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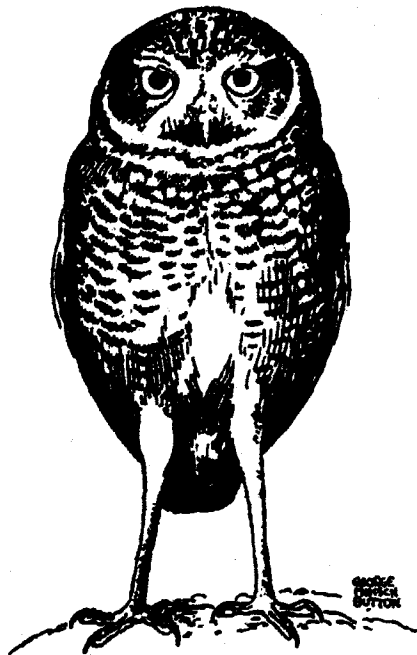
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Editor's Note: With this issue we step into a new era: this is the first issue in the history of *The Nebraska Bird Review* to feature full color pages. Thanks are due to Wayne Mollhoff, who instigated this change and underwrote the bulk of the cost for the color printing, and to others who contributed financially, photographically and with much-appreciated advice and encouragement.

WINTER FIELD REPORT, December 2007 to February 2008

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INTRODUCTION

This winter in Nebraska was much colder on average than the few previous winters, not so much because of low temperatures, but a lack of warmer days. This kept water bodies frozen most of the winter, with far fewer than usual midwinter water-bird records. Surprisingly, though, passerines, including some surprises, were able to brave the coolness. Notable were three species of wood-warblers; although Yellow-rumped Warblers winter to some extent in the southeast, 9 of the 21 total February records for the species have come in the last two winters. The others were not unprecedented for Nebraska, and are known to be somewhat cold-tolerant: Yellow-throated and Pine Warblers. Sparrows were also in evidence, with Fox Sparrow an occasional winterer, but Chipping and Field Sparrows, especially the latter, are rare in midwinter. Another group usually absent in midwinter involved two icterids, Great-tailed Grackle and Brown-headed Cowbird.

Purple Finches were reported statewide in good numbers, a definite incursion or even invasion by this species. Most notable were good numbers in the Panhandle, where Purple Finches are usually rare to absent. Western sections of the state had a minor incursion of Mountain Chickadees, with a few noted at feeders and elsewhere.

A major rarity was a Band-tailed Pigeon that regularly appeared at a feeder in Ceresco and was eventually seen by most who looked; it was only the third for Nebraska.

ABBREVIATIONS

BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co
CBC: Christmas Bird Count
Cem: Cemetery
FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co
GPD: Gavins Point Dam, Cedar-Knox Cos
HCR: Harlan Co Res, Harlan Co
ICSP: Indian Cave SP, Nemaha/Richardson Cos

LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co
LO: L Ogallala, Keith Co
m.ob.: many observers
NC: Nature Center
NWR: National Wildlife Refuge
PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co
Res: Reservoir
RWB: Rainwater Basin (playa region in south-central Nebraska)
SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)
SP: State Park

GAZETTEER

DeSoto NWR: Washington Co
Funk WPA: Phelps Co
Sutherland Res: Lincoln Co
Wildcat Hills: Scotts Bluff-Banner Cos

OBSERVERS

AK: Alice Kenitz, Gering
AS: Audrey Sterkel, Sidney
BFH: Bill F. Huser, South Sioux City
BG: Betty Grenon, Bellevue
BN: Brent Nelson, Scottsbluff
B&DW: Bruce & Donna Walgren, Casper, WY
CM: Connie McCartney, Grand Island
CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, Bellevue
DH: Dave Heidt, Norfolk
DK: Dan Kim, Grand Island
DLe: Denise Lewis, Peru
DMu: Deborah Murphy, Omaha
DW: Duane Wolff, Norfolk
D&CN: Don and Colleen Noecker, Albion
D&JP: Don & Jan Paseka, Ames
GH: Gerard Harbison, Lincoln
GW: Gertrude Wood, Lincoln
G&WH: Glen & Wanda Hoge, Alma
JC: Jennifer Cantrell, Lincoln
JD: Jennifer Dunavan, Cedar Bluffs
JG: Joe Gubanyi, Seward
JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Lincoln
JJ: Jan Johnson, Wakefield
JMu: Jerry Mulliken, Nickerson
JRi: Justin Rink, Omaha
JT: Jerry Toll, Omaha
KC: Ken Carnes, Lincoln
KD: Kathy DeLara, Mitchell
KP: Kevin Poague, Lincoln
KS: Kent Skaggs, Kearney

LB: Laurel Badura, Kearney
LBr: Lisa Bringewatt, North Platte
LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln
LG: Linda Grdina, Lincoln
LH: Luther Haige, Omaha
LN: LynnDee Nielson, North Platte
LR: Lanny Randolph, Gibbon
L&CF: Laurence & Carol Falk, Nebraska City
L&BP: Loren & Babs Padelford, Bellevue
MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton
MM: Marty Mathieson, Shelton
NF: Nancy Fish, Superior
PD: Paul Dunbar, Hastings;
P&DD: Phyllis & Dean Drawbaugh, Scottsbluff
RH: Robin Harding, Gibbon
SJD: Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA
SR: Sarah Rehme, Lincoln
TEL: Thomas E. Labedz, Lincoln
TH: Tim Hajda, Broken Bow
TJW: T.J. Walker, Brady
TL: Tucker Lutter, Bronson, IA
WF: William Flack, Madison
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Greater White-fronted Goose: One in Madison Co 7 Feb (WF) was probably an early migrant; most arrive mid- to late Feb, like the 37 in Lincoln Co 15 Feb (TJW).

Snow Goose: One in Cass Co 26 Jan (CNK) was likely wintering, although 250 appeared near Alma 1 Feb (G&WH). Huge numbers, at least one million, were in the RWB by 29 Feb (JGJ).

Ross's Goose: Routine reports.

Cackling Goose: Best count was 479 at LM 27 Dec (SJD).

Canada Goose: Routine reports.

Trumpeter Swan: This species can be found in small numbers during winter almost anywhere in the state; occasional large groups occur, usually in or near the Sandhills, such as the 23 between Hyannis and Merriman 23 Feb (TH).

Wood Duck: There are very few reports into Jan; 1-2 were in Lincoln 7 and 26 Jan (LE).

Gadwall: The 124 at LO 27 Dec (SJD) was a good count for the rather late date.

American Wigeon: One at HCR 16 Feb (G&WH) was likely an early migrant.

American Black Duck: None were reported; best looked for in wintering Mallard flocks in the east. Recent sightings have been few.

Mallard: Routine reports.

Blue-winged Teal: One at Funk 29 Feb (JGJ) was only 6 days from being earliest ever.

Northern Shoveler: One in Scotts Bluff Co 9 Jan (AK) was unexpected; midwinter reports are rare, even in the North Platte Valley.

Northern Pintail: Routine reports.

Green-winged Teal: The 116 at LM 29 Dec (SJD) was a good count for the date.

Canvasback: Best tally was the 300 at Funk 29 Feb (JGJ).

Redhead: This species passes through the RWB in high numbers; thus the 7000 at Funk 29 Feb (JGJ) is moderate relative to the record 40,500 there in 2001.

Ring-necked Duck: Late fall and early spring migrants were the 12 in Omaha 5 Jan (LH) and 2 in Madison Co 7 Feb (WF). There are a few wintering records however.

Greater Scaup: Routine reports.

Lesser Scaup: Last were 6-8 rather late in Douglas Co 2 Jan (JT).

White-winged Scoter: The only report was of an ad. male and a fem./imm. at BOL 7 Dec (LE); the latter was still present rather late 10 and 15 Dec (LE).

Bufflehead: Routine reports.

Common Goldeneye: Routine reports.

Barrow's Goldeneye: A rare but regular winter visitor in the North Platte Valley, singles were somewhat easterly near North Platte 23 Jan (TJW) and at the Scottsbluff SL 15 Dec (AK).

Hooded Merganser: Rather late were singles in Omaha 5 Jan (LH) and Lincoln 5 Jan (LE); late dates away from LM and Sutherland Res are in early Jan.

Common Merganser: Best count was a moderate 9792 on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD).

Red-breasted Merganser: Last were 2 at LM 29 Dec (SJD), where a few can usually be found with the large Common Merganser flock.

Ruddy Duck: Last was a report of 33 from the Grand Island CBC 15 Dec (fide CM). Late dates are at the end of Dec.

Gray Partridge: None were reported.

Ring-necked Pheasant: Routine reports.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Routine reports.

Greater Prairie-Chicken: Easterly were 16 at the Meat Animal Research Center in Clay Co 28 Dec (JGJ), only the second report from Clay Co since 2000; both reports may have been of birds moving southeastward in fall, well-known in this species. Amazing was the 174 counted on the Beaver Valley CBC 16 Dec (fide D&CN); other good counts were the 83 on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD) and 60 near Callaway 16 Feb (TH).

Wild Turkey: Routine reports.

Northern Bobwhite: This species appears to be in good numbers in the Loup Drainage, with CBC counts of 30 at Norfolk 15 Dec (fide DW) and 15 at Calamus-Loup 29 Dec (fide DH); in addition, 8 were at Broken Bow 13 Dec (TH). Surprisingly, 12 were found on the Harrison CBC 30 Dec (B&DW); the species is rare in the northwest.

Common Loon: One at LM 29 Dec (SJD) was late; there are only 2 Jan records.

Pied-billed Grebe: One in Lincoln 5 Jan (LE) was latest ever except for a handful of wintering reports, most in the LM area.

Horned Grebe: None were reported; late dates are in mid-Dec.

Eared Grebe: None were reported; most depart by early Dec.

Western Grebe: Lingering was one at LM 28-29 Dec (SJD); recent years have seen larger numbers dallying through Dec.

American White Pelican: A single was wintering in Lincoln (JGJ, LE), 2 at Sutherland Res (JGJ), and up to 5 at LM (SJD, MB). One at BOL until 7 Dec (LE) may have been the bird that wintered at Lincoln.

Double-crested Cormorant: Routine reports.

Great Blue Heron: The 9 found on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD) was a good count for the date.

Bald Eagle: Breeding numbers continue to increase; there were a record 50 active nests in the state in 2007 (fide JGJ).

Northern Harrier: Routine reports.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Routine reports.

Cooper's Hawk: Routine reports.

Northern Goshawk: The only report was of a "first-year" bird in Cedar Co 18 Feb (MB).

Red-shouldered Hawk: Encouraging sightings continue from the PL area, where hopefully a second breeding territory will be established in addition to the current lone known site at FF; single birds were seen at PL 7 and 10 Dec (LE) and 16 Feb (JGJ). Another was on the Omaha CBC 16 Dec (fide BG), presumably one of the FF birds.

Red-tailed Hawk: A total of 93 birds in Dodge Co 30 Dec (D&JP) and Sarpy Co 7 Jan (CNK) included 5 "Harlan's", 11 dark morphs, and one rufous morph.

Ferruginous Hawk: Easternmost was at Republican City 3 Feb (G&WH).

Rough-legged Hawk: Best counts were in the north and northeast; 18 were found on the Ponca SP CBC 22 Dec (fide BFH).

Golden Eagle: Easternmost adult was in Harlan Co 26 Feb (G&WH).

American Kestrel: Courtship was noted in Lincoln 25 Feb (TEL).

Merlin: Best count was the 5 on the Seward-BOL CBC 15 Dec (fide JG).

Prairie Falcon: Easternmost was in n. Saunders Co 27 Dec (D&JP).

Peregrine Falcon: A young bird chasing geese in Adams Co 29 Feb (D&JP) should retrain to shorebirds to avoid cold weather and increase its success rate; this is only the 9th record for Feb (but see next sentence). One at the Capitol in Lincoln 19 Dec (JGJ) and another in Lincoln 13 Feb (TEL) were presumably part of the resident pair; both this pair and the Omaha pair appear to remain through winter.

Virginia Rail: The usual 1-2 were found on the LM CBC 29 Dec (SJD).

American Coot: Two lingered rather late in Douglas Co 2-3 Jan (JT, L&BP) and 3 were on the Lincoln CBC 5 Jan (fide RE); 140 was a good count at BOL as late as 9 Dec (JGJ).

Sandhill Crane: Probably the earliest migratory species to arrive each spring, first reported were two over North Platte 3 Feb (LN), followed by flyovers near Grand Island 8 Feb (DK). By 29 Feb, "thousands" were in the RWB (D&JP).

Killdeer: Wintering birds were, as expected, at LO, with 7 on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD), and, more surprisingly, at North Platte, with 6 on 28 Jan (TJW).

Wilson's Snipe: As usual, several CBCs statewide reported this species; best count was 9 at LM (fide SJD).

Bonaparte's Gull: One at Sutherland Res 28-30 Dec (JGJ, SJD) was tardy; most depart by mid-Dec.

Ring-billed Gull: Routine reports.

California Gull: Unexpected was a first year bird at BOL 9 Dec (JGJ), while less surprising were the 6-14 at LM 27-29 Dec (SJD).

Herring Gull: A record fall count was the 540 at Sutherland Res 30 Dec (SJD, JGJ, WRS).

Thayer's Gull: Three were reported, all adults: one was at LM 27-29 Dec (SJD) and 2 were at Sutherland Res 30 Dec (SJD).

- Lesser Black-backed Gull:** An adult and a second-basic were at LM 27-29 Dec (SJD), and possibly the same two birds were at Sutherland Res 30 Dec (SJD, JGJ, WRS).
- Glaucous Gull:** Sutherland Res hosted 2-3 juveniles 28-30 Dec (JGJ, SJD, WRS) and a single was at LM 15 Feb (MB).
- Great Black-backed Gull:** An adult at LM 15 Feb (MB) may have been the same one that was there 14 Sep.
- Rock Pigeon:** The 1208 counted on the Norfolk CBC 15 Dec (fide DW) was the second-highest CBC total on record.
- Band-tailed Pigeon:** An exciting surprise was the appearance of a Band-tailed Pigeon at the Dale and Lucy Fisher feeder in Ceresco around 15 Nov; birders were not aware of its presence until Feb 19 (fide KP), when it was seen and photographed by many 22 Feb-2 Mar (m. ob.). It was Nebraska's third record.
- Eurasian Collared-Dove:** Winter flocks continue to get bigger; 200 were at Shelton 25 Dec (MM), and 77 at Brady 18 Feb (TJW). Best CBC tallies were 122 at LM 29 Dec (fide SJD) and 101 at Scottsbluff 15 Dec (fide AK).
- White-winged Dove:** Only the 7th report for mid-Oct through mid-Apr was one in Scottsbluff 2 Feb (BN).
- Mourning Dove:** One in Scottsbluff 10 Feb (P&DD) was unexpected, although wintering occurs in the North Platte Valley on occasion.
- Eastern Screech-Owl:** Routine reports.
- Great Horned Owl:** This is an early nester, with earliest Nebraska egg date 6 Feb, but one incubating in late Jan near North Platte (TJW) was exceptionally early.
- Snowy Owl:** Two, possibly 3, were reported. A male near Mead 26 Jan (JD) may have been the same bird seen just east of Wahoo 23-24 Feb (TL, m.ob.), and an emaciated female was picked up for rehabilitation near Peru 24 Feb (DLe).
- Barred Owl:** Routine reports.
- Long-eared Owl:** The 14 on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD) was a good count.
- Short-eared Owl:** Two were hunting around baled cornstalks during a period of snow cover in Dodge Co 8 Jan (JMu); the observer suspected such bales would be a good source of mice. Other singles were also in Dodge Co 13-14 Jan and 28 Feb (D&JP), and one was found on the Seward-BOL CBC 15 Dec (JGJ, LE).
- Northern Saw-whet Owl:** The only report was of one on the LM CBC 29 Dec (SJD).
- Belted Kingfisher:** Routine reports.
- Red-headed Woodpecker:** Routine reports.
- Red-bellied Woodpecker:** Routine reports.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** A few winter each year in the extreme se., but an immature near Genoa 15 Feb (WF) was northwesterly for the date. A molting juvenile at Broken Bow 7 Dec was also westerly, probably a late migrant.
- Downy Woodpecker:** Routine reports.
- Hairy Woodpecker:** Routine reports.
- Northern Flicker:** Routine reports.
- Pileated Woodpecker:** The only reports were from regular locations: one each at FF on the Omaha CBC 16 Dec (fide BG) and at ICSP 15 Feb (L&CF).
- Northern Shrike:** This species was widespread this winter; good counts were the 19 in the west 27-30 Dec (SJD) and 11 on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD).
- Loggerhead Shrike:** Rare in winter, but most likely in the extreme se., one in Otoe Co 24 Feb (L&CF) may have been an early migrant, but one photographed in

Dodge Co 10 Jan (JMu) was unexpected; this is only the 5th documented record for Jan.

Blue Jay: Routine reports.

Pinyon Jay: The only report was of one near Crawford in late Dec (B&DW); this species is erratic in its occurrences.

Black-billed Magpie: Continuing occasional winter reports in Lancaster Co was one on the Seward-BOL CBC 15 Dec (fide JG). Others eastward were 2 on the Clay-Adams Cos line 16 Feb (LR, RH) and 2 on the Norfolk CBC 15 Dec (fide DW).

American Crow: "Huge flocks" wintered in the Merna-Callaway area of Custer Co, with "thousands" seen in mid-Feb (LB, TH).

Horned Lark: Huge counts were reported from the south and west; "tens of thousands" were along highways in sw. Nebraska 14 Dec (TJW), and a count record of 4788 occurred on the Scottsbluff CBC 15 Dec (fide AK).

Tree Swallow: An incredibly early arrival was a Tree Swallow near Lincoln 13 Feb (GH); this is record early by a month.

Black-capped Chickadee: Numbers are still "reduced and localized" in Lancaster Co (LE), and an all-time low count of 10 was made there on the Seward-BOL CBC 15 Dec (fide JG).

Mountain Chickadee: There was a moderate incursion this winter, with a total of 8 birds reported in addition to the 2 in fall (see Fall Report). Four were on the Scottsbluff CBC 15 Dec (fide AK), one was in Harrison 28 Dec (SJD, details), another or the same one on the Harrison CBC 30 Dec (B&DW), and singles were at Wildcat Hills NC 31 Dec (JRi) and 15 Feb (AK).

Tufted Titmouse: Routine reports.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: This species was widely reported at feeders statewide, usually fewer than 5 at each site; best CBC totals were 37 at LM 29 Dec (fide SJD) and 49 at Lincoln 5 Jan (fide RE).

White-breasted Nuthatch: Routine reports.

Pygmy Nuthatch: The 35 on the Harrison CBC 30 Dec (fide B&DW) was a good count.

Brown Creeper: A good count was the 5 at Wyuka Cem, Lincoln, 22 Dec (LE).

Carolina Wren: Westerly were 2 at HCR 16 Feb (KS) and one at Johnson L, Dawson and Gosper Cos, 29 Feb (JGJ).

Winter Wren: Unexpected so far northwest was one at Calamus Res 29 Dec (DH); sightings after Dec are few, even in the southeast, and so one in Gage Co 26 Jan (JGJ) was also unexpected.

Marsh Wren: Routine reports.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: By midwinter most are in the southeast; outliers this winter were 2 at Broken Bow 28 Jan (TH) and singles in Boone Co 6 Feb (WF) and Greeley Co 20 Feb (WF).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: This species is a rarity in midwinter, especially away from the Missouri Valley where it is rare at best; thus one in Adams Co 13 Jan (LR, RH) was unexpected and 2 on the Omaha CBC 16 Dec (fide BG) were a rare find.

Eastern Bluebird: Two singing males in Dodge Co 23 Feb (D&JP) were likely early migrants. A pretty sight must have been the flock of 100 in Hitchcock Co 14 Dec (TJW).

Mountain Bluebird: Routine reports.

- Townsend's Solitaire:** The 94 on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD) was an excellent count. Easternmost were 3 on the Seward-BOL CBC 15 Dec (fide JG), one on the Ponca SP CBC 22 Dec (fide BFH), and one in Omaha 24 Feb (JRI).
- Hermit Thrush:** Over-wintering is rare, and usually occurs in the southeast; one wintering in Bellevue was still present 13 Feb (fide L&BP). A few lingered into Dec, as expected, but one on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD) was westerly.
- American Robin:** The 10,712 on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD) was the 2nd-highest all-time CBC total for the state behind 13,136 at Calamus Res in 2003.
- Varied Thrush:** A brightly-plumaged male was in an Omaha yard 13-19 Dec (DMu, photo); it was the 2nd for the season, the other in Sioux Co in Oct (Fall Report). There have been several sightings in recent years; this is the 8th for 2005-Feb 2008.
- Brown Thrasher:** One lingered at Broken Bow until 27 Dec (TH); over-wintering is rare, generally in the southeast, and so one present through the period in Lincoln (LG) was unexpected.
- European Starling:** A count high for the Seward-BOL CBC was the 3275 there 15 Dec (fide JG); all-time high CBC count is 101,384 at Lincoln 1975-76.
- Bohemian Waxwing:** Good numbers were found in the extreme northwest: a flock of 325 was in Harrison 28 Dec (SJD), and apparently the same flock was found on the Harrison CBC, which tallied the same number two days later (fide B&DW). On 28 Dec, 32 were west of Crawford (SJD). Easternmost were 18 on the LM CBC 9 Dec (fide SJD).
- Cedar Waxwing:** Routine reports.
- Yellow-rumped Warbler:** Prior to this winter, there were few Jan and especially Feb reports. This winter, reports through Dec were widespread, including 2 as far west as the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD), and several were found into Jan and even Feb in the southeast and south. Prior to 2007 there were only 12 Feb records for the state, but there were 5 in 2007, and 4 more in 2008: singles were in Otoe Co 1 Feb (LE), at BOL 10 Feb (JGJ), in Nance Co 15-16 Feb (WF), and at HCR 16 Feb (KS). Swanson Res hosted 1-2 on 19-20 Jan (LR, RH), late for that westerly location.
- Yellow-throated Warbler:** Extraordinary, but not unprecedented, was one at a Lincoln feeder 11 Dec (JC, photo). Previously, one was at an Omaha feeder through 24 Dec 1980.
- Pine Warbler:** Another very late suet feeder visitor was one in North Platte 24 Dec (LBr, photo). Surprisingly, this is about the 7th record for Dec.
- Spotted Towhee:** A few winter from the Platte River Valley south; the 2 on the Scottsbluff CBC 15 Dec provided a high for that count (fide AK).
- American Tree Sparrow:** Routine reports.
- Chipping Sparrow:** A single at a feeder, typical of late reports for this species, was present in Lincoln 6-21 Jan (TEL); this is only the 2nd documented Jan record.
- Field Sparrow:** One, and possibly 3, although the two additional were not seen by the reporter, were found on the LM CBC 29 Dec (SJD); this is only the 4th documented report for Dec away from the southeast.
- Savannah Sparrow:** The only report was of one near Broken Bow 26 Jan (TH, details), the 4th record for Jan.

Continued on Page 12



Leucistic Sandhill Crane among other Sandhill Cranes, southern Hall Co.,
26 Feb 2007. Photo by Paul Dunbar.

Upland Sandpiper, Chet & Jane Fleisbach
WMA (Facus Springs), Morrill Co.,
23 June 2007. Photo by Kathy DeLara.



Lazuli Bunting, Box Elder Canyon,
15 mi. SE of North Platte, Lincoln Co.,
20 May 2007. Photo by Jerry Mulliken.



Piping Plover on nest, Lake McConaughy,
Keith Co., 14 May 2004.
Photo by Stephen J. Dinsmore.



Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Pierson farm, 3 mi. SE of Arcadia, Sherman Co., 22 April 2008. Photo by Conn Pierson.



Least Sandpiper and Short-billed Dowitcher, Funk WMA, Phelps Co., 25 Aug 2007. Photo by Paul Dunbar.



Yellow Warbler, Olive Creek SRA, Lancaster Co., 6 May 2008. Photo by Heather York, Doane College.

Fox Sparrow: More than usual were reported in Dec, including an amazing 13 on the Seward-BOL CBC 15 Dec (fide JG). Reports late Jan-Feb are few, most from the southeast; this winter one was a bit westerly in Adams Co 15 Jan (PD), two were at BOL 27 Jan (JGJ), and singles were in Cass Co 1 Feb (LE) and Lancaster Co 3 Feb (JGJ).

Song Sparrow: Routine reports.

Lincoln's Sparrow: This species may linger late in fall on occasion; there are some 35 Dec records and others into mid-Jan, but one at a Lancaster Co feeder present through 21 Jan was apparently attempting to over-winter, although it was not seen after that date (TEL). Otherwise, last was one in Lancaster Co 5 Jan (LE).

Swamp Sparrow: This species winters in the southeast most years in small numbers; up to 8 were at PL through the period (LE), 3 were at ICSP 15 Feb (L&CF) and one was in Lancaster Co 16 Feb (JGJ).

White-throated Sparrow: This species was present as expected throughout the southeast, where it is rare in winter; best count was only 5, on the CBCs at Omaha 16 Dec (fide BG) and Lincoln 5 Jan (fide RE).

Harris's Sparrow: Rather rare westerly, 8 were counted on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD).

White-crowned Sparrow: This species is scarce in midwinter in most of the state except the south and west; thus unusual were up to 20 in Broken Bow through 26 Jan (TH) and one at a feeder in Albion 5 Jan (D&CN). These are only the 8th and 9th midwinter records for the north-central and northwest parts of the state (north of the Platte Valley). Best count was the 136 on the Scottsbluff CBC 15 Dec (fide AK).

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: More than usual were reported, all from the Panhandle except for 8 (out of 1494 juncos) on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD). Two (out of 458) were on the Scottsbluff CBC 15 Dec (fide AK), 32 (out of 191) were on the Harrison CBC 30 Dec (fide B&DW), and "several", the observer's first ever, were at a Sidney feeder 30 Dec (AS).

Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco: Routine reports.

Dark-eyed (Oregon and Pink-sided) Junco: The 28 "Oregons" (out of 1570 juncos) on the Seward-BOL CBC 15 Dec (fide JG) was a good easterly count. Single "Pink-sided" juncos at Broken Bow 27 Dec and 12 Feb (TH) were good finds for the eastward location.

Lapland Longspur: Routine reports.

Snow Bunting: More than usual were reported statewide, about 100, with best counts 58 in Cass Co 1 Jan (GW) and 20 in Morrill Co 27 Dec (SJD).

Northern Cardinal: This species continues in very low numbers in Scotts Bluff Co; one was found on the CBC there 15 Dec (fide AK). One was singing 13 Jan in Lincoln (JGJ).

Red-winged Blackbird: A flock of 500 in Scotts Bluff Co 10 Feb (P&DD) was unusual; they were likely early migrants, although 50 were there 28 Jan (P&DD).

Western Meadowlark: First singing bird reported was in Sarpy Co 21 Feb (WF).

Rusty Blackbird: Apart from 5 on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD), where this species is rare, there were numerous reports from the east totaling about 40 birds during Dec. Best count was 22 on the Grand Island CBC 15 Dec (fide CM); latest were 6 in Cuming Co 28 Dec (LE); and northernmost was one on the Norfolk CBC 15 Dec (fide DW).

- Brewer's Blackbird:** One on the Scotts Bluff CBC 15 Dec (fide AK) was unexpected and the only one reported; few remain in the state past mid-Dec.
- Common Grackle:** Scattered birds were found on CBCs in the east, and 20 were seen on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD), also the latest reported for the season.
- Great-tailed Grackle:** The only reports away from the southeast were of 65 in Dawson Co 30 Dec (SJD) and one at Alma 5 Feb (G&WH). There are few records of over-wintering.
- Brown-headed Cowbird:** The 30 on the Beaver Valley CBC 16 Dec (fide D&CN) were a little farther north and west than usual in mid-Dec, and one on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD) was unexpected there at that date.
- Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch:** None were reported.
- Purple Finch:** Following a good fall for this species, winter reports were numerous and widespread. Best counts included 124 at Calamus Res 29 Dec (DH) and 82 on the Seward-BOL CBC 15 Dec (fide JG). Generally rare in the west, one on the Scottsbluff CBC 15 Dec was only the second time the species had been found on that CBC (fide AK). The 33 in Monroe Canyon, Sioux Co 28 Dec (SJD), may have been unprecedented, and 33 on the LM CBC 29 Dec was a count high there (fide SJD). Even eastward, 2-3 at a Dodge Co feeder were the first ever there (D&JP), and 2 at a Gibbon feeder were "unusual" there (LR, RH). In all, about 520 were reported for the period.
- Cassin's Finch:** The only report was of 2 on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD). This is the 4th time for this species on this CBC.
- House Finch:** Routine reports.
- Red Crossbill:** This species was also widely reported in good numbers, a total of about 190 birds. Best counts were the up to 40 wintering in Hastings: 40 were at one feeder 14 Feb (PD) and 20 at another 9 Jan (fide KC). Also, 25 were at PL 21 Jan (SR, JG) and 22 were there 19 Feb (LE). It is believed that resident birds in Nebraska are Type 2 (Groth: <http://research.amnh.org/ornithology/crossbills/>), which is a ponderosa pine specialist. An observer suggested that, based on recordings, the birds in Hastings might be Type 2 (PD), but 4 in Omaha 16 Feb were thought to be Type 4 (JRi). Evidence, which is rather sketchy, to date (*Birds of Nebraska*) suggests that Types 2, 3, 5, and 7 have occurred in Nebraska, and so Type 4 would be new to the state.
- Common Redpoll:** There were more reports than usual, but not surprisingly so. CBC compilers reported 2 at Seward-BOL 15 Dec (fide JG) with a single at BOL 28 Dec (TEL); one was at Harrison 30 Dec (fide B&DW); 4 were in Sheridan Co 28 Dec (SJD); one was at a Scotts Bluff Co feeder 2 Jan (KD); and 2 were in Superior for 2 weeks through 5 Jan (NF). This species is rare as far south as Superior.
- Pine Siskin:** This species was widespread in good numbers; an impressive 665 were found on the LM CBC 29 Dec (fide SJD) and 225 were at Wildcat Hills NC 27 Dec (SJD). Best easterly count was the 60 on the Omaha CBC 15 Dec (fide BG).
- Lesser Goldfinch:** The second report for winter was of a male at a Scottsbluff feeder 19 Feb (P&DD); the only similar prior report was of one at a Morrill feeder 13 Jan 2002.
- American Goldfinch:** Routine reports.



Osprey on nest near Winters Creek Lake, Scotts Bluff Co., 18 May 2008.
Photo by Wayne Mollhoff.



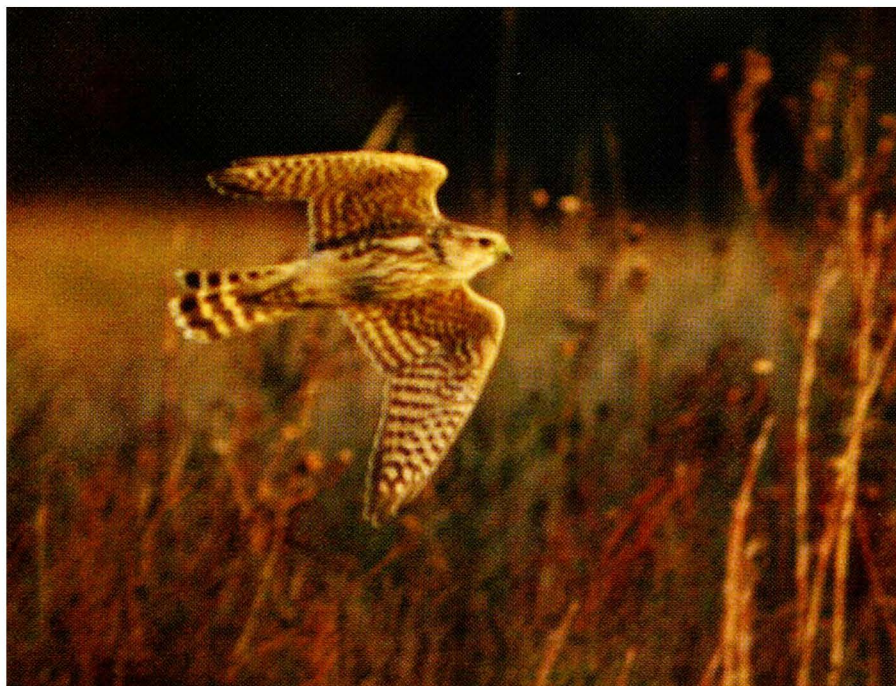
Short-billed Dowitcher, Burchard Lake,
Pawnee Co., 14 May 2006. Photo by
Stephen J. Dinsmore.



Broad-tailed Hummingbird, DeLara yard,
4 mi NW of Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff Co.,
14 July 2007. Photo by Kathy DeLara.



Le Conte's Sparrow, Harvard Marsh
WPA, Clay Co., 16 Oct 2006.
Photo by Paul Dunbar.



Merlin, southern Cherry Co., 29 Sept 2007. Photo by Paul A. Johnsgard.



Marbled Godwit, Harvard Marsh WPA, Clay Co., 13 Sept 2007. Photo by Paul Dunbar.

Burrowing Owl, north of Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co., 29 June 2004.
Photo by Bruce Walgren.



2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS IN NEBRASKA

The 2007-08 Christmas Bird Count (CBC) period will be remembered for snow cover and cold temperatures. More counts than usual were postponed due to weather. The average high temperature on count day this year was 28° F and the low was 12° F, both of which are 5-10° colder than any count day average since 2000-01. Only three counts made it above freezing during the course of the day. Snow was also a problem, and although only two circles recorded precipitation on the day of the count, snow cover and ice from earlier storms resulted in stuck vehicles, arduous walking, and inaccessible areas. Open water was at a premium: many counts reported only a few small patches of water in the ice cover.

Fourteen CBCs were held during the period, the same number that were reported last year. Despite the inclement weather, 222 observers participated. The total number of species this year was 130, one less than last year. The total number of individuals (133,106) was the lowest since 1998, due largely to the low numbers of Canada Geese and Mallards.

Goose numbers were all down this year, some dramatically. Only 15,910 Canada Geese were found, which is the lowest total since 1992. The number of Snow Geese, which has varied from a high of 308,463 in 1988 to a low of zero in 1983, was a meager 11 this year, 6 of those at DeSoto, a former Snow Goose haven. Greater White-fronted and Ross's were missed entirely this year, which has not happened since 1997.

With the exception of Wood Ducks, which hit a high of 34 this year, most duck numbers were down. The most drastic drop was Mallard, with a count this year of 7580, lowest since 1983 and down from 51,544 last year. Greater Scaup was missed for the first time since 1997. A highlight at Branched Oak-Seward was the White-winged Scoter, a first for that count. Only two Redheads were found, one at Calamus-Loup and one during count week at Omaha. In general, the numbers of diving ducks (*Aythya* genus) in the past three years have been low in comparison with the previous four years. A good example of this is the Ring-necked Duck. Its 2001-2004 average is 160, but the 2005-2007 average is only 32.

Gallinaceous bird numbers were good; both Calamus-Loup and Lake McConaughy recorded all 5 species. Ring-necked Pheasant (high count was 323 at Norfolk), Greater Prairie-Chicken (high was 174 at Beaver Valley) and Northern Bobwhite (high was 73 at Grand Island) were all at peak numbers since 1994. Grebes were apparently elsewhere this year. Of the 6 species which have been seen on Nebraska CBCs, only two (Pied-billed: one each at Lincoln and Scottsbluff, and Western: one at Lake McConaughy) were found this year.

One Osprey was a surprise at Scottsbluff, and the Red-shouldered Hawk at Omaha was the first since 2002. Red-tailed Hawks were widespread (every count except one) and at an all-time high of 616. Cooper's Hawks also reached a new high count of 36. Although they were widespread (counted everywhere except Lincoln and Harrison), Bald Eagle numbers were down this year to 184, the lowest since 1998; they were most numerous (350) in 2005.

As usual, the only rails were two Virginias at Lake McConaughy. Coot numbers were down to 24 this year (average for the past 10 years is 328), and the only shorebirds counted anywhere were Killdeer and Wilson's Snipe, not surprising given the harsh weather. It was a disappointing gull year: only five species were found, and the 57 Ring-billeds were the fewest since 1989, when none were found.

Eurasian Collared-Dove numbers continue to climb since they were first counted on a Nebraska CBC in 2000; this year they were seen on every count except Lincoln and Ponca. The total of 538 this year is a new high and is greater than the number of Mourning Doves seen, which were at their highest since 1996.

Owl numbers were within their historical range. Interesting owls were the Short-eared at Branched Oak-Seward and the Saw-whet at Lake McConaughy. Red-headed Woodpecker numbers have dropped into the single digits in the past two years. Omaha had the only Red-headed and the only Pileated, the third appearance for the latter species on a CBC.

The 41 Northern Shrikes found was the highest count since 1994. American Crow numbers have been dropping since their all-time high of 11,002 in 2003; this year's count of 908 was the lowest since 1983. Horned Larks apparently don't mind harsh winter weather. They were found on all the counts (count week at Calamus-Loup) and reached a new high of 10,015 (average of previous 10 years is 1543).

Black-capped Chickadee numbers continue to be a puzzle. The 2003 CBCs saw drastic drops (from an average of 152 per count circle in 2002 to an average of 70 in 2003). Low numbers continued in 2004 with an average of 58. In 2005, numbers seemed to be beginning a rebound with an average of 76 with two new counts added (Ames and Harrison). However, the average per circle dropped to 70 in 2006 and further to 49 in 2007. Two of the western CBCs (Harrison and Scottsbluff) saw modest increases from 2006 to 2007, as did four of the central CBCs (Calamus-Loup, Lake McConaughy, Lincoln and Norfolk). However, the CBCs along the Missouri River (DeSoto, Omaha and Ponca) all showed decreases this year; Ponca went from 93 in 2006 to 23 in 2007. On a brighter note, Mountain Chickadees appeared at Scottsbluff and Harrison (first ever at Harrison) for a total of 5 individuals, highest since 1994.

The Red-breasted Nuthatch invasion resulted in the highest-ever count (194) and an appearance at every count but one (Crawford). Carolina Wrens continued their high numbers from last year (47 in 2006, 41 in 2007); previous high had been 18 in 1999. Townsend's Solitaires bounced back from 25 in 2006 to 140 this year, and American Robins more than tripled last year's count of 3793 with a tally of 14,093, due largely to the 10,712 found at Lake McConaughy.

Bohemian Waxwings, which occur rarely on CBCs, were found at Harrison (325), Lake McConaughy (18), and at Crawford during the week of the count. High count is 562 from 2004. The only warblers were Yellow-rumped, but they were found in five locations.

2007-08 CBC Site Data

	Date	Species	Individuals	Observers	Low Temp	High Temp	Sky (am/pm)	Rain	Snow
Ames	27 Dec	53	7,441	12	11	20	cloudy	none	none
Beaver Valley	16 Dec	38	1,354	3 + 1	2	24	cloudy	none	none
Branched Oak/Seward	15 Dec	69	9,341	15	12	22	cloudy	none	am
Calamus-Loup	29 Dec	56	4,815	6	10	23	partly cloudy	none	none
Crawford	29 Dec	29	1,239	13 + 4	8	36	clear	none	none
DeSoto-Boyer	23 Dec	54	9,059	16	15	26	clear / pt. cloudy	none	none
Grand Island	15 Dec	64	10,557	10 + 5	16	26	clear	none	none
Harrison	30 Dec	30	1,099	3	15	29	cloudy	none	pm
Lake McConaughy	29 Dec	93	34,577	17 + 15	0	28	partly cloudy	none	none
Lincoln	5 Jan 08	69	14,933	34 + 7	20	44	partly clear	none	none
Norfolk	15 Dec	57	12,306	13	N/A	N/A	N/A	none	none
Omaha	16 Dec	71	7,135	24	16	35	partly cloudy	none	none
Ponca S.P.	22 Dec	43	1,945	10	18	20	cloudy/clear	none	none
Scottsbluff	15 Dec	66	17,305	14	6	32	clear	none	none
Total		130	133,106	190 + 32					

Additional observer numbers at Beaver Valley, Crawford, Grand Island, Lake McConaughy and Lincoln are feeder watchers.

Fox Sparrows were well-represented, showing up at five eastern counts for an all-time high of 34. Likewise Harris's Sparrows, which were found in all but the Panhandle circles, appeared in the greatest numbers (741) since 1989 (1253). White-crowned Sparrows reached an all-time high of 222, of those, 136 were in Scottsbluff. Dark-eyed Juncos were found in good numbers on all of the counts; the total tally of 11,489 is a new high; the yearly average for the past 10 years is 4387. Lapland Longspurs were at their lowest since 1988, and only one Snow Bunting was found, at Ames. (Perhaps our weather was too mild for these species?)

The 202 Great-tailed Grackles was a new high; 135 of those were in Grand Island. Most of the 116 Brown-headed Cowbirds were from the Grand Island CBC also. Purple Finches had a great year, appearing at counts all across the state; the 436 total is a new high, beating 2003's previous high count of 223. Two Cassin's Finches, a species which has only been found on CBCs six times, all since 1993, were found at Lake McConaughy. Red Crossbills had a low tally (5) and were only found in Lincoln (and count week Scottsbluff). Three Common Redpolls were found, down from last year's spike of 19. Pine Siskins were everywhere (12 out of 14 counts); the total of 1015 was the highest since 1143 in 1987.

2007-08 CBC PARTICIPANTS

Ames Larry Einemann, William Flack, Robin Harding, Clem Klaphake, Steve Lamphere, Jeanne Miller, Elizabeth Mulliken, Jerry Mulliken, Don Paseka (compiler), Janis Paseka, Lanny Randolph, Jerry Toll (12)

Beaver Valley William Flack, Colleen Noecker, Don Noecker (compiler) Feeder watcher: Belle Esau (3 + 1 feeder watcher)

Branched Oak- Seward Alex DeGarmo, Kevin DeGarmo, Rick Eades, Larry Einemann, Mike Ellis, Joseph Gubanyi (compiler), Joel Jorgensen, Vince Kingston, Thomas E. Labedz, John Quinn, Sarah Rehme, Mary Steinbeck, Shane Tucker, Gertrude Wood, Heather York (15)

Calamus-Loup Bob Gerten, Kathi Gerten, Robin Harding, David Heidt (compiler), Lanny Randolph, Duane Wolff (6)

Crawford John Flavin, Bruce Walgren (compiler), Donna Walgren (3 + 4 feeder watchers; Steve Dinsmore: count week scouting)

DeSoto Elliott Bedows, Laurine Blankenau, Fred Davis, Jim Hartman, Clem Klaphake, Steve Lamphere, Urban Lehner, Sue Mattix, Jim Meyer, Betsy Mulliken, Jerry Mulliken, Don Paseka, Janis Paseka, Kathleen Pyper, Jerry Toll, Steve Van Riper (16)

Grand Island Tom Blanchard, Gordon Backer, Tony Curtis, Blake Hatfield, Connie McCartney (compiler), Jim Meyers, Steve Morris, Vicki Orr, Patricia Smith, Vern Throop Feeder Watchers: Kathy Aubushon, Anton Curtis, Jim & Carole Etherton, Lewis Hilligas (10 + 5 feeder watchers)

PARTICIPANTS, continued

Harrison. Elliott Bedows, Bruce Walgren (compiler), Donna Walgren (3; Stephen J. Dinsmore: count week scouting)

Lake McConaughy Elliott Bedows, Mary B. Brown, Stephen J. Dinsmore (compiler), Joey Hajda, Tim Hajda, Luke Hamilton, Roger Hamilton, Alice Heckman, Bill Huntley, Joel Jorgensen, Bette Klaphake, Clem Klaphake, Roger Lawson, John Murphy, Justin Rink, W. Ross Silcock, Gabriel Wilson (17 + 15 feeder watchers)

Lincoln George Alexander, Irene Alexander, Sue Allen, Anita Breckbill, Linda R. Brown (compiler), Mary B. Brown, Jackie Canterbury, Barbara J. DiBernard, Paul Dunbar, Rick Eades, Larry Einemann, Billie Erxleben, Joe Gubanyi, Barbara Hopkins, Nicole Hosman, Paul Johnsgard, Michelle Johnson, Joel Jorgensen, Martha Kaul, Robert Kaul, Fujiyo Koizumi, Thomas E. Labedz, Jeanine Lackey, Jenifer Lautenschlager, Daniel Leger, Linda Maslowski, Pete Maslowski, Pat McCoy, Bruce Mellberg, Jim Miklavcic, John Miller, Kevin Poague, Ken Reitan, Laura Safarik, Rachel Simpson, Brooke Stansberry, April Stevenson, Kristal Stoner, Jerry Toll, Shane Tucker, Gertrude Wood (34 + 7 feeder watchers)

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

	Ames	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer Chute	Grand Island	Harrison
Snow Goose	1					6		
Cackling Goose								
Canada Goose	433		42	165		856	2297	
Trumpeter Swan				6				
Swan sp						3		
Wood Duck							15	
Gadwall			3	7				
American Wigeon				95			12	
American Black Duck								
Mallard	412	136	66	631		1859	1204	3
Blue-winged Teal						2		
Northern Shoveler			1	2				
Northern Pintail			1					
Green-winged Teal			1					

PARTICIPANTS, continued

Norfolk Joyce Borgelt, Ed Brogie, Mark Brogie, Donna Christiansen, Joyce Eucker, Bill Flack, David Heidt, Gene Kincanan, Mary Ellen Kincanan, Phyllis McCain, Jean Rumsey, Matt Stanley, Duane Wolff (compiler) (13)

Omaha Elliott Bedows, Laurine Blankenau, Nelli Falzgraf, Bob Fuchs, Betty Grenon (compiler), Maria Hicks, Clem Klaphake, Catherine Kuper, Steve Lamphere, Sue Mattix, Betsy Mulliken, Jerry Mulliken, Babs Padelford, Loren Padelford, Don Paseka, Janis Paseka, Dick Rasmussen, Neal Ratzlaff, Al Reyer, Jean Richter, Kathleen Rose, Rick Schmid, David Smith, Jerry Toll (24)

Ponca Warren Dunkel, Pat Dunn, Jeff Fields, Bill Huser (compiler), Jan Johnson, Richard Johnson, Bill Morris, Jerry Probst, Gary Small, Jan Small (10)

Scottsbluff Bob DeLara, Kathy DeLara, Phyllis Drawbaugh, Ann Duey, Robin Harding, Charlotte Herrell, Michelle Hoff, Helen Hughson, Alice Kenitz (compiler), Brad McKinney, Connie McKinney, Lanny Randolph, Bonnie Schoen, Ruben Siegfried (14)

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Ponca State Park	Scottsbluff	Total
Snow Goose	1 cw			2		1	11
Cackling Goose	370	86	150	5		5	616
Canada Goose	2334	5335	265	1282	25	2876	15910
Trumpeter Swan							6
Swan sp							3
Wood Duck	1	8	1	6		3	34
Gadwall	6						16
American Wigeon	13					84	204
American Black Duck				1			1
Mallard	815	748	181	218	4	1303	7580
Blue-winged Teal							2
Northern Shoveler	1					21	25
Northern Pintail	3					61	65
Green-winged Teal	116	33		16		5	171

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

	Ames	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer Chute	Grand Island	Harrison
Casvasback								
Redhead				1				
Ring-necked Duck								
Lesser Scaup			1			1		
Scaup sp								
White-winged Scoter			1					
Bufflehead								
Common Goldeneye		cw		23		15	28	
Barrow's Goldeneye								
Hooded Merganser				1				
Common Merganser				27		51		
Red-breasted Merganser								
Ruddy Duck		cw					33	
Duck sp								
Ring-necked Pheasant	51	7	110	1	4	85	11	
Sharp-tailed Grouse				1				
Greater Prairie-Chicken		174		40				
Wild Turkey	108	54	129	21	49	238	218	1
Northern Bobwhite			21	15			73	12
Common Loon								
Pied-billed Grebe								
Western Grebe								
American White Pelican								
Great Blue Heron	2						3	cw
Osprey								
Bald Eagle	5	8	3	4	2	49	4	
adult	3			4	2	19	2	
immature	2					19	2	
unspecified age		8	3			11		

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Ponca State Park	Scottsbluff	Total
Casvasback				5			5
Redhead			cw				1
Ring-necked Duck						26	26
Lesser Scaup	2						4
Scaup sp			1				1
White-winged Scoter							1
Bufflehead	7						7
Common Goldeneye	222		1	8	11	200	508
Barrow's Goldeneye						1	1
Hooded Merganser	5	3				2	11
Common Merganser	9,792		cw		9		9,879
Red-breasted Merganser	2					1	3
Ruddy Duck							33
Duck sp				21			21
Ring-necked Pheasant	22	6	323	11	52	17	700
Sharp-tailed Grouse	6						7
Greater Prairie-Chicken	83						297
Wild Turkey	12	7	48	126	148	4	1,163
Northern Bobwhite	57	24	30		7		239
Common Loon	1						1
Pied-billed Grebe		1				1	2
Western Grebe	1						1
American White Pelican	5	1					6
Great Blue Heron	9			1			15
Osprey						1	1
Bald Eagle	63		8	10	17	11	184
adult			8			8	46
immature						3	26
unspecified age	63			10	17		112

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

	Ames	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer Chute	Grand Island	Harrison
Northern Harrier		3	7	1		4	3	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	1	4	4		3	2	
Cooper's Hawk	cw		5	2		1	8	
Accipiter sp.						1		
Red-shouldered Hawk								
Red-tailed Hawk	46	8	89	17	1	91	54	
Ferruginous Hawk							1	
Rough-legged Hawk			4	1	1	1	14	
Buteo sp.			5			1		
Golden Eagle				cw				
American Kestrel	8	2	8	9	1	12	10	1
Merlin	2		5	1		cw	1	
Prairie Falcon	1				1			
hawk sp.								
Virginia Rail								
American Coot			3				7	
Killdeer								
Wilson's Snipe				1				1
Ring-billed Gull								
California Gull								
Herring Gull								
Thayer's Gull								
Lesser Black-backed Gull								
Rock Pigeon	132	25	47	3	28	128	338	3
Eurasian Collared-Dove	4	41	39	14	60	10	71	24
Mourning Dove	35		42			81	10	
Eastern Screech-Owl			2	4	1	2	9	
Great Horned Owl	2	1	12			1		1

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Ponca State Park	Scottsbluff	Total
Northern Harrier	15	6	2	2	1	3	47
Sharp-shinned Hawk	6	8	5	2 cw		1	37
Cooper's Hawk	5	6	3	5		1	36
Accipiter sp.		2	4				7
Red-shouldered Hawk				1			1
Red-tailed Hawk	25	66	85	102	26	6	616
Ferruginous Hawk	1					1	3
Rough-legged Hawk	4	2	4		18 cw		49
Buteo sp.		3	3				12
Golden Eagle	1					1	2
American Kestrel	18	22	19	9	2	19	140
Merlin	1	2	2				14
Prairie Falcon		1	1			1	5
hawk sp.		1					1
Virginia Rail	2						2
American Coot		3				11	24
Killdeer	7						7
Wilson's Snipe	9		1			1	13
Ring-billed Gull	53	1		3			57
California Gull	6						6
Herring Gull	200			1			201
Thayer's Gull	1						1
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1						1
Rock Pigeon	58	554	1,208	140	36	284	2,984
Eurasian Collared-Dove	122		47	5		101	538
Mourning Dove	22	138	28	167	3	5	531
Eastern Screech-Owl	1	2	3				24
Great Horned Owl	7	8	6	5	1	4	48

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

	Ames	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer Chute	Grand Island	Harrison
Barred Owl	1		2			2		
Long-eared Owl			3					
Short-eared Owl			1					
Northern Saw-whet Owl								
Belted Kingfisher	4		1	4			4	
Red-headed Woodpecker								
Red-bellied Woodpecker	15	11	44	2		37	5	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker			1			1	1	
Downy Woodpecker	27	7	65	9	6	40	12	5
Hairy Woodpecker	2	1	16	4	1	15	2	6
Northern Flicker	14	8	38	21		43	25	
Pileated Woodpecker								
Loggerhead Shrike								
Northern Shrike	1	1	4	6		2	2 cw	
Shrike sp								
Blue Jay	22	4	148	3	5	63	28	6
Pinyon Jay					cw			
Black-billed Magpie			1		5		1	
American Crow	7	18	355	55	49	88	17	44
Horned Lark	238	247	127 cw		442	304	947	191
Black-capped Chickadee	54		10	5	26	105	2	13
Mountain Chickadee								1
Tufted Titmouse						17		
Red-breasted Nuthatch	5	3	23	3		8	4	3
White-breasted Nuthatch	27	12	58	5	7	51	24	1
Pygmy Nuthatch					6			35
Brown Creeper	8		10			1		
Carolina Wren	2		6				1	

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Ponca State Park	Scottsbluff	Total
Barred Owl		4		3	1		13
Long-eared Owl	14						17
Short-eared Owl							1
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1						1
Belted Kingfisher	5	9		2		3	32
Red-headed Woodpecker				1			1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	5	62	16	62	12		271
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		2		3			8
Downy Woodpecker	26	109	21	87	9	12	435
Hairy Woodpecker	13	15	11	16	5	2	109
Northern Flicker	78	40	12	21	5	27	332
Pileated Woodpecker				1			1
Loggerhead Shrike		1					1
Northern Shrike	11	4	5		4	1	41
Shrike sp		1					1
Blue Jay	16	229	47	75	22	79	747
Pinyon Jay							
Black-billed Magpie	25		2			26	60
American Crow	16	117	44	61	32	5	908
Horned Lark	2,051	5	409	192	74	4,788	10,015
Black-capped Chickadee	28	80	35	274	23	26	681
Mountain Chickadee						4	5
Tufted Titmouse				34			51
Red-breasted Nuthatch	37	49	22	19	6	12	194
White-breasted Nuthatch	18	80	26	126	25	4	464
Pygmy Nuthatch						cw	41
Brown Creeper	5	34	1	10			69
Carolina Wren		10		22			41

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

	Ames	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer Chute	Grand Island	Harrison
Winter Wren			2	1				
Marsh Wren								
Golden-crowned Kinglet	6	4	9			cw	1	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet								
Eastern Bluebird	28	3	52	16		22	23	
Mountain Bluebird								
Townsend's Solitaire			3	1	5		1	5
Hermit Thrush			3					
American Robin	56	3	780	1,617	6	1	358	47
European Starling	3,793	83	3,275	1,073	73	855	1,535	10
Bohemian Waxwing					cw			325
Cedar Waxwing	107		29	60		27	54	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	3		6					
Spotted Towhee			cw					
American Tree Sparrow	85	69	680	211	70	530	497	1
Chipping Sparrow								
Field Sparrow								
Fox Sparrow	1		13				7	
Song Sparrow	9		3	1		4	5	1
Lincoln's Sparrow								
Swamp Sparrow			cw					
White-throated Sparrow	3		cw					
Harris's Sparrow	49	6	212	55		63	185	
White-crowned Sparrow			4				46	
Sparrow sp						26		

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Ponca State Park	Scottsbluff	Total
Winter Wren				3			6
Marsh Wren	1					1	2
Golden-crowned Kinglet	2	22	4	2		1	51
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				2			2
Eastern Bluebird	42	31	2	33	50		302
Mountain Bluebird	cw						
Townsend's Solitaire	94				1	30	140
Hermit Thrush	1						4
American Robin	10,712	392	28	5	2	86	14,093
European Starling	2,635	2,675	7,456	1,273	229	1,522	26,487
Bohemian Waxwing	18						343
Cedar Waxwing	47	26		212	10	4	576
Yellow-rumped Warbler	2	4	cw				15
Spotted Towhee		1				2	3
American Tree Sparrow	396	577	154	305	187	81	3,843
Chipping Sparrow		cw					
Field Sparrow	3						3
Fox Sparrow		7		6			34
Song Sparrow	30	39	2	22	7	18	141
Lincoln's Sparrow		2		1			3
Swamp Sparrow				9			9
White-throated Sparrow		5		5			13
Harris's Sparrow	8	109	26	23	5		741
White-crowned Sparrow	27	2	6	1		136	222
Sparrow sp							26

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

	Ames	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer Chute	Grand Island	Harrison
Dark-eyed Junco	941	120	1,570	134	68	2,316	724	191
Slate-colored			1,142	33	3			74
Oregon	2		28	5		2		2
White-winged								32
Pink-sided					2			2
unspecified subspecies	939	120	400	96	63	2,314	724	81
Lapland Longspur							3	
Snow Bunting	1							
Northern Cardinal	52	2	118	4		112	35	
Red-winged Blackbird	211	4	99	1		112	103	
Eastern Meadowlark								
Western Meadowlark		20			1		446	
meadowlark sp.	177		59	1		143		
Rusty Blackbird	17	2	2				22	
Brewer's Blackbird								
Common Grackle		2				5	1	
Great-tailed Grackle							135	
Brown-headed Cowbird		30					85	
blackbird sp.		1						
Purple Finch	12		82	124		8	13 cw	
Cassin's Finch								
House Finch	14	41	95	9	15	5	13	6
Common Redpoll			2			cw		1
Red Crossbill								
Pine Siskin	4		31	45	20	1	2	5
American Goldfinch	31	19	287	161	71	121	132	106
House Sparrow	171	173	361	87	215	430	630	50
TOTAL SPECIES	53	38	69	56	29	54	64	30
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	7,441	1,354	9,341	4,815	1,239	9,059	10,557	1,099

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Ponca State Park	Scottsbluff	Total
Dark-eyed Junco	1,494	1,097	893	1,010	473	458	11,489
Slate-colored	480	466				106	2,304
Oregon	228	21				120	408
White-winged	8					2	42
Pink-sided	60					21	85
unspecified subspecies	718	610	893	1,010	473	209	8,650
Lapland Longspur	6		2	2			13
Snow Bunting							1
Northern Cardinal	27	150	48	206	30	1	785
Red-winged Blackbird	4	43	2	74	1	4,224	4,878
Eastern Meadowlark		2					2
Western Meadowlark	36	35	40		2		580
meadowlark sp.	180	80		57		7	704
Rusty Blackbird	5		1	3			52
Brewer's Blackbird						1	1
Common Grackle	20	2	1	2			33
Great-tailed Grackle		65		2			202
Brown-headed Cowbird	1						116
blackbird sp.							1
Purple Finch	33	96	6	51	10	1	436
Cassin's Finch	2						2
House Finch	134	113	44	6	19	130	644
Common Redpoll							3
Red Crossbill		5				cw	5
Pine Siskin	665	44	49	60		89	1,015
American Goldfinch	662	284	38	177	142	111	2,342
House Sparrow	427	1,097	424	420	199	351	5,035
TOTAL SPECIES	93	69	57	71	43	66	130
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	34,577	14,933	12,306	7,135	1,945	17,305	133,106

FIRST REPORT OF ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER
(*Myiarchus cinerascens*) BREEDING IN THE
NEBRASKA PANHANDLE REGION

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This report presents evidence of the breeding of Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) in mixed conifer woodland in the Nebraska Panhandle Region, 160 miles north of its nearest known breeding area. In addition, it presents the first photographic evidence and the second accepted record by the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (NOURC) of the presence of Ash-throated Flycatcher in Nebraska.

On 28 June 2007 Wayne Mollhoff observed an adult Ash-throated Flycatcher while conducting a survey in Priority Block K409 in Kimball County, Nebraska, for the Nebraska Breeding Bird Atlas Project II. The bird was observed on private property in limber pine (*Pinus flexilis*) habitat from a county road approximately one mile south of Interstate 80 Exit 1, and 1.2 miles east of the Wyoming state line. After obtaining permission from the landowner, the area was searched more extensively and a second observation of an Ash-throated Flycatcher was made about 400 yards farther east of the site of the initial observation. During the second sighting, the bird appeared to be carrying food in its beak. Attempts to relocate the bird(s) the following morning, both west and east of the site of the initial find, were unsuccessful. With only a single accepted record in the state (Mollhoff 1989), Mollhoff sent a written documentation of the sighting to the chair of the NOURC, Mark Brogie.

On 9 July 2007, Mark Brogie and NOURC member Joseph Gubanyi attempted to relocate the bird and obtain a photograph and recording of its call in hopes of upgrading its status in Nebraska from Class III (written description only,

by a single observer) to Class I (diagnostic specimen, photo, or recording) (Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee 1986). After playing a recording of an Ash-throated Flycatcher call, they observed an adult Ash-throated Flycatcher that evening and again the following morning at the site where the bird was initially observed, and obtained photographs of the bird and a recording of its call. The bird, which was slightly smaller than Cassin's Kingbirds seen nearby, was identified as a *Myiarchus* species by its size, dull grayish-brown upper parts, washed out creamy yellow belly, extensively rufous tail and rufous patch at base of the primaries on folded wings. The underside of the tail, seen on the bird when perched, had a dark terminal band which was wider on the lateral portion of the tail tip than the medial portion. The dark terminal band created the teardrop rufous pattern which is found only in adult Ash-throated Flycatchers and a small percentage of Nutting's Flycatchers (*Myiarchus nuttingi*). The combination of the tail pattern and the distinctive vocalizations are diagnostic for Ash-throated Flycatcher (Cardiff and Dittmann 2002; Dittmann and Cardiff 2000). Photographs and recordings were submitted to the NOURC and accepted, elevating Ash-throated Flycatcher from Class III to Class I in Nebraska (Mark Brogie, NOURC chair, personal communication).

The bird was found in an area of open mixed conifer woodland, dominated by limber pine, with a scattered mix of Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*) and ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), growing on the north-facing rocky slopes of low ridges and ravines. The tree cover ranged from fairly thick clumps that provided complete ground cover in small areas to widely scattered individual trees and ranged in height from 6 to 50 feet. Scattered clumps of fragrant sumac (*Rhus aromatica*) were found throughout the wooded area. The ground cover community was a mosaic of mixed-grass and short-grass prairie as described by Kaul et al. (2006). Principal ground cover plants were little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), and threadleaf sedge (*Carex filifolia*). Gravel, broken rock, rock ledges, and outcrops were common on the steeper slopes. This fits the description of the semiarid to arid scrub and open conifer woodland habitat described as typical for Ash-throated Flycatcher habitat (Bent 1942, Cardiff and Dittmann 2002, Corman and Wise-Gervais 2005, Kingery 1998).

Brogie and Gubanyi noted an agitated response to the recording of an Ash-throated Flycatcher call. Based on this behavior and repeated use of the same limited area, we believed it possible that the bird was on territory or possibly breeding in the area. With the possibility of adding an unexpected breeder to the atlas project, Mollhoff returned to the area on 18 July 2007 in an attempt to document breeding. Permission to search the area was again obtained and an unsuccessful search for the birds was made of the area where the bird was first observed, including a search for possible nest cavities in dead trees within a 75-100 acre area to the west of the original sighting. A single dead limber pine snag, riddled with woodpecker holes, was found hidden in a clump of trees in the immediate area where the bird was first observed. The largest cavity, a rotted-out woodpecker hole, 3.5 inches in diameter and 5 inches deep, contained a vacated nest consistent with that described for the species (cup of grasses, lined with softer material and a few feathers). The nest did not fit the appearance of any other cavity nesters seen or likely to be found in the area. The following morning, 19 July, a second unsuccessful search was made in the

area of the nest. A search was then made in the area up to 600 yards farther east of the initial sighting, including the area where a bird had been seen carrying what appeared to be food on 28 June. At 0730, an agitated Ash-throated Flycatcher responded to a recording of its call. A second Ash-throated Flycatcher soon appeared carrying an insect in its beak. The two birds were observed for 10 minutes when a third bird landed in a nearby pine. Close observation of this bird revealed a rounded head profile even when the crown feathers were raised and a tail that was cinnamon-colored to the tip when viewed from below, indicating a juvenile bird. After a moment, the bird with the insect approached the juvenile, whereupon the juvenile fluttered its wings in a typical begging display. The adult responded by feeding it the insect in its beak. Less than a minute later, the adult captured another flying insect and repeated the action. At 0810 the birds flew over a low ridge and out of sight to the east and were not observed again.

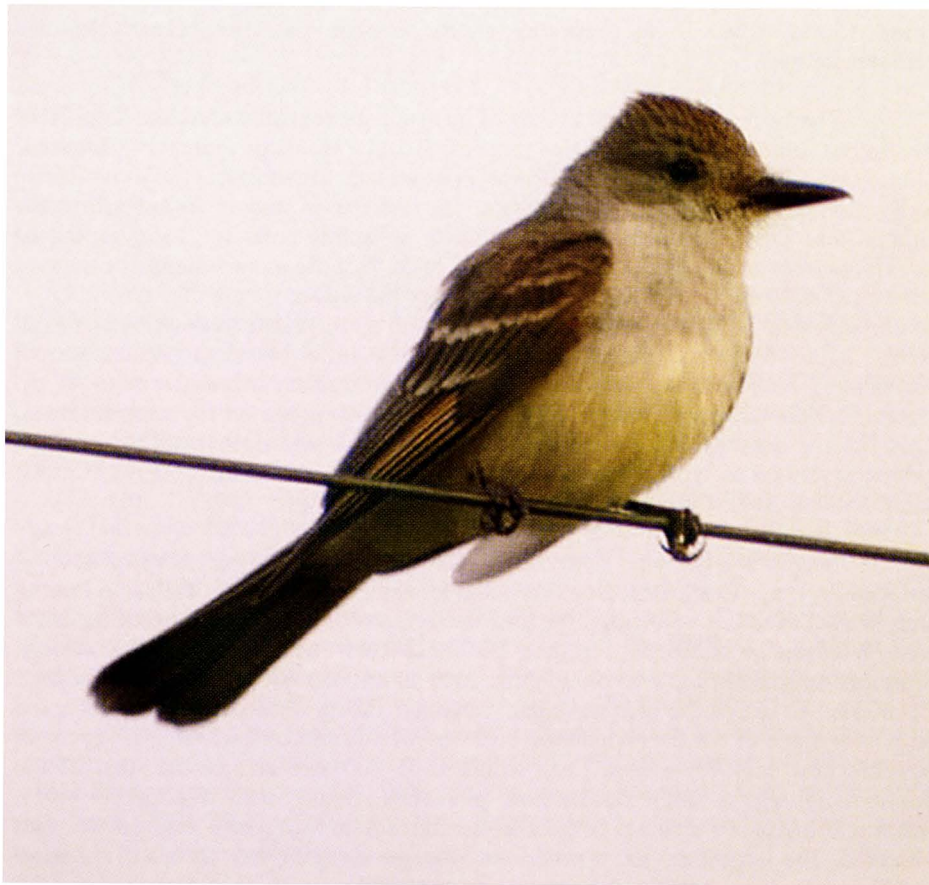


Photo 1. Ash-throated Flycatcher observed 10 July 2007 in Kimball County, Nebraska (Photo by Joe Gubanyi)



Photo 2. Ash-throated Flycatcher observed 10 July 2007 in Kimball County, Nebraska (Photo by Joe Gubanyi)

Sharpe et al. (2001) listed Ash-throated Flycatcher as "Accidental in fall" in Nebraska. Ash-throated Flycatcher was placed on "The Official List of the Birds of Nebraska" (Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee 1997) by the NOURC based on a description of a single bird observed by Richard and Dorothy Rosche north of Chadron, Dawes Co., 29 August, 1987 (Mollhoff 1989). There are three additional reports of Ash-throated Flycatcher in Nebraska. A single bird with no details published was reported in 1957 to the editor of the Nebraska Bird Review (Bray et al. 1986, Sharpe et al. 2001). A bird was reported calling in Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co., 20 July 2000 by observers experienced with the species (Silcock 2000a). This record was not reviewed by the NOURC. A record of a single bird observed at Riverside Park, Scotts Bluff Co., 4 September 2000 (Silcock 2000b) was not accepted by the NOURC because the description did not eliminate other *Myiarchus* species (Jorgensen 2002). There is an additional record of a set of eggs labeled as Ash-throated Flycatcher collected in Otoe County in 1907 and stored in the University of Nebraska State Museum (ZM 08555). It was assumed the eggs were misidentified at the time of collection (Ducey 1988, Sharpe et al. 2001).

Ash-throated Flycatchers are found in arid to semiarid habitat in the southwestern U.S. including most of Texas west of the Brazos River, the panhandles

of Texas and Oklahoma, the southern and western parts of Colorado, all or most of New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and California (Cardiff and Dittmann 2002). Ash-throated Flycatcher reaches the northern limits of its range in southwest Wyoming, southeast Idaho, and north into Oregon and Washington along the eastern slopes of the Cascades (Cardiff and Dittmann 2002). Ash-throated Flycatcher has not been recorded in South Dakota (Tallman et al. 2002), Iowa (Kent and Dinsmore 1996), or Missouri (Jacobs 2001), and in Kansas is known only from the southwest corner of the state (Thompson and Ely, 1989). Vagrant Ash-throated Flycatchers have been reported regularly in early winter along the U.S. East (Murphy 1982) and Gulf coasts.

The nearest known breeding area to the Nebraska Panhandle Region is about 160 miles south near Colorado Springs, El Paso Co., Colorado (Kingery 1998). During the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas Project, breeding was documented from that area, southeast to the southeast corner of Colorado bordering Kansas (Kingery 1998). Although not reported breeding during the Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas Project (Busby and Zimmerman 2001), Ash-throated Flycatcher has bred in Morton County in extreme southwest Kansas (Boyd 1985). In Wyoming, breeding has been confirmed only in Sweetwater Co. along the southern border west of the continental divide (Dorn and Dorn 1990).

Hopefully, observers will look for Ash-throated Flycatchers and other southwestern species in appropriate habitat in the Nebraska panhandle. Only time and more study will tell if this represents a range expansion or an isolated event and whether other scrub-related, xeric-adapted species will follow.

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Least Bittern, North Lake Basin WMA, Seward Co., 9 June 2007. Photo by Joseph Gubanyi.

Pomarine Jaeger, Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 17 Sept 2005. Photo by Stephen J. Dinsmore.



White-winged Dove, Johnson farm, 7 mi. NW of Wakefield, Dixon Co., 15 June 2008. Photo by Jan Johnson.



Wood Stork, west of Ashland, Saunders Co., 2 Aug 2006. Photo by Joel G. Jorgensen.

**FIRST NEBRASKA RECORD FOR THE ROYAL TERN
(*Sterna maxima*) AND A REVIEW OF REGIONAL RECORDS**

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Photo 1. Taken 8 Sep 2007 at Lake North, Platte Co., Nebraska, by Janis Paseka.

On the afternoon of 8 Sept 2007, Don and Janis Paseka discovered a large tern on the causeway that separates Lake North from Lake Babcock, north of Columbus, Platte County, Nebraska. The causeway consists of a road next to Lake North and a low cement wall next to Lake Babcock. They observed the tern at approximately 1630 CDT standing on the low wall, on the west side of the causeway. The tern remained standing on the wall as they drove to within 15 feet and photographed it. The tern was standing with its wings drooping (Photo 1), and the fact that it allowed such a close approach indicated that it was in some distress, although there were no obvious injuries. The Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*) is the expected large tern species in Nebraska, but it was soon apparent from the white forehead, black crest, and the size and color of the bill that this was not a Caspian, but a Royal Tern (*Sterna maxima*). After the initial sighting on 8 Sep 2007, the bird was observed and photographed on 9 Sep by multiple observers (NEbirds 2007). The bird was observed by Sarah Rehme on 9 Sep to be dragging its wings on the ground and stumbling, but it was still able to fly. This is the first documented occurrence of a Royal Tern in Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001).

SIGHTING DETAILS

The tern was found dead at about 1330h, 10 Sept by William Flack. The carcass was salvaged by Rehme at 1500h on the same day under authorization of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. The carcass was donated to the University of Nebraska State Museum (UNSM). The specimen was prepared as a round skin, spread wing, and partial skeleton by Thomas Labedz and added to the research collection as ZM-18317 (Photo 3). Ectoparasites were retained from the carcass and



Photo 2. Taken 9 Sep 2007 at Lake North, Platte Co., Nebraska, by Sarah Rehme.

delivered to the UNSM Division of Parasitology (HWML-48693). Examination during preparation revealed the bird to be an adult female in definitive basic plumage with average linear measurements, compared with adult female *Sterna maxima maxima* measurements given by Buckley and Buckley 2002. The tern was underweight at 282.2 grams. An adult female *S. m. maxima* generally weighs between 300-585 grams (Malling, Olsen, and Larsson 1995).

The bird's cause of death was unclear. Labeledz saw no indication as to the cause of the low weight (i.e., no intestinal blockage) or subsequent death. Starvation was indicated by lack of fat on the specimen, reduced muscle mass, and lack of oil in the uropygial gland, but Labeledz did not consider the bird completely emaciated. It is possible the bird succumbed to hypothermia, as low temperatures for 8, 9, and 10 Sept were 54, 53, and 49 degrees Fahrenheit, respectively. Temperatures on 9 and 10 Sept did not exceed 64 degrees Fahrenheit. The total precipitation for 9 Sept was 0.37 in. and 1.22 in. for 10 Sept, and wind gusts were as high as 15 m.p.h. on 9 Sept (Curtis 2008). The lungs and heart appeared healthy. The stomach contained very minor amounts of digested food including fish bones, two of which were retained and in identification compared favorably with dorsal fin rays of sunfish (*Perciformes: Centrarchidae*).

INLAND OCCURRENCES

Sterna maxima maxima, the New World subspecies of Royal Tern, is strictly coastal in distribution (Buckley and Buckley 2002). Rare inland from coastal states, a handful of mid-continent records exists. One healthy bird was observed 1 Jan 1989 at Lake Hefner and Kid's Lake, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, among Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*). The bird was last sighted 19 Jan 1989 (Newell and Newell 1989). Another Great Plains Record is an adult observed at Neenoshe Reservoir in Kiowa County, Colorado, 15-16 July 1997. The bird was among Long-billed Curlews (*Numenius americanus*), Marbled Godwits (*Limosa fedoa*), Forster's Terns (*Sterna forsteri*), and Ring-billed Gulls (Nelson 1999). An alternate-plumaged adult was videotaped 17 June 2004 at Big Johnson Reservoir in El Paso County, Colorado (Semo 2008). Iowa's first Royal Tern was seen at Lake Rathbun in Appanoose County 20 Aug-14 Sept 2005 (Dinsmore and Gilliam 2005). Other regional inland records are listed in Table 1. The 1986 Arkansas specimen (Table 1) was also female and is retained in the zoological collections at the University of Arkansas even though the university's museum no longer exists. The specimen was believed to have been shot (James et al. 1994).

Inland sightings of strictly coastal birds often occur following hurricane and tropical storm activity. The Nebraska Royal Tern may have been driven inland by the same weather system that brought a frigatebird (*Fregata* sp.), photographed 28 Aug 2007, to the Norfolk, Nebraska, area (Silcock 2007) and a female Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) to Spirit Lake, Iowa, on 2-3 Sept 2007 (Dinsmore and Gilliam 2008). The following storm activity occurred during the weeks preceding the sighting of the Nebraska Royal Tern: Hurricane Dean made landfall on the Yucatan Peninsula 21 Aug, Tropical Storm Erin made landfall in Texas as a tropical depression 16 Aug, Hurricane Felix made landfall in Nicaragua 4 Sep, and Tropical Storm Gabrielle made landfall in South Carolina 9 Sept (AccuWeather.com 2007).

Date	State	County	Notes	Reference
5 Sep 1965	Wisconsin	Outagamie		Gorney (2008)
7 Sep 1985	Illinois	Cook		Bohlen (1989)
18 Jun- 15 Jul 1985	Wisconsin	Manitowoc	1st state record, among Common and Caspian Terns	Soule (1986) and Peterson (1986)
14-15 Jun 1986	Arkansas	Lonoke	Specimen 88-51-1 at UA Museum	James, et al. (1994)
6 Jul 1986	Wisconsin	Manitowoc		Sontag (1987)
13 Jul 1988	Illinois	Cook		Bohlen (1989)
2-3 Aug 1988	Wisconsin	Milwaukee	Milwaukee Coast Guard Impoundment	Peterson (1989)
19 Jan 1989	Oklahoma	Oklahoma	See text	Newell and Newell (1989)
18 Jun 1993	Illinois	Cook		Gorney (2008)
20-21 Jul 1995	Ohio	Lorain	With gulls and terns in harbor	BIRDCNTR Archives (1995)
29 Jun 1996	Indiana	LaPorte	Photos on file with Indiana Bird Records Committee	Bruner (1997)
15-16 July 1997	Colorado	Kiowa	1st state record, see text	Nelson (1999)
22 May-15 Jun 1999	Indiana	LaPorte	Video on file with Indiana Bird Records Committee	Bruner (2000)
13 Aug 2002	Arkansas	Miller	3 birds	Arkansas Audubon Society (2004)
17-23 June 2004	Colorado	El Paso	Video on file with Colorado Field Ornithologists	Semo (2008)
20-21 Aug 2005	Iowa	Appanoose	1st state record; see text	Dinsmore and Gilliam (2005)
1 Sep 2005	Tennessee	Shelby	Hurricane Katrina generated	FreeLists.org/TN-bird (2005)
25 Sep 2005	Arkansas	Ouachita	Probably hurricane generated	Arkansas Audubon Society (2004)

Table 1. Sightings of Royal Tern from the central United States.

While hurricane or tropical storm activity may have contributed to the appearance of the Royal Tern in Nebraska, other regional observations appear not to be linked with these types of weather systems. No hurricane activity occurred near the time of the 1989 Oklahoma record, but Newell and Newell stated, "The weather was cold that day with strong winds and icy conditions." (1989). In the dates preceding the 1985 Illinois sighting, Hurricane Elena (category 3) made landfall in Mississippi 2 Sept 1985. Hurricane Danny, a category 1 from 18-20 July, could have led to the 1997 Colorado sighting (NOAA Coastal Services Center 2007), but Nelson reported an "absence of wind" (1999). The 2005 Tennessee sighting is believed to have been brought about by Hurricane Katrina, which made landfall in Louisiana as a category 3 on 29 Aug 2005 (NOAA Coastal Services Center 2007). No other significant hurricane activity was found around the dates of the other sightings listed in Table 1.

CONCLUSIONS

The Royal Tern discovered at Lake North in 2007 represents the first documented record for Nebraska and is the northernmost record for the Great Plains. It is unlikely that it will ever be known what circumstances, or combination of circumstances, contributed to the occurrence and subsequent death of this Royal Tern in Platte County, Nebraska. We speculate that weather systems in the Gulf of Mexico may have played a role. Perhaps an ailment caused disorientation and contributed to the bird's dispersal. We were unable to pinpoint an exact cause of death. Pending approval by the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee, this species will be added to the Nebraska Official List.



Photo 3. Taken 26 Sep 2007 by Sarah E. Rehme.

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NEBRASKA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION TREASURER'S REPORT December 31, 2007

	General Funds	Breeding Bird Atlas	Scholarship Fund	Endowment Fund	Total
CHECKING					
Jan. 1, 2007 Balance - Checking	\$2,145.38	\$(346.38)	\$60.00	\$725.00	\$2,584.00
RECEIPTS					
Donations				175.00	175.00
Memberships	2,585.00				2,585.00
Subscriptions	305.00				305.00
Spring Meet -No. Platte -2007	2,582.80				2,582.80
Fall Meet - Halsey -2007	3,990.00				3,990.00
Interest	725.00				725.00
NG&P Atlas Grant		15,029.96			15,029.96
Sub-total Receipts					\$25,392.76
DISBURSEMENTS					
Fall Meet - Lincoln -2006	500.00				500.00
Spring Meet -No. Platte -2007	2,354.64				2,354.64
Fall Meet - Halsey -2007	3,916.00		35.00		3,951.00
Fall Meet - Ashland - 2008	1,090.00				1,090.00
NE Corporate Fee	20.00				20.00
NBR-V74 #4, V75 #1,2,3	1,684.33				1,684.33
Newsletter - Printing	752.23				752.23
Postage	649.16				649.16
New Checks	19.70				19.70
Insurance	200.00				200.00
Reimb Mollhoff-Atlas #2		14,821.54			14,821.54
Transfer to CD				725.00	725.00
Sub-total Disbursements					\$26,767.60
Dec. 31, 2007 Balance-Checking	\$1,147.12	\$(137.96)	\$25.00	\$175.00	\$1,209.16
SAVINGS					
Jan. 1, 2007 Balance - Savings	\$4,966.17	\$-	\$1,755.30	\$-	\$6,721.47
Interest	197.55				197.55
Transfer from Atlas		520.10			520.10
Interest from Endowment	682.88				682.88
Dec. 31, 2007 Balance - Savings	5,846.60	520.10	1,755.30	\$-	\$8,122.00
CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT					
Jan. 1, 2007 Balance - CDs	\$5,065.35	\$7,525.71		\$34,286.59	\$46,877.65
Principal Additions				725.00	725.00
Transfer to Savings		(1,200.00)		(682.88)	(1,882.88)
Transfer to Checking				(725.00)	(725.00)
Interest Received	260.11	377.22		1,638.48	2,275.81
Dec. 31, 2007 Balance - CDs	\$5,325.46	\$6,702.93		\$35,242.19	\$47,270.58
Maturity					
CD Annual Rates	4/20/08	6/26/08		2/27/08	
Endowment Principal	4.50%	4.50%		5.00%	
				\$33,847.00	
Grand Total					\$56,601.74

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