all in the period 26 Apr-15 May. Only one was found away from the extreme e, a single in Boyd Co 27 Apr (DH,MB).

Swainson's Hawk: Disturbingly few were reported, possibly due to well-publicized problems on the South American wintering grounds with chemical spraying. Earliest, as well as the best count, were only 2 at FL 20 Apr (LR,RH). Late away from a breeding area was a single near Axtell 24 May (LR,RH).

Ferruginous Hawk: High count was 4 in sw Kimball Co 6 Apr (SD). Easterly reports included 1 at Private Marsh 14 Mar (LR,RH) and another at Swan L, Cherry Co, 16 Mar (LR,RH).

Rough-legged Hawk: As many as 9 were found in the s Panhandle 20 Apr (SJD). Last to leave were singles at CLNWR 25 Apr (MF) and in nw Kimball Co 3 May (SD).

Golden Eagle: A single bird was on a nest in Long Canyon 30 May (JGJ, GJ). The only other report was of singles at CLNWR 21 Mar and 16 Apr (MF).

American Kestrel: Good counts were of 59 tallied from Scottsbluff to L Ogallala 12 Apr (SD) and 38 in Keith Co the following day (SD).

Merlin: All reports were of singles, as follows: 9 Mar at Wolf L (TH), 20 Apr at NPNWR (SD,WRS), 3 May at NPNWR (JS), and 3 May at Lindau WPA, Kearney Co, (LR,RH).

Peregrine Falcon: More than expected were reported; a total of 22 was found across the state during the period 9 Apr-24 May, half of which were in the RWB. Westerly reports included 1-2 in s Kimball Co 18-19 May (SD) and a single at Clear Creek 3 May (JS).

Prairie Falcon: A single was n of Long Canyon 20 Apr (SD,WRS) and nesting was noted in Long Canyon during the period (SD).

Gray Partridge: Suggestions of this species' imminent extirpation may be slightly premature. The three reports received are encouraging: a single was noted 1 mile w of Laurel 8 May (DH), 2 were 5 miles e and 1.75 miles n of O'Neill 18 May (DH), and a single was found in Dixon Co 24 May (JJ).

Ring-necked Pheasant: Reports were routine.

Greater Prairie-Chicken: Reports were routine.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Not yet well-established in the s Panhandle, 20 were found in sw Banner Co 12 Apr (SD) and a single was in sw Kimball Co 4 May (SD). The possibility that these birds wandered south during the winter cannot be ruled out, but if evidence can be

obtained that the species breeds in the area it would be significant.

Wild Turkey: Reports were routine.

Northern Bobwhite: Panhandle reports, where it is uncommon, included a single at CLNWR 9 May (MF), another at the Gering Cem 14 May (AK), and 3 e of Scottsbluff 24 May (AK).

Virginia Rail: On 30 Mar, 4 were found at Clear Creek (SD), possibly birds which overwintered. Up to 6 were found at Twin Lakes 25 May (JGJ).

Sora: Earliest was a single at Tamora Basin, Seward Co, 2 May (JGJ). High count was 5 at Nebraska City 11 May (BP,LP).

American Coot: High count was 386 at CLNWR 4 Apr (MF). Young had already fledged at Wood Duck by 5 May (DH).

Sandhill Crane: Furthest e were 16 at Father Hupp Marsh 2 Apr (JGJ) and 16 at Freeman Lakes 18 Apr (JGJ). Latest was a single at FL 25 May (LR,RH).

Whooping Crane: Very early and well-publicized was a single that was found at Rowe Sanctuary 9 Mar (Paul Tebbel, fide LR,RH). The only other report received was of 3 at Rowe Sanctuary 21 Apr (LR,RH).

Black-bellied Plover: Earliest was a single at Harvard Marsh 25 Apr (JGJ). High counts included 32 at Freeman Lakes 17 May (JGJ) and 27 at Ayr L 16 May (JGJ). Latest were 26 in the e RWB 23 May (JGJ). Only three reports were received from the w.

American Golden-Plover: Numbers were spectacular this spring; high counts included 273 at Freeman Lakes and 206 at Real Basin, both on 17 May (JGJ). Earliest ever was a single near Nathan's L 21 Mar (JGJ).

Snowy Plover: This species appeared in unprecedented numbers this spring, with 5 different birds in the RWB. Singles (all *JGJ) were found at Real Basin 2-4 May, North Harvard Basin 2-4 May, Father Hupp Marsh 9-10 May, Miller's Pond, Fillmore Co, 9-10 May, and Sinninger Lagoon 17 May.

Semipalmated Plover: Earliest was a single at Rolland Basin 18 Apr (JGJ). High counts included 52 there 3 May (JGJ) and 26 at Harvard Marsh 7 May (JGJ). Latest were 2 at County Line Marsh 23 May (JGJ).

Piping Plover: All reports of migrants were from the RWB, where 7 were noted 2-19 May (JGJ,WRS,JM). At LM, the 2 found on 18 Apr (SD) increased to 10 on 26 Apr (SD), and 8 nests were found 18 May (SD).

Killdeer: Reports were routine, except that many were found in strange places during the snowstorm which occurred 10 Apr, such as at feeders, wandering around on city lawns, and especially along roadsides.

Mountain Plover: The sw Panhandle was well-covered this spring by SD and JS. SD found a pair of this species in sw Kimball Co 25 Apr, a single displaying w of Kimball 4 May, and 4 plus a nest s of Kimball 18 May; JS found 2 birds 4 May in overgrazed pasture and a single the same day, both sw of Kimball. Since about 1994 it has become apparent that Mountain Plovers are occupying stony wheat-fallow areas in a rectangular area about 5 miles wide (e-w) and 10 miles long (n-s) with the Kimball airport at its ne corner.

Black-necked Stilt: A pair was found at the traditional locale in Sheridan Co at MM106 on Highway 2. The only other reports were from CLNWR, where 1-3 were found 7-17 May (MF,JS,JH,EH).

American Avocet: Earliest were 3 at Hultine Basin 18 Apr (JGJ). High counts included 70 at Harvard Marsh 3 May (JGJ) and 68 at L North, Platte Co, 20 Apr (DH). Last away from breeding areas were singles at BOL 18 May (LE) and Sinninger Lagoon 23 May (JGJ).

Greater Yellowlegs: Earliest was a single at Stagecoach L 26 Mar (LE). High count was 62 at Hultine Basin 3 Apr (JGJ). Late birds

included singles at Smith WPA, Clay Co, 23 May (JGJ) and CLNWR 30 May (MF).

Lesser Yellowlegs: Earliest was a single at Stagecoach L 26 Mar (LE). Excellent high counts included 211 at Hansen Marsh and 189 at Kissinger Basin, both on 25 Apr (JGJ).

Solitary Sandpiper: Earliest was a single at NPNWR 26 Apr (SD). High count was 4 at Arbor L 6 May. Last was a single in Otoe Co 18 May (LF,CF).

Willet: Earliest were 2 at Hultine Basin 18 Apr (JGJ). High counts included 23 at Harvard Marsh and 34 at Mallard Haven, both on 3 May (JGJ). Last away from breeding areas was a single at County Line Marsh 19 May (JM). Singles or pairs near Long L, Willow L WMA. Brown Co, L. George, and Twin Lakes 24-25 May (JGJ) were likely breeding birds near the eastern limit of the species' breeding range in NE.

Spotted Sandpiper: Earliest was a single at NPNWR 26 Apr (SD). High count was 3-4 in late May at Wood Duck (DH).

Upland Sandpiper: Earliest were in Hamilton Co 26 Apr (BWN). No more than 4 were reported at any location.

Whimbrel: Reports were unusual this year in the number of birds found and because all were from the east, whereas historically most reports have been from the west. Earliest was a single at Harvard Marsh 4 May (*JGJ,WRS), followed by another at Freeman Lakes 17 May (*JGJ), then an incredible 45 at BOL 18 May (JM), one of which was still there the following day (*BP,LP), and finally another single at Jack Sinn Marsh 18 May (JM).

Long-billed Curlew: Earliest were 2 at CLNWR 27 Mar (MF), where the season's high count of 7 was recorded 3 Apr (MF). A pair was w of Long Canyon 3 May (SD), a date suggestive of breeding in an area where breeding has not been recorded. A single chasing an American Crow in extreme sw Rock Co (JGJ), a pair at one locale in nw Brown Co (JGJ), and another single elsewhere in nw Brown Co, all on 24-25 May (JGJ) were at the eastern edge of the species' breeding range in NE.

Hudsonian Godwit: Good numbers were encountered this year. Earliest and right on schedule were 13 at Hultine Basin 18 Apr (JGJ). High counts included 29 at Hansen Marsh 16 May (JGJ) and 48 at Sinninger Lagoon the following day (JGJ). Last to leave were 3 at FL 25 May (LR,RH).

Marbled Godwit: Earliest were a single at Freeman Lakes 18 Apr (JGJ) and 14 at LM 19 Apr (SD). High counts, the first unexpectedly far e and late, included 25 at Jack Sinn Marsh 18 May (JM) and 23 at NPNWR 26 Apr (SD). Latest was a single near Bayard 30 May (AK).

Ruddy Turnstone: It is probably safe to write that the 14 reports totaling 76 birds this spring is unprecedented. A quick review of past spring reports indicates that 1-3 birds is typical. Earliest was a single at Harvard Marsh 7 May (JGJ). High counts included 21 at Sinninger Lagoon 17 May (JGJ) and 12+ at BOL 18 May (JM), the former the best single-locale count ever. Latest were 6 at BOL (BP,LP) and a single in Otoe Co (LF,CF), both on 19 May.

Red Knot: The only report, without details, was of a single at CLNWR 22 May (TLE).

Sanderling: Numbers were slightly lower this spring, with the high counts only 19 at Harvard Marsh 4 May (JGJ,WRS) and 18 at NPNWR 15 May (LK). The latter has hosted large numbers in previous springs. Earliest was a single at Wood Duck 30 Apr (DH) and latest were 2 at Freeman Lakes and 1 at Island Basin, both 23 May (JGJ).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Earliest were 18 at Harvard Marsh 19 Apr (JGJ). High counts included some 800 at County Line Marsh 21 May (BP,LP), 400 at Freeman Lakes 18 May (JGJ), and 150 at BOL 13 May

(LE). Less common to the w, 4 were at Clear Creek 26 Apr (SD). A few can be found into very early Jun.

Western Sandpiper: This is a very low-density migrant throughout the region in spring, even at Cheyenne Bottoms in Kansas. Details are appreciated for spring sightings, such as those that were provided for 2 found at CLNWR 16 May (JS) and 8 in the e RWB 3-4 May (JGJ).

Least Sandpiper: Earliest were 2 at Sinninger Lagoon 18 Apr (JGJ). High counts were 110 at Freeman Lakes 16 May (JGJ) and 51 at CLNWR 29 Apr (MF). Latest was a single at FL 25 May (LR,RH).

White-rumped Sandpiper: Earliest was a single, identified by the white uppertail coverts, at Wilkins WPA, Fillmore Co, 26 Apr (JGJ). Excellent high counts include 3600 at Freeman Lakes 17 May (JGJ), 870 at Mallard Haven 16 May (JGJ), and 630 at County Line Marsh 23 May (JGJ). Migration lasts into early Jun.

Baird's Sandpiper: Earliest was a single at Nathan's L 21 Mar (JGJ) followed by several found at a variety of locales 29 Mar (mob). High counts included 170 in a plowed field in Clay Co 3 May (JGJ) and 75 at CLNWR the same day (MF). Latest were a total of 44 in the e RWB 23 May (JGJ).

Pectoral Sandpiper: A few can be expected to drift n by the end of Mar with flocks of Baird's, as apparently did a single at FL 29 Mar (SD). High counts included about 100 at County Line Marsh 21 May (BP,LP) and 61 at Real Basin 7 May (JGJ). Latest were 3 at FL 24 May (LR,RH).

Dunlin: This is another uncommon shorebird which was found in excellent numbers. Unprecedented single-locale high counts included 62 at BOL 21 May (JS) and 36 at Mallard Haven 26 April (JGJ). Earliest were 1 at FL 30 Mar (LR,RH) and 2 at North Lake Basin 3 Apr (JGJ) and latest were 11 at County Line Marsh and 2 at Freeman Lakes, both on 23 May (JGJ).

Stilt Sandpiper: Earliest were a single at Theesen Lagoon, Adams Co, 25 Apr (JGJ) and 2 at FL 27 Apr (LR,RH). High counts included 625 at Mallard Haven 16 May (JGJ), 206 at Clear Creek 19 May (SD), and 200 at FL 24 May (LR,RH). Last report was from FL 25 May (LR,RH).

Ruff: Likely the top shorebird find for an excellent shorebird season was a black-morph male at FL 24 May (*LR,RH). This will provide the 3rd record for NE, if accepted by the NOURC, interestingly all within a 10 mile radius.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: The migration corridor used in spring is narrow and stopovers are primarily in the RWB. Evidence is accumulating that the corridor is centered on Thayer, Fillmore, York, and Platte Cos. Smaller numbers occur in the counties on either side of these, and still fewer e and w of there. In York Co Lee Morris has regularly found large numbers (into the hundreds) in spring, while in Hamilton Co Byron Nilson reports that he is "never surprised to see it in spring" but "[has] never seen hundreds like Lee Morris." This year, almost all were found in the center of the corridor and in the RWB. Earliest were 9 at Father Hupp Marsh 3 May (JGJ). High counts included 162 just w of Freeman Lakes 10 May (JGJ) and 116 birds 4 miles s of Shickley 17 May (JGJ). Last were 13 just n of the RWB in Platte Co 24 May (JGJ).

Short-billed Dowitcher: The numerous reports this spring suggest that a recent review (NBR 64:74) may have understated this species' abundance in NE. A tad early, but identified by call, were 5 near Wood Duck 30 Apr (DH). Other reports accompanied by details include: 3 at Harvard Marsh 7 May (JGJ), 2 at East Harvard Basin, Clay Co, 9 May (JGJ), 5 at Theesen Lagoon, Adams Co, 9 and 16 May (JGJ), 2 at Hansen Marsh 16 May (JGJ), 22 at Father Hupp Marsh 16 May (JGJ), 31 at Mallard Haven 16 May (JGJ), 15 at Freeman Lakes 17

May (JGJ), 1 at County Line Marsh 19 May (JM), and 1 at Harvard Marsh 23 May (JGJ). Several other reports were received without details, including 125 in Otoe Co 19 May, a likely time and place. Please submit identification details for this species!

Long-billed Dowitcher: Earliest was a single at Hultine Basin 2 Apr (JGJ). Peak migration hit NE on 2-3 May when high counts of 282 occurred at Hansen Marsh (JGJ), 286 at Harvard Marsh (JGJ), and 147 at CLNWR (MF). Last was a lone bird at FL 25 May (LR,RH).

Common Snipe: Migration was at its peak near the beginning of Apr. High counts included 24 at FL 30 Mar (LR,RH) and 38 at Bluewing Marsh WMA, Clay Co, 4 Apr (JGJ). Likely breeders were up to 6 found in wet meadows near Chambers, Holt Co, 25 May (JGJ).

American Woodcock: Arrival is early in the period and difficult to pinpoint. An excellent count was 15 displaying at BOL 25 Mar (JS); 2 were found there 18 May (JM). Other reports included singles 2 miles s of Niobrara 18 May (DH), at Crystal Cove L 14 May (BFH), and at the furthest w known locale, 2-3 were at the Fort Kearny Hike-Bike Trail, Buffalo-Kearney Cos, 9 Mar and 3 Apr (LR,RH).

Wilson's Phalarope: Earliest was a single at FL 20 Apr (LR,RH). High counts included 1113 at CLNWR 7 May (MF) and 350 at FL 24 May (LR,RH).

Red-necked Phalarope: An excellent high count was 250 at one small lake at CLNWR 22 May (TLE). In the n, a single was 2 miles w of Wood Duck 16 May (DH). Elsewhere, birds were found only in the RWB, a surprise for a species expected only in the n and w in spring. Reports from the RWB were: 1 at Harvard Marsh 7 May (JGJ), 2 at Roadside Basin, 9 May (JGJ), 1-2 at Mallard Haven 9 and 16 May (JGJ), 2 at Freeman Lakes 17 May (JGJ), 8 at Miller's Pond, Fillmore Co, 17 May (JGJ), 7 at Sinninger Lagoon 19 May (JM), and 6 at Harvard Marsh 23 May (JGJ).

Laughing Gull: An adult was photographed at Father Hupp Marsh 4 Apr (*JGJ); if approved, about the 7th NE record.

Franklin's Gull: Earliest were 7 in Hall Co 27 Mar (BP,LP) and 3 at FL 29 Mar (SD). No high counts worth mentioning were received. Last to be recorded were 100 in a plowed field 5 miles w of Wisner 29 May (DH,MB).

Bonaparte's Gull: Another primarily eastern migrant which is showing up in numbers at LM, 322 were there 26 Apr (SD). In the central region and away from a reservoir, 50 was a good count at the Odessa Platte R bridge. Earliest was a single at Cunningham L 1 Apr (JGJ) and last were 10 immatures at LM 19 May (SD).

Little Gull: What will likely be the 3rd NE record and first from the w was an alternate-plumaged adult at LM 19 Apr (*SD).

Ring-billed Gull: High counts included 2550 at LM 30 Mar (SD) and 2000 at NPNWR 19 Apr (SD).

Mew Gull: Nebraska's 4th record was an adult in alternate plumage photographed at LM 12-13 Apr (*SD). The 4 records have come in the last 2 years.

California Gull: An adult at Cunningham L 19 Mar (*JGJ) will, if approved by the NOURC, become about the 4th record from the e quarter of the state. At LM, 3 were found 29 Mar (SD) and 27 on 17 Apr (SD). Other reports include a single at NPNWR 20 and 26 Apr (SD,WRS) and another at Oliver Res 19 May (SD).

Herring Gull: High count was 250 on 30 Mar at, of course, LM (SD).

Thayer's Gull: An adult 29 Mar, 2 1st-year and 1 3rd-year birds on 13 Apr, and an adult on 19 Apr at LM were all photographed (all *SD). Hopefully this will begin to provide the needed concrete evidence for the species' generally-assumed regular status in NE. Other reports included 1st-year birds at LM 30 Mar (SD) and 19 Apr (SD).

Iceland Gull: A 1st-year bird was photographed at L Ogallala 30 Mar

(SD) and another was photographed at L Minatare 19-20 Apr (*SD, WRS).

Glaucous Gull: Last to move n were 1st-year birds at BOL 17 Mar (JS), Sutherland Res 29 Mar (SD), LM 29-30 Mar (SD), and LM 12 Apr (SD).

Great Black-backed Gull: Becoming regular, but only at LM, a 3rd-year bird was there 12-13 Apr (*SD).

Caspian Tern: Earliest was a single at Pawnee L, Lancaster Co, 8 May (LE). An excellent high count was 28 at BOL 21 May (JS). Still rare, but becoming more regular, in the w a single was at L Ogallala 12 May (JH, EH).

Common Tern: All reports listed were accompanied with details, very much appreciated. Most were observed in the LM area and these include: a single at CPBS 16 May (JH, EH), an adult at L Ogallala 18-19 May (SD), up to 14 at LM 18-19 May (SD), 2 at Clear Creek 19 May (SD), a single at BOL 19 May (JM), a single at Pawnee L, Lancaster Co, 10 May (JS), and 2 at Power Station L 16 May (JS). The other report was a single at a farm pond 6 miles s of Norfolk (DH).

Forster's Tern: First were 1 at Oliver Res and 3 at LM, both on 18 Apr (SD) as well as 1 at Cunningham L the same day (JH, EH). High counts included 79 at LM 18 May (SD) and 50 at BOL 5 May (LE).

Least Tern: The only reports were of singles 6 May, the earliest, in Cass Co (GW), and 16 May at both LM (JS) and CPBS (JH, EH).

Black Tern: Earliest were 4 at CLNWR 25 Apr (MF). High counts included 121 at Nathan's L 14 May (BP, LP) and 40 at L North, Platte Co, 16 May (LR, RH).

Rock Dove: Reports were routine.

Mourning Dove: Arriving birds were led by 1 in Cass Co 15 Mar (GW) and another in Norfolk 19 Mar (DH). In the west first were 2 at CLNWR 27 Mar (MF).

Black-billed Cuckoo: Barely making it into this report, other than an early bird in Cass Co 15 May (GW), were 1 at Wood Duck 23 May (DH) and another at Schramm SP 26 May (JS). None were reported w of these locations.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Earliest were 2 at Ashford BSC 18 May (BFH, LR, RH) and 1 at FF 21 May (B). None were reported w of Lancaster Co, where 2 were at Wilderness Park 29 May (LE).

Common Barn-Owl: Earliest were 2 at a traditional road cut location n of Clear Creek 26 Apr (SD). Rather far n at any time of year was 1 at Calamus Res in Loup Co, 24 May (JGJ). Other reports were from the LM area (SD, JH) and Scotts Bluff Co (AK).

Eastern Screech-Owl: A red morph bird was seen in Dixon Co 1 Mar (JJ); this color morph constitutes less than 10% of the population in n and w NE.

Great Horned Owl: Two young were on a nest at Alma 9 May (GH).

Burrowing Owl: Earliest was 1 at CLNWR 1 Apr (MF), a rather early date. An excellent count of 13 was s of Lyman 27 Apr (SD), 7 were in se Cheyenne Co 16 Apr (SD), and it was noted at CPBS 14 May (JH, EH). There were no easterly reports.

Barred Owl: Near the currently known n and w edge of the NE range were 1 at Basswood WMA, Dakota Co, 10 May (BFH), 2 at BOL 18 May (JM), and 1 at Wilderness Park 19 May (LE).

Long-eared Owl: Last presumed wintering birds were 3 at Standing Bear L, Omaha, 30 Mar (B); while it is assumed that winter roosts contain winter visitors, this may not be a safe assumption, and such sites should be checked for nesting birds in Apr-May.

Short-eared Owl: Earliest was 1 in nw Hall Co 18 Mar (B), followed by another at BOL 25 Mar (JS). The only other reports were of singles in Kimball Co 6 Apr and 3 May (SD).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Exciting, even though from an apparently

regular summering area, the Pine Ridge from Chadron SP westward (Rosche, Birds of Northwest Nebraska and Southwest South Dakota, 1982), was 1 calling at a campground in West Ash Creek Canyon, Dawes Co, 3 May (WM). Nesting has not been documented in NE this century, and only once in all, from Otoe Co.

Common Nighthawk: First were singles in Lincoln 14 May (B) and at Wood Duck 15 May (DH). First in the w were singles at CLNWR 28 May (MF) and s of Gering 19 May (AK).

Common Poorwill: Earliest was 1 at CPBS 12 May (JH,EH). Unusual but not unprecedented was 1 n of Verdigre 18 May (DH); there are reports eastward to Knox Co. A nest with eggs was found in West Ash Creek Canyon, Dawes Co, 30 May (WM).

Chuck-will's-widow: None were reported by the end of the period, even though arrival usually is in mid-May. Perhaps the cool spring was a factor in food availability or in suppression of calling.

Whip-poor-will: Earliest was 1 at Basswood WMA, Dakota Co, 10 May (BFH), followed by a good count of 10 n of Verdigre 18 May (DH).

Chimney Swift: First was at Wehrspann L, Sarpy Co, 20 Apr (B), followed by another in Cass Co 25 Apr (GW). Westerly, none were noted prior to 24 May, when 1 was s of Gering (AK), and 30 May, when 6 were in Kimball (JGJ).

White-throated Swift: The only reports were from a dependable site, Scotts Bluff NM, Scotts Bluff Co, where 7 were counted 20 Apr (SD), the 2nd earliest ever, and 10 on 6 May (AK).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Earliest was 1 at a Bellevue feeder 6 May (B), probably a survival tactic at that date in this cool spring, and another was in Douglas Co 10 May (B). Intriguing was a report of a hummingbird unidentified to species in Hamilton Co 17 May (BWN); although likely a Ruby-throated, unusual hummingbird species have been showing up in odd places recently.

Belted Kingfisher: Reports were routine.

Lewis' Woodpecker: None were reported.

Red-headed Woodpecker: Two at ADF 19 Mar (LF,CF) probably wintered there, as it was reported in Feb (see Winter Report). Migrants were led by 1 in Dixon Co 26 Apr (JJ) and another at Rowe Sanctuary 1 May (LR,RH). First in the w was at WHNC 24 May (AK).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: As many as 8 were near HCR 8-10 May (GH); now common there, it was unrecorded in Harlan Co until 1953, and now occurs throughout the Republican Valley.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: The only reports of this uncommon migrant were of 1 in Bellevue 11 Apr (B) and another at the Fort Calhoun Cem 23 Apr (JGJ), the latter a rather late date.

Downy Woodpecker: Reports were routine.

Hairy Woodpecker: One was feeding young at FF 28 May (NR).

Northern Flicker: The last "red-shafted" were near Valley 5 Apr (B) and in Dixon Co 21 Mar (JJ). First noted at James Ranch was a "red-shafted" 30 Mar (SL). First "yellow-shafted" at James Ranch was 20 Apr (SL). Best count was a modest 8 at BOL 3 Apr (LE).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: First was at Elmwood Park, Omaha, 9 May (CEJ), a rather early date, followed by 1 at Ponca SP 17 May (JJ,LR,RH) and 1 far to the w in Sowbelly Canyon 23 May (TLE). There are not many panhandle reports all-time; this spring all but this 1 were noted in the Missouri Valley counties.

Western Wood-Pewee: The only report was 1 in the Gering Cem 14 May (AK), rather early.

Eastern Wood-Pewee: All reports were from the e; earliest 2 in Dixon Co 10 May (JJ) and another in Cass Co 15 May (GW).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: None were reported.

Acadian Flycatcher: The only reports were from Neale Woods 25 and 29 May (B). No details were provided.

Alder Flycatcher: No identification details were provided for

singles rather early in Bellevue 11 May (B) or at Ponca SP 17 May (JJ), while 4 were identified by vocalizations at ICSP 24 May (JS), a more usual arrival time for this species.

Willow Flycatcher: First for this statewide migrant were not unexpectedly early, but reported without details: singles were on the NAMC in Pierce Co 10 May and at CPBS 12 May (JH,EH). Vocalizing birds were at Bazile Creek WMA, Knox Co, 18 May (DH) and BOL 21 May (JS).

Least Flycatcher: First were at ADF 7 May (LF,CF) and FF on 9 May (BP,LP), and the last at Valparaiso 29 May (JH,EH). Best counts were 20 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS) and 12 at FF on 9 May (BP,LP). Furthest w for this statewide migrant were 1 at Halsey, where usually more are seen (RG), and another at CPBS (JH,EH), both on 12 May.

Cordilleran Flycatcher: The only reports before the end of the period were of vocalizing birds on 31 May at 3 locations in the Pine Ridge, suggesting that new locations other than the traditional site in Sowbelly Canyon are being occupied, as predicted by Grzybowski in 1992. Singles were at Smiley Canyon, Sioux Co, and East Hat Creek Canyon, Sioux Co, and 2 were at Gilbert-Baker WMA in Monroe Canyon, Sioux Co (JS).

Eastern Phoebe: First for this early migrant were in the extreme se, where singles were at Omaha (B) and in Cass Co (GW) on 20 Mar. A rare migrant in the panhandle, 1 was in Long Canyon 27 Apr (SD), and, rare but regular as a breeder in the Pine Ridge, a pair was in Hat Creek Canyon, Sioux Co, 23 May (TLE).

Say's Phoebe: First was rather early at Mormon Island WMA, Hall Co, 28 Mar (B), followed by another at Chimney Rock, Morrill Co, 23 Apr (AK). Easterly reports were from Dixon Co 4 and 22 May (JJ); reports from the e in recent years are few. Best count was 18 in w Banner Co 4 May (SD).

Great Crested Flycatcher: First was at Rock Creek Station SRA, Jefferson Co, 7 May (JGJ), followed by singles at FF (BP,LP) and in sw Hall Co (LR,RH) on 10 May. Best count was 8 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS). All reports were from the e.

Cassin's Kingbird: Reports were from the panhandle, earliest 4 May near I-80 Exit 1 (SD), the 2nd earliest ever. Next were singles in Kimball and Banner Cos 30 May (JGJ) and 2 in East Hat Canyon, Sioux Co, 31 May (JS).

Western Kingbird: Earliest was rather early in Buffalo Co 30 Apr (John Kozak fide LR,RH), followed by singles in Kimball and Scotts Bluff Cos 4 May (SD). The northeast was reached 9 May by 2 in South Sioux City (BFH).

Eastern Kingbird: First were a single at CLNWR 4 May (MF) and singles at BOL (LE) and in Hamilton Co (BWN) 5 May. Best count was 18 in Otoe Co 18 May (LF,CF).

Horned Lark: These birds were very numerous in w NE 12 Apr, with 1800 in a flock near Bushnell, and 6750 along 10 miles of road near L Minatare (SD).

Purple Martin: Rather early for this early-arriving species was 1 at Theesen Lagoon, Adams Co, 4 Apr (JGJ); no more were reported until 20 Apr in Cass Co (GW). Most reports were from the e, with the exception of a colony in a dead tree at Willow L SRA in Brown Co (RG). In recent years reports of nesting in natural settings are few.

Tree Swallow: Earliest were 2 at Wagontrain L, Lancaster Co, 26 Mar (LE), a rather early date, and 7 at Crystal Cove L 10 Apr in a snowstorm (BFH). Now occurring at scattered locations virtually statewide, best count was 39 as far w as CLNWR 21 Apr (MF).

Violet-green Swallow: Apparently the easternmost report with details ever was 1 seen by observers from Oregon on a wire at HCR

8 May (GH); there are undocumented reports for Adams, Brown, and Cuming Cos. With patience, it seems that a few should be found in migrant swallow flocks as far e as central NE. The only other report was of 1 in Sioux Co 23 May (TLE).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Earliest were at FF 2 Apr (B), followed by others there 15 Apr (B) and 4 at Nebraska City 16 Apr (LF,CF). Best count was 60 at Stagecoach L 29 May (LE). First in the w were at CPBS 11 May (JH,EH) and s of Gering 14 May (AK).

Bank Swallow: First were at FF 15 Apr (B), rather early, and at County Line Marsh 26 Apr (JGJ), also the westernmost. Best count was 50 w of Peru 25 May (LF,CF).

Cliff Swallow: First was a single in the w at Winters Creek L, NPNWR, 26 Apr (AK), followed by 5 in Buffalo Co 27 Apr (LR,RH). Best count was 100 at Ponca SP 17 May (JJ).

Barn Swallow: First were 3 at Wood Duck 15 Apr (DH) and 2 in Hamilton Co 17 Apr (BWN). Best count was 50 on 8 May in Dixon Co, where the species arrived 10 days later than usual (JJ).

Steller's Jay: The wintering birds at Carter Canyon departed "around 15 Apr" (Edson Ewing fide SD), or more specifically 13 Apr (AK).

Blue Jay: Still of note in parts of the w, 4 were at CLNWR 11 May (MF).

Pinyon Jay: Last at the WHNC were 5 on 11 May (AK) and the last at the James Ranch feeders were 28 Apr (SL). There were no other reports; numbers are lowest in summer.

Clark's Nutcracker: Exciting was the apparent breeding of this species in at least 2 locations; there is only 1 prior report, that in Sowbelly Canyon in May 1987. Birds which wintered at Morrill brought a young bird with brown feathering in its wings to the feeder 7 May and 1 bird was still present 31 May (ECT,AK). Two additional nestings were reported without details in the Pine Ridge (WM). Two small flocks were in Sowbelly Canyon 22-23 May (TLE), and others were in West Ash Creek Canyon, Dawes Co, 3 and 30 May (WM). There appears to have been a major influx this winter with several birds remaining into summer for the first time since 1987.

Black-billed Magpie: Easterly reports were of 3 birds 2 miles w of Fairbury 8 May (JGJ) and 3 birds 6 miles nw of Fairbury 14 May (GH), as well as 1 in w Lancaster Co 8 May (LE). As many as 10 were counted for the NAMC in Pierce Co 8 May.

American Crow: Best count was a modest 200 in Howard Co 2 Mar (LR,RH), probably early migrants. Peak movement is in Mar-Apr.

Black-capped Chickadee: Reports were routine.

Mountain Chickadee: The winter influx tailed off with 1-2 remaining at WHNC until 19 Apr (SD), 2 at Gering 18 Mar (AK), and 2 in Scotts Bluff Co 19 Apr (AK), location not specified. An indication that it may indeed not have ended were single singing birds 27 Apr at Scotts Bluff NM, 3 May at Long Canyon, and 4 May at Winters Creek L, NPNWR; the observer (SD) wondered how many of these would breed.

Tufted Titmouse: Individuals were reported as far w as Rock Creek Station SRA, Jefferson Co, 25 May (WRS), a little w of the expected range.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Few were reported from non-breeding locations, the last at Holmes L, Lincoln, on 1 May (LE). At expected summer locations, nesting was noted at Halsey (RG) and in Sioux Co, where a nest with eggs was found (WM), and 2 were at WHNC 11 May (AK).

White-breasted Nuthatch: At Gering, where it is only a winter visitor, the last was noted 2 Mar (AK). A nest with eggs was seen in Dawes Co (WM), a regular summering location.

Pygmy Nuthatch: Good numbers, including nesting birds, were noted at sites in Sioux and Dawes Cos where nesting has been presumed but

little-documented; 25 birds, including at least 9 pairs and up to 6 nest sites were noted 3-4 May at West Ash Creek Canyon, Dawes Co, (WM), and several were carrying food 23 May in Sowbelly Canyon (TLE). At a relatively new nesting location, a single bird was at WHNC 24 May (AK).

Brown Creeper: A singing bird remained along North Stream Trail in FF 25 May (BP,LP), presumably breeding at the only known site in the state. Another singing bird in apparently suitable breeding habitat was at Krimlofski Tract, Washington Co, 24 May (JGJ). Winter birds departed by late Mar, last a single in Omaha 30 Mar (NR). None were reported w of Lancaster (LE) and Saunders (TH) Cos.

Rock Wren: None were reported e of CPBS, where 1 was noted 13 May (JH,EH).

Carolina Wren: All reports, of about 11 birds, were in an area bounded by Douglas (B), Lancaster (LE) and Jefferson (JGJ) Cos. Numbers have not been large lately.

House Wren: Earliest, surprisingly, was at CLNWR 31 Mar (MF); this is record early at that location, but no details of identification were provided. Next were singles at ADF (LF,CF) and FF (B) on 18 Apr, but not until 13 May did any show up in the Panhandle; this at James Ranch (SL). Best count was 33 at Wilderness Park 14 May (LE).

Winter Wren: About 5 were reported, all in Douglas and Sarpy Cos in the period 7 Mar-15 Apr (BP,LP,B). The earliest may have been wintering; most migrants pass through in early Apr.

Sedge Wren: At best uncommon in spring, only 3 were reported: singles at Moger Basin WPA, Clay Co, 2 May (JGJ), Jack Sinn Marsh 3 May (LE), and in Pierce Co 10 May on the NAMC.

Marsh Wren: Probably wintering there, 3 were at Clear Creek 30 Mar (SD). However, 3 at CLNWR 18 Apr (MF) had probably just arrived on this rather early date. Next were 6 in the e RWB 4 May (WRS). Of interest are breeding locations in the area where the eastern and western song types (possibly different species) meet; such a spot was Twin Lakes, where 2 of the western song type (much more varied and aggressive repertoire than eastern birds) were nesting 24 May (JGJ).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Last was 10 May in Pierce Co on the NAMC, a rather late date; another was at Wood Duck 25 Apr (DH). Only about 7 were reported, all in the e.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: First were in Omaha 31 Mar (CEJ) and Cass Co 31 Mar (GW), and last were 2 at FF 19 May (BP,LP). Best count was only 6, at FF 19 Apr (BP,LP). None were reported w of Lancaster Co (LE).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Earliest were in Jefferson Co 20 Apr (JGJ), also the furthest w. Northerly were 2 at Ponca SP 17-18 May (JJ,LR,RH) and 2-4 at Ashford BSC 17-18 May (WRS,LR,RH). Others were w to Wilderness Park 8 and 29 May (LE) and at Rock Creek Station SRA, Jefferson Co, 7 May (JGJ).

Eastern Bluebird: The few reports were from the e; migrants arrive in Mar, such as the first in Dixon Co on 29 Mar (JJ).

Mountain Bluebird: Migrants were first noted s of Gering, where 5 were seen 10 Mar (AK) and at CLNWR, where 9 were noted 15 Mar (MF). Best count was 100 s of Gering 10-12 Apr (AK), and most easterly 2 in Thomas Co 16 Mar (LR,RH). Spring movement is mostly in Mar and early Apr; as many as 32 were still in sw Kimball Co 6 Apr (B).

Townsend's Solitaire: The only eastern report was 1 at Neale Woods 10-11 Apr (B), a rather late date for that far e. Last in the regular winter range were 2 at L Ogallala 3 May (JS), also a rather late date. Also late, and in a potential breeding location, were 2 at Chadron SP, Dawes Co, 25 May (B).

Veery: About 8 were reported, a good spring for this low-density migrant. Two races occur in NE, the eastern rusty race *fuscescens*,

a single described at Wood Duck 12 May (DH), and western *salicicolus*, presumably accounting for 2 birds in Kimball Co 17 May (JS) and probably another at CPBS 12 May (JH,EH), although none of the presumed western birds were described. *Salicicolus* is not rusty and can be difficult to identify; reports from the Panhandle are few. Elsewhere, first were 1 at FF 10 May (B) and 2 in Pierce Co 10 May on the NAMC. The latter were undescribed and, strangely, were the only *Catharus* thrushes reported there. Last was 1 at FF 29 May (BP,LP).

Gray-cheeked Thrush: Casual away from the e, 1 was at CPBS 15 May (JH,EH). Other reports were from the Missouri Valley, earliest in Omaha 1 May (CEJ) and last 1 at FF 16 May (DH). A total of about 12 were reported.

Swainson's Thrush: A good spring produced reports statewide, as expected, including high counts of 25 at Ponca SP 17 May (JJ) and 20 at FF 15 May (BP,LP). Earliest was in Omaha 28 Apr (NR) and last 6 in Chase Co 31 May (JGJ); migrants are still moving through in Jun, especially in the w. Earliest in the Panhandle was at Gering 12 May (AK), while best count in the w was 8 at Kimball 17 May (JS).

Hermit Thrush: All reports were from the e; first 1 in Lancaster Co 14 Apr (LE) and last 1 in Omaha 5 May (CEJ). Best count was 5 in Lancaster Co 1 May (LE).

Wood Thrush: Casual as a migrant in c and w NE in spring, singles were at CPBS 14 May (JH,EH) and at Alma 9 May (GH). All other reports were from the e, earliest 2 at Wilderness Park 8 May (LE).

American Robin: Indicating peak migration were high counts of 75 both in Lancaster Co 3 Apr (LE), Dixon Co 10 Apr (JJ), and, in the w, 70 s of Gering 18 Apr (AK). Earliest in the w were 5 at a Chadron feeder 11 Mar (ZU).

Gray Catbird: Uncommon westerly, 2 were at CLNWR 28 May (MF) and a single at CPBS 14 May (JH,EH). Earliest was at ADF 2 May (LF,CF), and best counts 30 at Rowe Sanctuary 31 May (LR,RH) and 12 at Ponca SP 18 May (JJ).

Northern Mockingbird: Reports were all from York Co (BP,LP) southeastward, involving about 11 birds, earliest in Omaha 11 Mar (JGJ), possibly wintering nearby, followed by 1 at ADF 18 Apr (LF,CF). Spring movement is discernible in early Apr in northern parts of the breeding range.

Sage Thrasher: The only reports of this casual migrant in spring were of singles in native grassland n of Long Canyon 20 Apr (SD,WRS) and in sw Kimball Co the same day (SD). These are only the 9th and 10th spring records.

Brown Thrasher: An early bird at Neale Woods 12 Mar (B) may have wintered nearby, while migrants arrived 7 Apr at ADF (LF,CF) and 15 Apr at FF (B), and 6 May in the Panhandle, at CLNWR (MF). Best count was 12 at ADF 5 May (LF,CF).

American Pipit: Reports were statewide, as expected. Earliest was 1 s of Kearney 29 Mar (SD), followed by 2 in Dakota Co 7 Apr (BFH). Tying the latest date ever was 1 at County Line Marsh 23 May (JGJ); elsewhere, latest were 5 in Hamilton Co 29 Apr (BWN). Best count was 30 w of Elmwood 18 Apr (B).

Bohemian Waxwing: After the best winter showing for some time, the only report for the period was of 5 in Carter Canyon 2 Mar (B).

Cedar Waxwing: There were reports through the period, although the only reasonable count was a meager 34 in Phelps Co 5 Apr (LR,RH).

Northern Shrike: Last was a single at Lemoyne 13 Apr (SD); about 7 were reported from Lemoyne westward 11-13 Apr (SD). Last in the e were singles in n Lancaster Co 5 Mar (LE) and in Cass Co 29 Mar (GW).

Loggerhead Shrike: Possibly wintering was 1 in Cass Co 9 Mar (GW);

next reported were singles in Lancaster Co 19 Mar (LE) and Otoe Co 23 Mar (LF,CF). Three were as far nw as CLNWR by 3 Apr (MF) and another was s of Gering 23 Apr (AK).

European Starling: Reports were routine.

White-eyed Vireo: Apparently only about the 6th report for the 1990s was 1 at FF 10 May; no details were provided, however (B).

Bell's Vireo: This species can be locally numerous; 34 were counted at Calamus Res in Loup Co 24 May (JGJ). Earliest were 3 in w Lancaster Co 8 May (LE). Reports were statewide.

Solitary Vireo: Soon to be split into 3 species (AOU; 41st Supplement to Checklist), NE has all 3 of the incipient species (listbuilders?).

Eastern birds will be known as Blue-headed Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*); most if not all e and c NE migrants are probably of this form. All reports of "Solitary Vireo" this spring except 1 (see below) were from the Missouri Valley and thus almost certainly Blue-headed: earliest were singles at Brownville 3 May (LF,CF) and Two Rivers SP, Douglas Co, the same day (JH,EH) and last was 1 in Dodge Co 29 May (DH).

The breeding bird of the Pine Ridge will be known as Plumbeous Vireo (*V. plumbeus*); the only report of this fairly common bird was of 4 in Sowbelly Canyon 23 May (TLE).

The third, to be called Cassin's Vireo (*V. cassinii*), is represented in NE by 2 specimens in the University of Nebraska State Museum collection: UNSM ZM11878 was collected 8 Sep 1911 at Crawford and UNSM ZM11877 on 13 Sep 1911 also at Crawford. These two birds show little or no contrast between the greenish back and crown, and little or no yellowish wash on the flanks, whereas Blue-headed have greenish backs contrasting with Bluish-grey crowns and yellowish flanks. Observers in the panhandle should carefully check "Solitary Vireos" for Cassin's Vireo; most non-Plumbeous "Solitary" Vireos there should be Cassin's.

Yellow-throated Vireo: All reports were from Cuming Co (LE) eastward; earliest were a single at ADF 6 May (LF,CF) and 2 at FF 9 May (BP,LP). Best count was 4 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS).

Warbling Vireo: Earliest were singles at Wolf L 4 May (TH) and Arbor L 5 May (LE), and, in the w, singles reached CPBS by 12 May (JH,EH) and Scotts Bluff Co 24 May (AK). Best count was 15 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS).

Philadelphia Vireo: Four were reported, about average. Earliest was at FF 13 May (BP,LP) and another was there 25 May (BP,LP,JS). There are few reports away from the east; this spring there were 2, only about the 9th and 10th since 1983: singles were at Calamus Res in Loup Co 24 May (JGJ) and at Rowe Sanctuary, no date or details provided (B).

Red-eyed Vireo: Earliest were 4 in Pierce Co on the NAMC 10 May and 1 at FF the same day (BP,LP). Further w, singles were at Pibel L SRA, Wheeler Co, 24 May (JGJ) and at Champion L SRA, Chase Co, 31 May (JGJ). Best count was 18 at FF 28 May (BP,LP).

Blue-winged Warbler: Only 2 were reported, fewer than in recent years; singles were at Alexandria Lakes SRA, Jefferson Co, 8 May (JGJ) and at Neale Woods 15 May (B). Observers should try to see singing birds which sound like this species and the next to confirm the identification; a carefully-observed "pure"-looking Golden-winged Warbler seen in Dakota Co 18 May (Ron Martin, WRS) alternated between songs of both species and threw in some odd songs for good measure!

Golden-winged Warbler: As many as 8 were reported, as this species is becoming more common in recent years. Most significant was a singing male near Fort Robinson SP in Dawes Co 23 May (TLE); this appears to be the first panhandle record. As many as 3 were at

Ashford BSC 17 May (WRS), 1 was there the next day (WRS, BFH, LR,RH), and another a short distance to the n, still in Dakota Co, mentioned above under Blue-winged Warbler (WRS). Another was westerly in Hall Co 20 May (LR,RH), and the only other Missouri Valley report was of a single at FF 21 May (B).

Tennessee Warbler: This common migrant was well-reported, best counts 45 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS), 21 in Dixon Co 5 May (JJ) and 15 at Wilderness Park 29 May (LE). Earliest were the 21 in Dixon Co 5 May already mentioned and another in Cass Co 6 May (GW). This species becomes rarer westerly; singles were at Ash Hollow SP, Garden Co, 19 May (SJD) and CPBS 16 May (JH,EH), and 13 were counted at various locations in nc NE 24 May (JGJ). Latest was 1 at ADF 31 May (LF,CF), tying the 3rd latest date ever.

Orange-crowned Warbler: This statewide migrant was well-reported; best counts were 15 in Lincoln 1 May (LE) and 12 at Rowe Sanctuary 4 May (LR,RH). Earliest were singles at Schramm SP 19 Apr (JH,EH) and at Rock Creek Station SRA, Jefferson Co, 20 Apr (JGJ), and latest singles at Pibel L SRA, Wheeler Co, 24 May (JGJ) and in Cuming Co 25 May (LE).

Nashville Warbler: Reports of this mostly eastern NE migrant were from the Missouri Valley except for 1 at HCR 9 May (GH). Earliest were singles at Arbor L 5 May (LE) and in Omaha 7 May (NR), and latest were 2 in FF 29 May (BP,LP), a rather late date.

Northern Parula: About 6 were reported, none w of Jefferson Co (JGJ). Earliest was at FF at a known breeding location 17 Apr (BP,LP); as many as 3 were there 10 May (BP,LP).

Yellow Warbler: Earliest was at ADF 3 May (LF,CF) and in the w at Morrill 5 May (ECT). Best counts were 18 in Pierce Co on the NAMC 10 May and 16 at Wilderness Park 8 May (LE).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: This was a good spring for this eastern NE migrant; about 33 were reported, including counts of 7 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS) and 3 at Schramm SP 26 May (BP,LP). Earliest were singles at ADF 13 May (LF,CF) and surprisingly far w for the date at CPBS 15 May (JH,EH). Last was also somewhat westerly at Halsey 30 May (RG).

Magnolia Warbler: Another mostly eastern NE migrant, westerly was 1 at Calamus Res in Loup Co 24 May (JGJ). First was 1 at ADF 8 May (LF,CF) and last singles at Dead Timber SRA, Dodge Co, 29 May (DH) and Crystal Cove L, a female, the same day (BFH). The latter date ties the 3rd latest ever. Best count was 4 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS).

Cape May Warbler: This casual migrant was noted twice: 1 remained in the observers' yard in Bellevue 9-10 May (BP,LP), and another was near Bellevue University 15 May (B).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: Reports of the western "Audubon's" race from the Wildcat Hills, where it is a possible but unconfirmed breeder, included 8 at Carter Canyon 20 Apr (SJD) and 1-2 singing 25-30 May near the WHNC (AK,CK). A migrant was near Exit 1 on I-80 19 May (SJD).

Of the remainder of the reports, presumed "Myrtles", earliest were 2 at FF 15 Apr (B), best counts 62 in Pierce Co 10 May on the NAMC and 47 in Wilderness Park 8 May (LE), and last a female in sw Brown Co 24 May (JGJ).

Black-throated Green Warbler: Of only 5 reports, westerly was 1 at Pibel L SRA, Wheeler Co, 24 May (JGJ), tying the 3rd latest date ever; it is also rare in c NE. The others included singles at a Bellevue feeder 7 May (B), Schramm SP 10 May (JS), and at FF 13 May (BP,LP) and 16 May (DH).

Blackburnian Warbler: Following a good spring in 1996, many were reported this year also, a total of about 27, including westerly reports, where it is rare, at L Ogallala 17 May (JS), at Calamus

Res in Loup Co 24 May (JGJ) and 8 miles s of Atkinson 24 May (JGJ). Best counts were 3 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS) and 3 at FF 28 May (BP,LP,NR), the latter date tying the 3rd latest date ever. Earliest were singles at Bellevue 11 May (BP,LP) and in Cass Co 12 May (GW), and latest a single at Neale Woods 30 May (DH), the 2nd latest date ever.

Yellow-throated Warbler: Rarely reported away from FF, 1 was in Cumming Co 25 May (LE). At the FF location, birds were first noted 17 Apr (BP,LP), with 2 the best count, on 10 May (BP,LP).

Palm Warbler: Two races occur in NE; most appear to be the western race *palmarum*, with whitish underparts, but occasional birds with yellowish underparts are reported, possibly the eastern race *hypochrysea*. One reported as an "eastern race" bird was in sw Hall Co 10 May (LR,RH), while a western race bird was in Jefferson Co 15 May (GH). The other reports were unspecified. Earliest were 2 at BOL 27 Apr (JS) and last the western bird mentioned above on 15 May along with a single at FF the same day (BP,LP).

Bay-breasted Warbler: Since 1980, this species has been reported in spring only in 1982 and 1991, but then each year 1993-97. This year 5 were reported, the best for some time, including a female at Hidden L in FF 28 May (JS) and 2 singing males there 29 May (BP,LP), about the 5th record for c and w NE at Pibel L SRA, Wheeler Co, 24 May (JGJ), and another reported without details on the UNL campus in Lincoln 26 May (B).

Blackpoll Warbler: Common in spring, reports were plentiful, with best counts 10 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS) and 9 in nc NE 24 May (JGJ). Somewhat westerly was 1 at CPBS 13 May (JH,EH). Earliest was 1 in Dixon Co 7 May (JJ) and latest a single in Bellevue 31 May (BP,LP).

Cerulean Warbler: In recent years this species has been reported somewhat regularly as far n as Dakota and Dixon Cos; this year 1 was at Ponca SP 17 May (JJ) and 2 were at Ashford BSC 17-18 May, including a female collecting nesting material there 17 May (BFH,WRS,LR,RH). Also a summer resident at FF, first were 2 birds there 13 May (BP,LP), with subsequent sightings through the period (DH,JM). No others were reported.

Black-and-white Warbler: Surprisingly, none were reported w of Pibel L SRA, Wheeler Co, during the period; 1 was there 24 May (JGJ). Earliest was 1 in Lincoln 1 May (LE), best count 9 at FF 9 May (BP,LP), and last 1-2 each at Ponca SP (JJ,LR,RH) and in Dakota Co (WRS) on 17 May.

American Redstart: Reports were w to CPBS, where 1 was noted 15 May (JH,EH). Earliest was 1 at ADF 8 May (LF,CF), and best counts 18 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS) and 12 at Calamus Res in Loup Co 24 May (JGJ). Several were reported present at the end of the period at likely breeding locations in the Missouri Valley at Neale Woods (DH) and Ponca SP (JJ), and at possible locations where there are, however, no recent confirmed reports of breeding, at Wilderness Park (LE), in Hamilton Co, a female (BWN), and at Wolf L (TH). Data from recent years suggest breeding is restricted to the Missouri and Niobrara Valleys and the Pine Ridge.

Prothonotary Warbler: The only reports were as expected from FF, but unexpectedly not at the usual North Stream Trail location; 1-2 singing males were at Hidden L 28-29 May (JS,BP,LP).

Worm-eating Warbler: Reports of this species are few enough in the Missouri Valley, but this spring's only report was from far w at CPBS, on 14 May (JH,EH). There are actually 2 spring panhandle records, 7-16 May 1979 in Garden Co (AB 33:786) and at Alliance 24 May 1959 (NBR 27:50), and it has been recorded at CPBS prior to this year, although in summer, 4 Jul 1992 (Brown et al, 1996). The only other report of Worm-eating Warbler in the w is an amazing

report of "several" in a chokeberry thicket in Scotts Bluff Co 14-16 Oct 1957, one of which was picked up dead, a hatching year bird (NBR 27:73; Klicka, pers comm to WRS).

Ovenbird: Earliest were 2 at Two Rivers SP, Douglas Co, 3 May (JH,EH), and best count 15+ in Sowbelly Canyon 23 May (TLE), where it a common breeder.

Northern Waterthrush: Rare in the w, 1 was at CPBS (where else?) 14 May (JH,EH). Elsewhere, earliest were singles at Rolland Basin, Fillmore Co, 25 Apr (JGJ) and Stagecoach L 29 Apr (LE). Last were singles at FF 23 May (BP,LP) and at FL 24 May (LR,RH).

Louisiana Waterthrush: More than usual were noted at scattered locations in the se. At the "outer limits" were a single at Federation Marsh, Lancaster Co, 10 May (LE) and another e of Rock Creek Station SRA, Jefferson Co, 20 Apr (JGJ). At more usual locations, although still rare, were singles at a public park 3-4 miles s of Neale Woods 30 May (DH), at Mill Hollow 10 May (BP,LP) and Child's Hollow 14 May (DH), both in FF, and at Platte River SP, Cass Co, 18 May (JM). It was also reported in Cass Co 12 May (GW).

Kentucky Warbler: Rather rare as far n as Dakota Co, a singing male was at Basswood WMA, Dakota Co, 18 May (Ron Martin, WRS). At more usual locations for recent years were 1-2 at Neale Woods 8-29 May (B) and 2 singing males at Schramm SP 8 May (JS).

Connecticut Warbler: Rarely reported, and almost impossible to find unless vocalizing, 2 were found this spring, 1 heard at FF 31 May (BP,LP), and another reported without details at L North, Platte Co, 16 May (LR,RH).

Mourning Warbler: Mostly an eastern NE migrant, westerly reports were of 1 at Calamus Res 24 May (JGJ) and far to the west, 1 was well-described in Morrill 27 May, where it was compared with a McGillivray's Warbler (ECT). In the east, earliest were singles at Ashford BSC 17 and 18 May (WRS) and at Towle Park, Omaha, 20 May (NR). Last were 2 at Schramm SP 30 May (BP,LP) and 1 at FF the same day (DH), although early Jun reports are not unusual for this late migrant.

MacGillivray's Warbler: In recent years, observers looking for this species in the Panhandle have had success; this year 5 were reported, all in the period 17-27 May. Singles were at CPBS 12 May (JH,EH), at L Ogallala 17 May (JS) and along Lodgepole Creek e of Oliver Res the same day (JS), at Ash Hollow SP, Garden Co, 19 May (SD), and at Morrill 27 May (ECT).

Common Yellowthroat: Earliest were singles at Wolf L 4 May (TH) and at ADF 5 May (LF,CF). In the w, none arrived until 24 May, at Winters Creek L, NPNWR (AK). Best counts were moderate: 15 in Lancaster Co 10 May (LE) and 12 the same day in sw Hall Co (LR,RH).

Wilson's Warbler: First to arrive of this statewide migrant was in the w, at Winters Creek L, NPNWR, 4 May (SD). In the e, first were a single in Omaha 8 May (NR) and 2 at Wilderness Park the same day (LE). Last were singles at 4 locations 29 May, all tying the 2nd latest date ever: at FF and in Bellevue (BP,LP), at ADF (LF,CF), and at Dead Timber WMA, Dodge Co (DH). No more than 2 were noted on any day.

Canada Warbler: Of 11 birds reported, all singles, 10 were in the very short period 23-30 May. The exception, reported without details, was 1 at Neale Woods 6 May (B). The previous latest date ever was 28 May, now surpassed by 1 in Dixon Co 30 May (JJ), 1 at Dead Timber WMA, Dodge Co, 29 May (DH), and tied by a single at FF 28 May (BP,LP,NR).

Yellow-breasted Chat: Most reports, as expected in recent years, were from the west, where it is still common; earliest was at CPBS 12 May (JH,EH). Unexpected, however, were 2 reports from the e, where it is casual at best. Singles were at ADF 18 May (LF,CF) and

in Cass Co 17 May (GW).

Summer Tanager: All reports were from Schramm SP, the only regular location for this species. Earliest was 1 found 14 May (JS), and best count was 2 (JM,BP,LP).

Scarlet Tanager: The few reports were from the Missouri Valley, northernmost 2 birds in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS). Earliest were singles at FF 10 May (BP,LP) and a female somewhat westerly near Gibbon 19 May (LR,RH).

Western Tanager: Only the 6th spring record for the east was a bird eating oranges at the observer's feeder in Omaha 3-4 May (NR). This date ties the previous earliest ever for the state; prior easterly reports tended to be early also. In the west, none apparently arrived (or were reported) until 31 May, very late for this species, when 6 were found at various locations in the Panhandle (JS).

Northern Cardinal: Probably at the western limit of its range in the North Platte Valley, or at least where it occurs in any numbers, several were at Ash Hollow SP, Garden Co, in Apr-May (SD); it is common at Ogallala and at CPBS but was considered sporadic west of Oshkosh by Rosche (1994). In Scotts Bluff Co, where it recently established itself in 1992, 3 were noted (AK).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: This species is casual as far w as the Panhandle in spring; this year there were 2 reports. One was at the WHNC feeders 24-25 May (AK,CK), and another was seen in Sioux Co 22 May (TLE). As far w as CPBS it can be numerous; 15 were there 2 May (Brown et al, 1996), and it was common at Halsey this year on 30 May (RG). Elsewhere, earliest were 2 at Wood Duck 6 May (DH), and best counts were 30 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS) and 20 at Ponca SP 18 May (JJ).

Black-headed Grosbeak: At the e edge of the regular range, 1 was near Gibbon 5 May, also the earliest for the period (LR,RH), followed by 1 at CPBS 14 May (JH,EH). Two were banded at Halsey 29 May (RG), where it is rather more common in summer than Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

Blue Grosbeak: Of the few reports received, only 1 was from the e, 1 in Cuming Co 24 May (LE). Earliest was in the w, at Gering 22 May (AK). Best count was only 3, at Ash Hollow SP, Garden Co, 30 May (JGJ).

Lazuli Bunting: Several were reported in w Iowa this spring, but only 2 in eastern NE: 1 was at Bellevue 11 May (B) and another at L North, Platte Co, 16 May (LR,RH). This species is a casual migrant in spring in eastern NE. At Halsey 4 males were banded 29 May and another was seen (RG). Earliest were singles at WHNC 4 May (SJD) and s of Gering 8 May (AK). Best count was 8 s of Gering 18 May (AK).

Indigo Bunting: Furthest w were 2 at Halsey 29 May (RG). Of interest was a hybrid of a common form, blue-bodied with a white belly, rather easterly at Schramm SP 26 May (JS). Earliest was 1 at Wilderness Park 6 May (LE) and best count 12 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS).

Dickcissel: All reports were from Phelps Co eastward. Earliest were 2 in sw Hall Co (LF,CF), 2 in Lancaster Co (LE), and 1 in Pierce Co on the NAMC, all on 10 May. Two were in Phelps Co 11 May (LF,CF). It was thought to be late in arriving (NR). Best count was 35 in Otoe Co 31 May (LF,CF).

Eastern Towhee: Earliest were singles at Wood Duck 19 Apr (DH) and in Dixon Co, a male, 27 Apr (JJ). Most westerly was near Gibbon 26 May (LR,RH); there is probably a breeding population in this area; Easterns occur somewhat further west along the Republican River. Spotted also summer in the Hall Co area, as at Wolf L, where both occur in summer (TH). In Dakota Co, at Ashford BSC, 9 of the 12

towhees observed were phenotypically essentially Easterns; the remainder appeared to be Spotteds. Obvious introgressants were not seen, although odd songs were commonly heard. As noted here previously, Spotteds and Easterns are about even in numbers a little further west, in Knox Co; all towhees seen at Halsey were Spotteds (RG).

Spotted Towhee: See comments under Eastern Towhee. This species occurs in the extreme se only in winter; latest there were singles in Omaha 6 May (NR) and in Lancaster Co 10 May (LE). In the Panhandle, where it occurs in summer, earliest were singles at Gering Cem 26 Apr (AK) and in Carter Canyon 27 Apr (SD).

American Tree Sparrow: Very late, but not unprecedented, were 10 in pierce Co on the NAMC 10 May. Otherwise, last were singles at the James Ranch feeders (SL) and in s Lancaster Co (LE) on 21 Apr. Best count was 250 in Dixon Co 10 Apr (JJ).

Chipping Sparrow: Earliest were at ADF 8 Apr (LF,CF), and, in the w, 3 were s of Gering 18 Apr (AK). Best count was 133 in Pierce Co on the NAMC 10 May.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Earliest was reported in Sarpy Co without details, although not unprecedented, 20 Apr (B), followed by singles in Omaha (NR) and near Gibbon (LR,RH) 2 May. Best count was 155 at ADF 14 May (LF,CF). Latest was at L North, Platte Co, 16 May (LR,RH).

Brewer's Sparrow: Reported only from the extreme w, where expected, first were a single in sw Kimball Co and 4 in w Banner Co 4 May (SD), and another was near Exit 1 on I-80 17 May (JS). No others were reported.

Field Sparrow: Rarer westward, 1 at CPBS 12 May (JH,EH) was at the w edge of its range in the North Platte Valley. All other reports were from the e; earliest were at Neale Woods 12 Mar (B), which ties the 2nd earliest ever, although no details were provided, and at ADF 27 Mar (LE). Best count was 72 on the Pierce Co NAMC.

Vesper Sparrow: Earliest was in Dixon Co 30 Mar (JJ) and best count 21 s of Offutt Base L, Sarpy Co, 10 Apr (BP,LP). None were reported w of Buffalo Co (LR,RH).

Lark Sparrow: Earliest were singles at Ash Hollow SP, Garden Co, (SD) and Olive Creek Res, Lancaster Co, (LE) on 26 Apr.

Lark Bunting: Earliest was somewhat easterly at Gleason Lagoon WPA, Kearney Co, 11 May (LR,RH); this, and another n of Scotts Bluff 11 May (AK) were rather late compared to normal arrival dates for this species.

Savannah Sparrow: Earliest were 1 at Boyer Chute NWR, Washington Co, 22 Mar (BP,LP) and 2 near Harvard 27 Mar (BP,LP), best count 40 at Rowe Sanctuary 26 Apr (LR,RH), and latest 5 at Arbor L (LE) and 5 in Otoe Co (LF,CF) on 13 May.

Baird's Sparrow: The only report was a documentation submitted to the NOURC of 1 seen Sarpy Co 12 Apr. This is an early date and rather far to the e of the normal range. The earliest specimen date for this rather late migrant in Kansas and Colorado is 25 Apr.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Earliest were not noted until 6 May, at Twin Lakes (JH,EH), a rather late arrival date for this species, which usually arrives in late Mar in s NE. No large counts were reported.

Henslow's Sparrow: The only reports were of a single in Washington Co 11 Apr (GJ), the 2nd earliest on record, and 2 at a regular location, Burchard L, Pawnee Co, on 22 May (B).

Le Conte's Sparrow: Only 3 were reported: singles were in the e RWB 4 May (WRS), at ADF 7 May (LF,CF), and at Jack Sinn Marsh 10 May (LE).

Sharp-tailed Sparrow: Only 2 were reported of this late migrant: a single at Jack Sinn Marsh on the record early date 10 May (LE) was reported without details, but from a regular location, and another

was singing at County Line Marsh 19 May (JM).

Fox Sparrow: Earliest was at ADF 15 Mar (LF,CF), best count 3 at Wagontrain L, Lancaster Co, 26 Mar (LE), and last 1 in Cass Co 1 May (GW).

Song Sparrow: Migrants appear in mid-Mar; first noted were 1 at ADF 15 Mar (LF,CF) and 4 at Wolf L the same day (TH). Best count was 50, at both Gibbon on 19 Apr (LR,RH) and Wood Duck 15 Apr (DH). Birds still present and singing near the end of May are probably at breeding locations, generally in the north and east, although 3 singing birds at FL 25 May (WRS) continue an isolated breeding population there.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Earliest was at ADF 27 Mar (LF,CF), best count only 8, at ADF 29 Apr (LF,CF), and latest a single at Hat Creek Canyon, Sioux Co, 23 May (TLE); this species is uncommon in the Panhandle, where there were additional reports of singles 6 May at Morrill (ECT) and 14 May at James Ranch (SL).

Swamp Sparrow: Earliest were singles at Wehrspann L, Sarpy Co, 20 Mar (B), where it might have wintered, and at FL 30 Mar (LR,RH), also possibly, but less likely a wintering location. Migrants normally arrive in late Mar. Last of the migrants was at ADF 12 May (LF,CF); 1 at FL 24 May (LR,RH) was probably part of the small summer population there.

White-throated Sparrow: Best count was 50 at Hummel Park, Douglas Co, 1 May (NR). Latest were rather late singles at South Sioux City 21 May (BFH) and in a Bellevue yard until 27 May (KCR). Rare to the w, none were reported w of Jefferson Co (JGJ).

White-crowned Sparrow: No high counts were reported. Last were singles near Gibbon (LR,RH) and in Hamilton Co (BWN) 16 May. None were identified to subspecies.

Harris' Sparrow: Best count was 100 near Gibbon 19 Apr (LR,RH). Latest were singles in Hamilton Co 16 May (BWN) and at Ponca SP 17 May (JJ,LR,RH).

Dark-eyed Junco: The only "white-winged" juncos reported were at a Chadron feeder 13-14 Mar (ZU), presumably returning migrants. The last "oregon" junco at the James Ranch feeder was seen 7 Apr (SL), and 1 was at a Chadron feeder 6-11 Apr only (ZU). The latest "slate-colored" juncos were 1 at Chadron 16 Apr (ZU) and 2 at Norfolk 22 Apr (DH). All other reports were of unspecified forms. Best count was 75 in Dixon Co 10 Apr (JJ), and latest were 1 at Wolf L 3 May (TH) and 2 in Pierce Co 10 May on the NAMC.

McCown's Longspur: The major snowstorm of 9-10 Apr in e NE allowed searchers for rare longspurs to search freshly-plowed roadsides. Totally unexpected, however, was the discovery of a male McCown's e of Creighton in Knox Co 10 Apr (*MB). This is about the time when this species returns to its regular w NE range; 41 were in sw Kimball Co 6 Apr (SD), and 1 was in s Scotts Bluff Co 12 Apr (SD). The Knox Co record is the 5th for e NE, including a specimen collected from a flock of Chestnut-collareds in Lancaster Co 11 Apr 1919, 1 seen in Douglas-Sarpy Cos 21 Apr 1992 after a snowstorm, and 3 undocumented reports in the period 23-30 Mar. A count of 16 was made 4 May at a regular summer location 13 miles s and 8 w of Exit 20 on I-80 in Kimball Co (JS).

Lapland Longspur: Not a rare longspur, incredible numbers were seen after the 9-10 Apr snowstorm, notably "at least" 10,000 in 6 miles of road e of Creighton 10 Apr (MB), 3000 in Dixon Co the same day (JJ), and 1500 in Washington Co also on 10 Apr (JGJ). Of interest, although a little morbid, was the observation of road-killed longspurs in Knox Co 10 Apr being eaten by various avian predators including American Kestrel, Northern Harrier, Ring-billed Gull, and American Crow. Somewhat surprisingly, in light of the large numbers still present as late as 10 Apr, the latest dates on record for

Lapland Longspur are 15 Apr; latest this spring were "hundreds" near Offutt Base L, Sarpy Co, 12 Apr (KCR).

Smith's Longspur: Definitely a rare longspur, apparently only the 9th and 10th spring records for the state were 4 n of Blair (guess the date?) on 10 Apr (JGJ) and 1 in se Washington Co the same day (JGJ). Few of the prior spring reports are documented, but there is a cluster in the period 10-20 Apr, including 3 specimens taken in Lancaster Co 20 Apr 1901 (UNSM ZM7606, 7607, and 7608). The limited data suggest that in spring this species migrates northeastward from its wintering range, crossing only the southeast corner of Nebraska, essentially e of a line from about Webster Co ne to Washington Co. There are no documented spring records outside this area.

Chestnut-collared Longspur: In recent years, reports after Apr snowstorms have shown that this species is a regular migrant in e NE; this year as many as 42 were found n of Blair 10 Apr (JGJ). In w NE, where it is regular in summer, earliest was a single in Kimball Co 30 Mar (SD), and an excellent count of 1045 was made in sw Kimball Co 16 Apr (SD). Eight were present at a regular summer location 13 miles s and 7.5 miles w of Exit 20 on I-80 in Kimball Co 4 May (JS), and many were observed at various locations on Highway 29 s of Harrison, also a preferred summering location, 22 May (TLE).

Snow Bunting: Surprisingly, despite the good numbers noted during the winter, and given late dates of occurrence of 10-11 Mar, none were reported for this period.

Bobolink: Earliest were 1 in n Lancaster Co (LE) and 5 at Wood Duck (DH) on 5 May. Best count was 25 in Pierce Co 10 May on the NAMC.

Red-winged Blackbird: Best counts were 5000 in Dixon Co 13 Mar (JJ) and 1500 at Wood Duck 27 Mar (DH). Females arrive significantly later than males; as late as 4 May a flock of about 1000 females was seen in the e RWB (WRS), and the first female was not seen until 4 May at a Chadron feeder (ZU). The first males were reported in Dixon Co 3 Mar (JJ) and at Chadron 5 Mar (ZU).

Eastern Meadowlark: Earliest were at ADF 11 Mar (LF,CF) and at Cunningham L the same day (JH,EH). Local in the Panhandle, it was reported from Sioux Co 22 May (TLE).

Western Meadowlark: Earliest noted in the w were 1 s of Gering 9 Mar (AK) and another at James Ranch 17 Mar (SL). Best count was 500 in Pierce Co 10 May on the NAMC.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Tying the record earliest arrival date were 4 at Harvard Marsh and 3 just s of Monroe 8 Mar (DH); next to arrive were in Hamilton Co 21 Mar (BWN). Best count was of about 1000 males and females still in a flock 4 May in the e RWB (WRS). A flock of about 200 females was noted on the rather late date (for flocks) of 25 May near FL (WRS).

Rusty Blackbird: Earliest of this uncommon migrant were 2 at FF 10 Mar (BP,LP) and 28 at Cunningham L 14 Mar (JGJ), also the best count. A count of 20 was made 16 Mar at Wood Duck (DH). Last was 1 in a Bellevue yard 11 Apr after the heavy snowstorm (KCR), and 6 were at Boyer Chute NWR, Washington Co, 9 Apr (JGJ). Primarily an eastern migrant, none were reported w of Lancaster Co (LE). Identification of this species and Brewer's Blackbird in e NE should be done with care; some plumages can be confusing.

Brewer's Blackbird: Earliest were 15 in Otoe Co 23 Mar (LF,CF), 1 in Washington Co 9 Apr (JGJ), and, in the w, 1 at James Ranch 22 Apr (SL); arrival in the Panhandle is about a month later than in e NE. Best count was 100 in Clay Co 19 Apr (JGJ), and last were a female in the e RWB 4 May (WRS) and 17 on the Pierce Co NAMC 10 May.

Great-tailed Grackle: Earliest were 2 at FL 22 Mar (LF,CF), a

rather early date, followed by 5 at Wood Duck 27 Mar (DH), a part of the state which is only recently being occupied. Best counts were 35 at Johnson Basin WPA, Kearney Co, 20 Apr (LF,CF) and 26 at FL 25 May (WRS), a regular summering location. Reports away from the current breeding range, centered on the RWB, were 1 at L Ogallala 18 May (SD), 1 in Pierce Co 10 May on the NAMC, and 15, including 9 males, w of Wood Duck 5 May (DH).

Common Grackle: One in Cass Co 5 Mar (GW) may have wintered nearby, as may 1 in Lincoln 11 Mar (LE). Wintering blackbirds tend to be singles, usually males. Migrants were noted 22 Mar, when 5 were at Wolf L (TH), and 24 Mar in the w, when 8 were at Gering (AK). Best count was 1000 in the e RWB 16 Apr (WRS).

Brown-headed Cowbird: One in a Gibbon yard 1 Mar had been wintering there (LR,RH), but 5 near Harvard 8 Mar (DH) were apparent early migrants, as were 2 males in Dakota Co 29 Mar (BFH). Best counts were 600 in Pierce Co 10 May on the NAMC, and 200 in the RWB 16 Apr (WRS).

Orchard Oriole: Earliest were 2 at Wood Duck 8 May (DH) and singles at Wehrspann L, Sarpy Co, 10 May (NR) and at Jack Sinn Marsh the same day (LE). Best count was 16 at Wood Duck 31 May (DH).

Baltimore Oriole: Earliest were 2 near Gibbon 5 May (LR,RH) and 1 in Lancaster Co the same day (LE). Best count was 45 in Dakota Co 17 May (WRS). Westerly reports included 1 at CPBS 11 May (JH,EH) and another in Sioux Co 22 May (TLE). Neither report gave details or noted hybrid characters; this species does occur regularly in small numbers in spring in the Panhandle.

Bullock's Oriole: Earliest were 2 in Kimball Co 17 May (JS) and 1 s of Gering 20 May (AK). None were reported e of Dundy Co, where 3 were noted in the w part of the county 31 May (JGJ).

Gray-crowned Rosy Finch: After a good winter for this erratic species, the only report was of the last 2 to leave a Chadron feeder on 13 Mar (ZU), a rather late date.

Purple Finch: This species is being reported less and less it seems; only 3 were reported, including a female which remained at a Bellevue feeder until 29 Mar (KCR), 1 along Ponca Creek in Knox Co 30 Mar (B), and another at Peru 6 Apr (B).

Cassin's Finch: Following a moderate invasion this winter, 5 remained at the WHNC feeders until 20 Apr (SD). None were reported elsewhere.

House Finch: Reports were routine, including that of 3 fledged in Omaha 30 May (NR), likely the first of several broods.

Red Crossbill: This species occurred in moderate numbers statewide, but, significantly, was still present, usually seen at feeders, in the extreme e at the end of the period: 5 were in Cuming Co 25 May (LE), 2-3 at Schramm SP 18 May (JM) and as many as 25 there 10 May (B), and 5 at Nebraska City 30 May (LF,CF). No evidence of nesting was reported. Best count was a moderate 50, that in one of its usual haunts in the Wildcat Hills 20 Apr (SD).

Pine Siskin: At Halsey, where it now nests regularly, as many as 451 were banded in the period 17 Apr-31 May; many had active brood patches (RG). Signs of breeding activity were noted in birds at UNL (JM), and birds were present at Elmwood Park, Omaha, through 31 May; they bred there 3-4 years ago (CEJ). "Many" were present on the UN-Kearney campus, where they have bred for several years (LR,RH). Two remained at Wyuka Cem, Lincoln, through 22 May (LE).

American Goldfinch: Reports were routine.

Evening Grosbeak: This species was much in evidence in the w, with high counts of 80 at WHNC 4 Mar (B) and 75 there 12 Apr (SD); furthest e were at feeders in Buffalo Co, where a male remained at a Gibbon feeder through 15 Apr (LR,RH), and 3 were at the Triplett feeder in Kearney 9 Mar (fide LR,RH). No others were reported e of

the Keith Co area, where 11 were at LM 19 Apr (SD) and 2 were at Ash Hollow SP, Garden Co, as late as 26 Apr (SD). Latest were 12 in Scotts Bluff Co 27 Apr (SD).

House Sparrow: Reports were routine.

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