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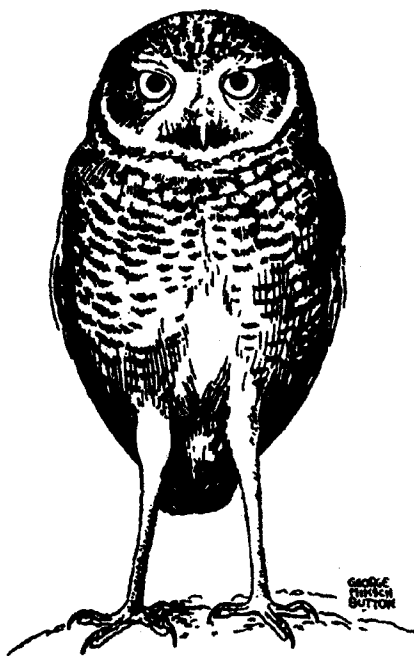
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# ***The Nebraska Bird Review***

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## NEBRASKA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION TREASURER'S REPORT December 31, 2009

	General Funds	Breeding Bird Atlas	Scholarship Fund	Endowment Fund	Total
<b>CHECKING</b>					
Jan. 1, 2009 Balance - Checking	\$1892.17	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$110.00	\$2002.17
<b>RECEIPTS</b>					
Donations	614.00				614.00
Memberships	2740.00			500.00	3240.00
Subscriptions	240.00				240.00
Spring Meet-York-2009	4131.20				4131.20
Fall Meet-Valentine-2009	1764.00				1764.00
NG&P Atlas Grant		12923.59			12923.59
Transfer from Savings		500.00			500.00
Sub-total Receipts	\$9,489.20	\$13,423.59	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$22,912.79
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>					
Spring Meet-Chadron-2010	50.00				50.00
Spring Meet-York-2009	3922.49		125.00		4047.49
Fall Meet-Valentine-2009	1505.00		306.28		1811.28
NBR-Printing-V76 #3,4-V77 #1,2	2686.38				2686.38
NBR Software	60.00				60.00
Newsletter - Printing	744.88				744.88
Postage	727.49				727.49
Secy of State	20.00				20.00
Bank of the West-checks	22.00				22.00
Website	125.29				125.29
Insurance	300.00				300.00
Reimb Mollhoff-Atlas #2		12834.02			12834.02
Contract-Rehme-Atlas #2		360.00			360.00
Transfer to CD				110.00	110.00
Sub-total Disbursements	\$10,163.53	\$13,194.02	\$431.28	\$110.00	\$23,898.83
Dec. 31, 2009 Balance-Checking	\$1,217.84	\$229.57	-\$431.28	\$500.00	\$1,016.13
<b>SAVINGS</b>					
Jan. 1, 2009 Balance - Savings	\$6,243.85	\$304.72	\$1,375.20	\$-	\$7,923.77
Interest	27.91				27.91
Transfer to checking		-500.00			-500.00
Transfer from CDs	1073.15	315.71			1388.86
Transfer to CD	-943.23				-943.23
Dec. 31, 2009 Balance - Savings	\$6,401.68	\$120.43	\$1,375.20	\$-	\$7,897.31
<b>CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT</b>					
Jan. 1, 2009 Balance - CDs	\$5,507.67	\$6,964.90		\$34,673.97	\$47,146.54
Principal Additions				110.00	110.00
Transfer to/from Savings	943.23	-315.71		-1073.15	-445.63
Transfer to Checking					0.00
Interest Received	105.73	112.36		849.44	1067.53
Dec. 31, 2009 Balance - CDs	\$6,556.63	\$6,761.55		\$34,560.26	\$47,878.44
Maturity	4/20/10	2/20/10		6/27/10	
CD Annual Rates	1.75%	1.30%		2.05%	
Endowment Principal				34152	
Grand Total					\$56,791.88

## WINTER FIELD REPORT, December 2009 to February 2010

Compiled by W. Ross Silcock  
P.O. Box 57, Tabor, IA 51653  
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## INTRODUCTION

This was a long, cold winter, but effects on birds were not particularly noticeable. Perhaps the relative blandness of the reports reflected the "normal" behavior of most birds when confronted with a cold winter and the seriousness of survival: birds were in places they should have been. Carolina Wrens may have been hit (more on that in the Spring Report), but a few species were present in higher numbers than might have been expected. Rusty and Red-winged Blackbirds and Brown-headed Cowbird were notable for higher winter numbers, as were Snow Buntings. Even more so, there were lots of Fox Sparrows, including several wintering birds, and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were widespread in eastern Nebraska. Winter Wrens stayed into December in force, with few reported in January. At the opposite end of the spectrum, Townsend's Solitaires and Red Crossbills were in low numbers, as were Common Redpolls, which adhered to their apparent alternating-year appearance schedule.

Encouraging was the slow but definite increase in reports of Red-shouldered Hawks in southeast Nebraska; this spring will add to the story.

Rarities were unremarkable: a Bewick's Wren was a belated 2008-2009 report. There was a single Varied Thrush and a dangerously-late Yellow-throated Warbler, Nebraska's third for December.

## ABBREVIATIONS

BOL: Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co  
BOL-S: Branched Oak Lake-Seward  
CBC: Christmas Bird Count  
Cem: Cemetery  
HCR: Harlan Co Reservoir, Harlan Co  
LM: Lake McConaughy, Keith Co  
LO: Lake Ogallala, Keith Co  
m.ob.: many observers  
NWR: National Wildlife Refuge  
PL: Pawnee Lake, Lancaster Co  
Res: Reservoir  
RWB: Rainwater Basin: wetland complex in several counties of south-central and southeast Nebraska  
SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)  
SCP: Spring Creek Prairie, Denton  
SP: State Park  
SR: Sutherland Res, Lincoln Co

Continued on page 6



Trumpeter Swan family, 3/4 mile south of Stapleton, Logan Co., 8 June 2010. Photo by Bob Gerten.

Louisiana Waterthrush (right) and  
adult on nest (lower right), Platte  
River S. P., Cass Co., 20 May 2010.  
Photo by Edward Tickle.



Lewis's Woodpecker, Fort Robinson S.P., Dawes  
Co., 13 May 2010. Photo by Tim Hajda.







Great Blue Herons on one of at least six nests at the rookery in Wilderness Park, Lincoln, Lancaster Co., 8 Apr 2010.



Sandhill and Common Crane, west of North Platte, Lincoln Co., 18 March 2010. Photo by Virginia Clark.

Great Egret with Gizzard Shad (*Dorosoma cepedianum*) at Crystal Springs Park, Fairbury, Jefferson Co., 15 Sept 2009.  
Photo by Edward Tickle.



## OBSERVERS

AD: Ann Duey, Scottsbluff  
AK: Alice Kenitz, Gering  
ARy: Al Reyer, Bellevue  
AS: Audrey Sterkel, Sidney  
BFH: Bill F. Huser, South Sioux City  
BG: Betty Grenon, Bellevue  
BM: Brad McKinney, Scottsbluff  
B&DW: Bruce & Donna Walgren, Casper, WY  
CH: Candace Havely, McCook  
CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, Bellevue  
CR: Carolyn Rieke, Lincoln  
DC: Derb Carter, Raleigh, NC  
DE: Dave Ely, Salem, MA  
DH: Dale Haverty, Nebraska City  
DHe: Dave Heidt, Norfolk  
DJ: Dee Jordan, Danbury  
DK: Dan Klammer, Hastings  
DL: Dan Leger, Lincoln  
D&CN: Don and Colleen Noecker, Albion  
DW: Duane Wolff, Norfolk  
EB: Eric Bents, Omaha  
EBr: Ed Brogie, Laurel  
GR: Gary Roberts, Fremont  
GW: Gordon Warrick, Lincoln  
G&WH: Glen & Wanda Hoge, Alma  
HKH: Helen K. Hughson, Mitchell  
JC: John Carlini, Lincoln  
JG: Joe Gubanyi, Seward  
JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Lincoln  
JJ: Jan Johnson, Wakefield  
JLL: Jeanine L. Lackey, Doniphan  
JM: Jim Mountjoy, Lincoln  
JMe: Jim Meyer, Elkhorn  
JR: Justin Rink, Omaha  
JRi: Juanita Rice, Fairmont  
JT: Jerry Toll, Omaha  
KB: Kelli Bacon, Lincoln  
KD: Kathy DeLara, Mitchell  
KP: Kevin Poague, Lincoln  
LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln  
LF: Laurence Falk, Nebraska City  
LJH: Luke J. Hamilton, Oshkosh  
LO: Linda Ollinger, Wilsonville  
LR: Lanny Randolph, Minden  
LRB: Linda R. Brown, Lincoln  
MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton  
PD: Paul Dunbar, Hastings

PS: Phil Swanson, Omaha  
RB: Rusty Blitz, Omaha  
RH: Robin Harding, Minden  
RJ: Rita Jensen, Hooper  
RSi: Ruben Siegfried, Gering  
RSt: Ruth Stearns, Lincoln  
SJD: Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA  
SM: Steve Morris, Grand Island  
SMc: Scott McConnell, Camden, WY  
SQ: Susan Quinn, Nebraska City  
SS: Shari Schwartz, Lincoln  
S&GM: Sandy and George McDonald, Omaha  
TEL: Thomas E. Labeledz, Lincoln  
TH: Tim Hajda, Broken Bow  
TJW: T.J. Walker, Brady  
TP: Theresa Pester, Walton  
VC: Virginia Clark, North Platte  
WF: William Flack, Kearney  
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA

#### SPECIES ACCOUNTS

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** Rare in midwinter, but most likely in the central Platte Valley, 11 were with the many Canada Geese at Grandpa's Steakhouse Pond, Kearney, 27 Jan (TH). Migrants appeared in mid-Feb, but no large groups were reported; earliest were 13 in Lancaster Co 13 Feb (LE).

**Snow Goose:** A few linger in winter, but westerly reports are unexpected; 6 were at SR and 21 in Dawson Co 3 Jan (SJD), and 3 were at HCR 18 Jan (G&WH). Large numbers piled in towards the end of Feb; "flock after flock as far as the binoculars can see" were in Cheyenne Co 18 Feb (AS).

**Ross's Goose:** Routine reports.

**Cackling Goose:** Although usually an uncommon winter visitor westward, surprising numbers were reported. Some 20,000 were in the Jeffrey Res, Lincoln Co, area 30 Jan (LRB) and 6500 were at SR with only 36 Canada Geese 3 Jan (SJD). Another 1500 were at Grandpa's Steakhouse Pond, Kearney 27-30 Jan (LRB, TH). Unexpected was one as far n. as Garfield Co 1 Jan (WF).

**Canada Goose:** Best count was an impressive 15,268 on the Scotts Bluff CBC 19 Dec (fide AK).

**Trumpeter Swan:** The usual scattered birds were reported, but none later than 2 in Cass Co 4 Jan (JT).

**Wood Duck:** Winter sightings are unusual, especially westward; late was one on the Scottsbluff CBC 19 Dec (fide AK), and "earliest ever" there was one at HCR 25 Feb (G&WH). Salt Creek, Lincoln, hosted 2-3 through the winter (LE).

**Gadwall:** Routine reports.

**American Wigeon:** Routine reports.





Willet, Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co.,  
4 May 2010. Photo by Edward Tickle.

Grasshopper Sparrow, Whooping Crane  
Trust, Hall Co., 6 June 2009.  
Photo by Tim Hajda.



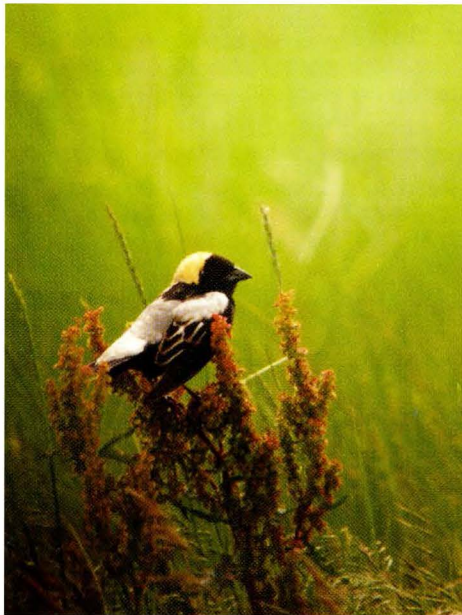
Lazuli Bunting, NW of Wakefield, Dixon  
Co., 19 May 2009. Photo by Jan Johnson.



Common Grackle in nest in Japanese  
yew, Lincoln, Lancaster Co., 26 May  
2010. Photo by Michelle Johnson.



Cooper's Hawk chasing  
American Crow, Holmes  
Lake, Lincoln, Lancaster  
Co., 16 Oct 2009.  
Photo by Edward Tickle.



Bobolink, Harvard WPA, Clay Co., 9 June  
2007. Photo by Paul Dunbar.



Hermit Warbler, Crescent Lake  
N.W.R., Garden Co., 21 May  
2010. Photo by Cory Gregory.



Baird's Sparrow, Sioux Co.,  
16 May 2010. Photo by  
Phil Swanson.

**American Black Duck:** Rarely reported in recent years, one was in Sarpy Co 3 Jan (SJD).

**Mallard:** Best count was a good tally of 35,000 at SR 3 Jan (SJD).

**Northern Shoveler:** One on Salt Creek, Lincoln, 12 Jan (LE) was one of few midwinter records away from the Platte Valley.

**Northern Pintail:** Routine reports.

**Green-winged Teal:** Routine reports.

**Canvasback:** Routine reports.

**Redhead:** Routine reports.

**Ring-necked Duck:** Unusual in midwinter away from a few locations such as LM, the 12 at Grandpa's Steakhouse, Kearney, 30 Jan (LRB) were unexpected.

**Greater Scaup:** Two at North Platte SL 18 Feb (TJW) were rather early, and the only ones reported.

**Lesser Scaup:** Routine reports.

**Long-tailed Duck:** The only report of this rare winter visitor was of a female in Greeley Co 5 Dec (LR,RH).

**Bufflehead:** Rather early were 2 at HCR 13 Feb (G&WH).

**Common Goldeneye:** A good count was the 380 at SR 1 Jan (SJD). Photos of a Common Goldeneye/Hooded Merganser hybrid in Scotts Bluff Co 13 Feb were received (KD). Surprisingly, the latter is the 9th Nebraska report of this hybrid, apparently involving only 3-4 birds.

**Barrow's Goldeneye:** A male near North Platte 21-22 Jan (TJW, TH, photo) may have been the same bird seen in the same general area 23 Jan 2008. This species is regular but rare in winter in the North Platte Valley, with most records at LM.

**Hooded Merganser:** Rather late for the location was one at Calamus Res, Garfield Co, 2 Jan (WF).

**Common Merganser:** Best count was a moderate 8500 at SR 3 Jan (SJD).

**Red-breasted Merganser:** Three were at SR 1-3 Jan (SJD); these birds probably winter here if open water persists.

**Ruddy Duck:** Routine reports.

**Gray Partridge:** None were reported.

**Ring-necked Pheasant:** Noteworthy CBC tallies were the 386 at DeSoto NWR 30 Dec (fide JT) and the 73 at Crawford 2 Jan (fide B&DW).

**Sharp-tailed Grouse:** Rather early for displaying birds were the 13 near Broken Bow 13 Feb (TH).

**Greater Prairie-Chicken:** Also rather early were 12 on a booming ground near Winnetoon 13 Feb (MB). The 100 near Broken Bow 10 Feb (TH) was a good count, as was the 60 at Davis Creek Res, Valley and Sherman Cos, 7 Dec (TH). Encouraging at a RWB location were the 25 at Harvard Marsh, Clay Co, 27 Feb (LR, RH).

**Wild Turkey:** This species is ubiquitous these days, as shown by CBC counts of 403 at Omaha 19 Dec (fide BG), 271 at Crawford 2 Jan (B&DW), and 256 at DeSoto NWR 30 Dec (JT).

**Northern Bobwhite:** Three coveys totaling 50 birds were near Broken Bow 12 Dec (TH); this species is uncommon north and west of central Nebraska and away from the Platte Valley.

**Pied-billed Grebe:** Routine reports.



**Horned Grebe:** The only report was of 2 at BOL 4 Dec (LE); late dates are around 20 Dec.

**Eared Grebe:** None were reported; late dates are in early Dec.

**Western Grebe:** A few linger into Dec on occasion at LM, and overwintering has occurred there on about 5 occasions, mostly in the late 1990s; one was there 1-2 Jan (SJD). One at BOL 5-6 Dec (JGJ, LE) was the latest on record for the east.

**American White Pelican:** At least a few usually try to winter at the cooling pond at SR, but 33 ghostly shapes in the fog there 1 Jan (SJD) were unexpected. Another at LO 1-2 Jan (SJD), also a regular location, may have survived until 28 Feb, when one was present there (JM).

**Double-crested Cormorant:** Two at PL 6 Dec (LE) were rather late.

**Great Blue Heron:** Routine reports.

**Osprey:** One was reported on the Scottsbluff CBC 19 Dec at an open water area by experienced observers (HKH, AD); Dec reports are few and not well-documented except for an injured bird near Grand Island 18 Dec 2004.

**Bald Eagle:** Routine reports.

**Northern Harrier:** Routine reports.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** The 7 on the BOL-S CBC 17 Dec (fide JG) was a good count; this count circle has the 3 highest CBC tallies for this species, including 11 in 2005.

**Cooper's Hawk:** Routine reports.

**Northern Goshawk:** The only reports were of a "possible" in Bellevue 3 Dec (ARy; a large Cooper's could not be ruled out) and one near Norfolk 19 Dec (fide DW).

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** An apparent increase in sightings from the PL and BOL areas and elsewhere indicate a likely increase in numbers in se. Nebraska, though possibly relating to only 1-2 pairs. There were 2 at PL 5 Feb (LE); singles were seen at PL 29 Jan, 5 and 22 Feb (LE) and at BOL 29 Dec (LE) and 27 Feb (RSt). Another was in Nemaha Co 28 Jan (LF, SQ).

**Red-tailed Hawk:** One was carrying nest material at Alma 5 Feb (G&WH), a rather early date to initiate nesting.

**Ferruginous Hawk:** An immature was reported at SCP 16 Dec (fide KP); identification of this age class is difficult and documented records from the east are few.

**Rough-legged Hawk:** Numbers were greater than usual; it was "more numerous than in recent years" in Harlan Co (G&WH), 12 were at Jack Sinn WMA, Lancaster Co, 16 Feb (LE), and the Crawford CBC had a count high of 15 on 2 Jan (fide B&DW).

**Golden Eagle:** Routine reports.

**American Kestrel:** Routine reports.

**Merlin:** Most wintering Merlins are the prairie-breeding subspecies *Falco columbarius richardsoni*, but a male *F. c. columbarius*, usually only a migrant in the state, was near Gothenburg 8 Jan (TH).

**Peregrine Falcon:** Single presumed resident birds were in Lincoln 18-19 Dec and 18 Feb (JC, LRB, TEL).

**Prairie Falcon:** Easterly was one in Howard Co 15 Feb (JLL), and there were 4 sightings of singles (same bird?) in Thayer and Nuckolls Cos during the period (DE).

- Virginia Rail:** The usual token bird was found on the LM CBC, this one on 2 Jan (SJD).
- American Coot:** Most depart before Jan, especially in the north, but one was at Calamus Res, Loup Co, 2 Jan (WF). A good count for the date was the 555 in Lincoln 5 Dec (LE).
- Sandhill Crane:** The first birds reported were 300-400 in Hall Co 18 Feb (PD), rather late for this species, but understandable given the weather on the Southern Great Plains.
- American Golden-Plover:** An apparent juvenile, seen and heard calling, was near Tekamah 7 Dec (EB); this is Nebraska's latest by 17 days.
- Killdeer:** A few birds linger below Keystone Dam at LM at least until CBC time each year; this year 2 were there for the CBC 2 Jan (fide SJD).
- Wilson's Snipe:** The usual stragglers into Dec were reported; last were on CBCs: 3 at LM 2 Jan (fide SJD) and 4 at Calamus-Loup the same day (fide DHe).
- Bonaparte's Gull:** None were reported; late dates are in mid-Dec.
- Ring-billed Gull:** Routine reports.
- California Gull:** None were reported; usually a few linger into early winter at LM.
- Herring Gull:** The 313 at SR 3 Jan (SJD) was a good count; high counts are in the 400-500 range.
- Thayer's Gull:** There were 2 reports involving 6 birds: an adult was at SR 1 Jan (SJD) with 2 juveniles there 3 Jan (SJD), and 3 individuals were at LM 28 Feb (JM).
- Lesser Black-backed Gull:** The only report was of an adult at SR 3 Jan (SJD), 2nd-latest for fall. There are only 4 records between 3 Jan and 12 Feb.
- Glaucous Gull:** The only reports were of a juvenile at SR 1-3 Jan (SJD) and a 3rd-year at HCR 13 Feb (G&WH).
- Rock Pigeon:** For anyone needing this species on their state list, the Scottsbluff CBC had 1046, a count high (fide AK).
- Eurasian Collared-Dove:** This species is far more numerous in the west, as indicated by CBC counts in Omaha of 28, a count high (fide BG), and 129 in Scottsbluff (fide AK). The 120 in Bridgeport 13 Dec (LJH) was an excellent count. Highest count to date is 200.
- White-winged Dove:** One of the birds that summered in Hastings was still there 2 Jan (DK fide PD). A Scottsbluff yard hosted a surprising 1-3 during the period; all 3 were there together 21 Feb (RSi).
- Mourning Dove:** Reports were from the south and east as expected, west to Red Willow Co (DJ) and north to Dixon Co (JJ). The 169 on the Lincoln CBC 19 Dec (fide LRB) was a good count.
- Eastern Screech-Owl:** Routine reports.
- Great Horned Owl:** Routine reports.
- Snowy Owl:** None were reported; at least one is reported most years.
- Barred Owl:** Numbers are good west to Seward Co; a count high 6 were on the BOL-S CBC 17 Dec (fide JG).
- Long-eared Owl:** Ten were found on CBCs: 8 at BOL-S 17 Dec (fide JG), one at Norfolk 19 Dec (DW), and one at LM 2 Jan (fide SJD).
- Short-eared Owl:** Seven were reported, including 4 in Lancaster Co 2 Feb (JC, SS); others were there 29 Dec (LE) and 5 Jan (LE), and one was on the LM CBC 2 Jan (SJD).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** A small owl without ear tufts carrying a "rat" near Fairmont 4 Dec (JRi) was likely this species. Main diet is small mammals, although an item as large as a rat would be unusual.

**Belted Kingfisher:** Routine reports.

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** Most winter birds are in the southeast, but one was a surprise as far west as the LM CBC 2 Jan (fide SJD). There is only one winter report for the Panhandle. One lingered in Dixon Co 5 Jan (JJ), where wintering occurs on occasion.

**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** Common in the east, 70 were found on the BOL-S CBC, a count high, 17 Dec (fide JG). Rare in the west, however, were one on the Scottsbluff CBC 19 Dec (fide AK) and another in Morrill Co 10 Dec (LJH).

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** There were more reports than usual, most, as expected, in the se, with 7 reported. Farther north and west than usual, an immature was in Custer Co 30 Jan (TH), 2 were in se. Lincoln Co 9 Feb (TJW), and an immature male was at Sidney 18 Feb (AS).

**Downy Woodpecker:** The 7 at a Lancaster Co feeder 19 Feb (TP) must have been a sight to see. Very unusual, but not unprecedented, was a Downy near Scottsbluff 19 Feb with yellow instead of red on its nape (AD, photo).

**Hairy Woodpecker:** Routine reports.

**Northern Flicker:** Routine reports.

**Pileated Woodpecker:** Routine reports within its limited range along the Missouri River in the se.

**Northern Shrike:** The 10 on the Calamus-Loup CBC 17 Dec (fide DHe) was a good tally; CBC high is 11.

**Blue Jay:** Routine reports.

**Pinyon Jay:** None were reported; this is usually a fairly common winter visitor in the Pine Ridge.

**Black-billed Magpie:** Routine post-West Nile reports. Magpies were seen in 9 of 10 years in the first 10 years of the BOL-S CBC, and the average number per count was 6. From 2003- 2009, only 3 magpies were seen, and they were found on only 2 of those 7 counts.

**American Crow:** The 1274 at Brady 13 Feb (TJW) were likely early migrants; peak spring migration is in Mar.

**Black-capped Chickadee:** Numbers are increasing in areas of east-central Nebraska that were hard-hit in recent years; the BOL-S CBC averaged 169 chickadees in its first 10 years, but only 23.5 from 2003 through 2008 (JG). This year, there were 66 counted (fide JG).

**Tufted Titmouse:** Routine reports.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Most feeders reported at least 1-2; numbers were about at baseline levels statewide.

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

**Pygmy Nuthatch:** Routine reports.

**Brown Creeper:** The 5 at Dannebrog 23 Jan (LR, RH) was a record count.

**Carolina Wren:** This species' range is restricted by the severity of winter weather; evidence of this was provided by one at a Dodge Co feeder from 10 Dec found dead in 10-foot snowdrifts in 28 Dec (RJ). Another was surviving at an Albion feeder through 25 Dec (D&CN), but no others were reported Jan-Feb away from the Omaha-Lincoln area. The last die-off was during the winter of 1977-78, after which none were reported on CBCs for 5 years.



- Bewick's Wren:** The only report is from winter 2008-2009; one in Scotts Bluff Co, photographed 27 Jan 2009 (BM, photo), was only the 4th winter record for the state.
- Winter Wren:** CBCs in the southeast all reported at least one, with 4 on the Omaha CBC 19 Dec (fide BG). However, the only Jan-Feb reports were of singles at FF 29 Jan (CNK) and Hormel Park, Dodge Co, 25 Feb (GR). Overwintering is uncommon, even in the southeast.
- Marsh Wren:** A single Marsh Wren was located, as is the norm, on the LM CBC 2 Jan (SJD); another on the Calamus-Loup CBC 2 Jan (fide DHe) was more surprising.
- Golden-crowned Kinglet:** This species is rare in midwinter away from the southeast; lingerers were 7 on the LM CBC 2 Jan (fide SJD) and 2 in Custer Co 9 Jan (TH).
- Eastern Bluebird:** Routine reports.
- Mountain Bluebird:** Wintering occurs along the North Platte and Platte Valleys east to sw. Dawson Co; 35 were there 15 Feb (TJW).
- Townsend's Solitaire:** Numbers were low this winter; surprisingly, none were found on the Crawford CBC (although one was there during count week; fide B&DW), and only 6 were on the LM CBC (fide SJD), where usually 50+ are found.
- Hermit Thrush:** Of 5 reported, 3 were on the Lincoln CBC 19 Dec (fide LRB). The others were on the BOL-S CBC 17 Dec fide (JG) and at Oak Glen WMA, Seward Co, 16 Dec (LE).
- American Robin:** Routine reports.
- Varied Thrush:** One appeared at the McDonald yard between Omaha and Blair in Washington Co around 10 Dec (S&GM, fide DC, fide SJD, photo PS) and was still present 10 Jan (CNK).
- Gray Catbird:** One in a North Platte yard was late and westerly for the date 7-19 Dec (VC photo, fide TJW).
- Northern Mockingbird:** Scarce in winter, the only report was of one in Brady 13 Feb (TJW).
- Brown Thrasher:** Four lingering birds were reported, the last on the Ponca SP CBC 2 Jan (fide BFH). The others were in Buffalo Co 7 Dec (LR, RH), Nebraska City 12 Dec (LF), and on the Lincoln CBC 19 Dec (fide LRB).
- European Starling:** The 11,062 on the North Platte CBC (of which 10,222 were individually counted by TH) was impressive but moderate by starling standards.
- American Pipit:** One at BOL 4 Dec (CR, details) was one of a handful of Dec records; there are none for Jan-Feb.
- Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler:** The 15 on the BOL-S CBC 17 Dec (fide JG) was a good total. Several lingered into Jan, notably one in Custer Co 30 Jan (TH), and apparently wintering were 3-5 at BOL 5-26 Jan (LE) and 3-4 at PL 29 Jan-22 Feb (LE). Singles in Nebraska City 28 Feb (CNK) and at SCP 21 Feb (KP) likely wintered also.
- Yellow-throated Warbler:** Yet another surprising Dec record, Nebraska's 3rd, was photographed at a Walton feeder 4-5 Dec (TP).
- Spotted Towhee:** Most are in the southeast by late Dec, and so singles at Bridgeport through 14 Dec (LJH) and on the LM CBC 2 Jan (fide SJD) were good finds. Three others were in the south and east during Jan-Feb (LO, KB, LE), where a few winter most years.

**Eastern Towhee:** Routine reports of a few individuals in the se.

**American Tree Sparrow:** Best count was the impressive but historically moderate 720 on the BOL-S CBC 17 Dec (fide JG).

**Fox Sparrow:** This species was much in evidence in the south and east, with a surprising 6-7 wintering at PL alone (LE). Wintering occurs on occasion, but is rare, and even more surprising given the hard winter. In addition to the PL birds, singles were present the entire winter at feeders in Elkhorn (JMe) and Hooper (RJ), and one was in Lincoln 18 Jan (DL). At least 35 were reported in all, including an amazing 17 on the BOL-S CBC 17 Dec (fide JG). Northerly were singles on the Ponca SP CBC 2 Jan (fide BFH) and a grayish bird, possibly *Passerella iliaca zaboria*, was on the Norfolk CBC 19 Dec (MB, EBr).

**Song Sparrow:** Routine reports.

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** The only report was of one on the Omaha CBC 19 Dec (fide BG); although rare in Dec, there are about 32 such reports, most on CBCs.

**Swamp Sparrow:** The only reports were of singles on the North Platte CBC 19 Dec (fide TJW) and the Omaha CBC the same day (fide BG).

**White-throated Sparrow:** Routine reports.

**Harris's Sparrow:** Numbers were rather poor; the only bright spot was 100+ in Dixon Co 12 Dec (JJ). Three on the LM CBC 2 Jan (fide SJD) were westerly.

**White-crowned Sparrow:** Numbers dropped to zero by 13 Feb in a Scotts Bluff Co yard where usually several winter (KD); wintering in the east and south is unusual, and so singles at Naponee 10 Jan (G&WH), Nebraska City 26 Jan-26 Feb (SQ), and in Dodge Co 26 Feb (GR) were good finds.

**Dark-eyed (Slate-colored and Oregon) Junco:** The 1322 (all Slate-colored) on the Omaha CBC 19 Dec (fide BG) was an excellent CBC tally; BOL-S CBC had 904, and included an excellent 14 "Oregon" Juncos (fide JG).

**Lapland Longspur:** Large numbers were in Banner Co 2 Feb; 5000 in several flocks were estimated (SMc).

**Snow Bunting:** Reports were widespread and numerous; best counts were 30 in Knox Co 16 Feb (WF) and 18 in Cuming Co 12 Feb (JJ). At least 74 were reported.

**Northern Cardinal:** Westerly reports continue, suggesting consolidation in the North Platte Valley; 2 were found on the Scottsbluff CBC 19 Dec (fide AK), up to 4 were at Bridgeport 10-15 Dec (LJH), with another there 4 Feb (LJH), and 2 were near Oshkosh 14 Dec (LJH).

**Red-winged Blackbird:** Midwinter flocks are unusual, but this year 620 were at BOL 5 Jan (LE) and 951 in Nuckolls Co 18 Jan (DE). The flock of 600 males at Kiowa WMA, Scotts Bluff Co, 13 Feb (KD) consisted of early migrants; flocks of males are usually the first migrants to appear in spring.

**Eastern Meadowlark:** Routine reports. Over-wintering of this species is as yet unproven; observations should include identification details.

**Western Meadowlark:** Earliest singers were 6 near Tamora 26 Feb (LE); first songs have been heard as early as late Jan.

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** The only record was one with Red-winged Blackbirds in Hitchcock Co 14 Feb (CH).

**Rusty Blackbird:** Reports have increased recently; an impressive 52 were reported (m. ob.) in Dec, and 34 were found in Jan, including 30 at Grand Island 1 Jan (SM), one at Ponca SP 2 Jan (BFH), and 3 in Washington Co 14 Feb (RB).

**Brewer's Blackbird:** The only report was of one at BOL 11 Dec (LE); winter reports are rare.

**Common Grackle:** Midwinter sightings are usually of single males; more than usual were reported this year, including a CBC count week bird at Harrison 1 Jan (B&DW), one on the Ponca SP CBC 2 Jan (BFH), a female with an asymmetric white collar in a Nebraska City yard 16 and 29 Jan (LF), one in Dixon Co 24 Jan (JJ), 4 in Otoe Co 8 Feb (DH), and 3 in Dodge Co 23 Feb (GR).

**Great-tailed Grackle:** Unexpected in midwinter was a flock of 60 in Grand Island 6 Jan (SM). The 154 on the North Platte CBC 19 Dec (fide TJW) was a good CBC tally.

**Brown-headed Cowbird:** More than usual lingered for CBCs, including excellent counts of 181 on the DeSoto CBC 30 Dec (fide JT) and 41 on the BOL-S CBC 17 Dec (fide JG). Usually rare in midwinter, surprising were singles in Madison Co 2 Jan (JJ), at SCP 16 Jan (KP), 9 each at PL and BOL 29 Jan (LE), and 2 in Fairmont 9 Feb (JRI).

**Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch:** The only reports were from Scottsbluff NM, where 50-75 were seen 19 Jan (GW) and 23 Jan (KD).

**Purple Finch:** Rather low numbers were reported, mostly in the southeast as expected, although one in a Scottsbluff yard 21 Jan (RSi) was a Panhandle rarity. Best count was the 59 on the BOL-S CBC 17 Dec (fide JG).

**Cassin's Finch:** None were reported; this species is rare but regular in the northwest.

**House Finch:** Best CBC count was 195 at Scottsbluff 19 Dec (fide AK).

**Red Crossbill:** Only 2 were reported away from the Panhandle; a male was at Alma 18 Jan (G&WH) and a single was found on the Lincoln CBC 19 Dec (fide LRB).

**Common Redpoll:** This is clearly a low year for this species. The only report was of one on the Lincoln CBC 19 Dec (fide LRB), following the single report of 4 birds during the fall.

**Pine Siskin:** Numbers were about average, with reports statewide. Best counts were in the west, including 89 in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 17 Jan (KD); best in the east was the 22 at Forest Lawn Cem, Omaha, 28 Feb (JR).

**American Goldfinch:** The 622 on the BOL-S CBC 17 Dec (fide JG) was an excellent total.

**House Sparrow:** Routine reports.

**Correction:** In the 2009 Fall Field Report (*NBR* Vol. 77, No. 4, page 155) the sightings reported as Pine Siskins were in fact of Lesser Goldfinches.

### 2009-2010 Christmas Bird Counts

Fourteen Christmas Bird Counts were held in Nebraska in the 2009-2010 season. The Ames count was cancelled due to weather, the Beaver Valley count returned after a year's absence, and the North Platte count was reinstated after not being officially run since the 1985-86 season. Although the average high and low temperatures were not exceptional, heavy snow cover affected most, if not all, of the counts. Roads were closed due to snow drifts, open water was limited, and at least three counts had to be rescheduled. The total number of species (116) was the lowest since 103 in 1997.

Interesting results included a record number of Trumpeter Swans (43), low duck numbers including no Canvasbacks (first miss since 1997), and an increase in numbers of all five Galliformes. Loons and grebes were absent except for one Western Grebe at Lake McConaughy. Raptor totals were generally down; a highlight was a Northern Goshawk at Norfolk. The nine American Coots was the lowest total since 1996.

Gulls were down in both numbers and diversity. Eight species and 1298 individuals were recorded on Nebraska CBCs in 2008 (most at Lake McConaughy), while this year only two species (Ring-billed and Herring) and 29 individuals were found.

Numbers of Columbiformes increased this year, possibly due to the birds being more concentrated and easier to find. A count-week White-winged Dove was found at Scottsbluff, the first one since 2005, which was also in Scottsbluff.

Overall Black-capped Chickadee numbers were down from 942 in 2008 to 814 this year, despite gains in some circles (from 31 in 2008 to 66 in 2009 at Branched Oak-Seward and from 3 in 2008 to 23 in '09 at Calamus-Loup). The Omaha tally went from 354 in 2008 to 262 this year. Nine Winter Wrens were recorded, which was an all-time high. Eighteen Carolina Wrens were tallied, a decade high, although those numbers will likely be lower next year, after this year's hard winter. Fox Sparrow rebounded to 28 after a low of 2 last year, and 142 Song Sparrows were found, a decade high count.

Icterid numbers were generally high. An impressive 37,570 Red-winged Blackbirds were counted at North Platte, although that number is dwarfed by the 255,806 found in Omaha in 1984. The 668 Common Grackles was the highest total since 1984, when 6097 were found. The 664 Great-tailed Grackles recorded (all from Grand Island and North Platte) was a new all-time high, and the 243 Brown-headed Cowbirds (181 at DeSoto) was the highest since 299 in 1984.

### 2009-2010 Christmas Bird Count Participants

**Beaver Valley** Belle Esau, William Flack, Mitzi Fox, Robin Harding, Colleen Noecker, Don Noecker (compiler), Lanny Randolph (7)

**Branched Oak- Seward** John Carlini, Alisha Clubb, Rick Eades, Larry Einemann, Kathleen French, Zane Grabau, Joseph Gubanyi (compiler), Thomas Labedz, Don Paseka, Janis Paseka, John Quinn, Sarah Rehme, Jessica Ripke, Shari Schwartz, Jerry Toll, Shane Tucker (16)

Continued on page 26

## 2009-2010 Christmas Bird Counts

	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak - Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harrison	Lake McConaughy
Greater White-fronted Goose								
Snow Goose								
Ross's Goose								
Cackling Goose			2			1		6
Canada Goose		282	587	51	140	4,366		1,991
Trumpeter Swan			25					17
Wood Duck						8		
Gadwall			6					8
American Wigeon			16					3
Mallard	155	4	211	cw	2	1,575	5	364
Northern Shoveler						6		
Northern Pintail								1
Green-winged Teal			22					7
Redhead								
Ring-necked Duck								
Lesser Scaup								1
Bufflehead								20
Common Goldeneye			19		13	21		70
Hooded Merganser			1					8
Common Merganser			33		20			242
Red-breasted Merganser								1
Ruddy Duck								
Duck sp.		10			20			
Ring-necked Pheasant	40	36	7	73	386	1		43
Sharp-tailed Grouse			27	7				
Greater Prairie-Chicken	167		219			36		7
Wild Turkey		18	250	271	256	160	9	7
Northern Bobwhite	1	33	23			25		
Western Grebe								1
American White Pelican								1
Great Blue Heron	1					2		3
Osprey								

## 2009-2010 Christmas Bird Counts

	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca	Scottsbluff	Total
Greater White-fronted Goose		8	2				10
Snow Goose	3	4	1	2			10
Ross's Goose			cw				cw
Cackling Goose		3	1	26		17	56
Canada Goose	4,973	2,116	1,299	2,813		15,268	33,886
Trumpeter Swan				1			43
Wood Duck	6	1				1	16
Gadwall		1	cw			9	24
American Wigeon			12			14	45
Mallard	1,301	176	811	411	6	3,358	8,379
Northern Shoveler			2	8		8	24
Northern Pintail			5			1	7
Green-winged Teal	3		6			6	44
Redhead				1		4	5
Ring-necked Duck			8			9	17
Lesser Scaup				2			3
Bufflehead				1			21
Common Goldeneye			60	81	21	117	402
Hooded Merganser	1		6			1	17
Common Merganser	2			65	1		363
Red-breasted Merganser							1
Ruddy Duck				1			1
Duck sp.							30
Ring-necked Pheasant	74	36	14	12	122	11	855
Sharp-tailed Grouse							34
Greater Prairie-Chicken			40				469
Wild Turkey	72	1	100	403	112	50	1,709
Northern Bobwhite	17	15		7			121
Western Grebe							1
American White Pelican							1
Great Blue Heron	4		3			1	14
Osprey						1	1



## 2009-2010 Christmas Bird Counts

	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak - Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harrison	Lake McConaughy
Bald Eagle	3	5	29	8	24	6		67
adult				8	16	5		
immature					8	1		
unspecified age	3	5	29					67
Northern Harrier	1	4	1	1	3	5		7
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	7	2		3	4		2
Cooper's Hawk		2	4		1	1		3
Northern Goshawk								
Red-tailed Hawk	9	63	8	12	61	25		26
Rough-legged Hawk	1	2	1	15	5	3	5	1
Buteo sp.			2	1				
Golden Eagle			1				1	
American Kestrel	5	4		3	8	20		11
Merlin			1	1	1			1
Peregrine Falcon								
Prairie Falcon			1			2		
Falcon sp.								
Virginia Rail								1
American Coot			1			4		
Killdeer								2
Wilson's Snipe			4					3
Ring-billed Gull								14
Herring Gull								12
Rock Pigeon	31	358	41	46	95	476	30	126
Eurasian Collared-Dove	63	14	9	77	3	146	39	148
White-winged Dove								
Mourning Dove		16			4	19		2
Eastern Screech-Owl		3	3		3	7		2
Great Horned Owl	1	13	2	2	1			6
Barred Owl		6			3			
Long-eared Owl		8						1
Short-eared Owl								1
Owl sp.								

## 2009-2010 Christmas Bird Counts

	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca	Scottsbluff	Total
Bald Eagle	1	4	8	36	4	4	199
adult			6			3	38
immature			2			1	12
unspecified age	1	4		36	4		149
Northern Harrier			1	5	1	2	31
Sharp-shinned Hawk	5	4	2	1	1	CW	33
Cooper's Hawk	3			2	1		17
Northern Goshawk		1					1
Red-tailed Hawk	39	22	14	86	28	29	422
Rough-legged Hawk	1	4		1	5	3	47
Buteo sp.	3	1				1	8
Golden Eagle							2
American Kestrel	13	12	11	12		17	116
Merlin		1	2				7
Peregrine Falcon	1						1
Prairie Falcon			2				5
Hawk sp.	1						1
Virginia Rail							1
American Coot	2	1				1	9
Killdeer							2
Wilson's Snipe		1	1	1			10
Ring-billed Gull			3				17
Herring Gull							12
Rock Pigeon	1,039	396	229	279	35	1,046	4,227
Eurasian Collared-Dove		113	86	28	1	129	856
White-winged Dove						CW	CW
Mourning Dove	169	2		63	13		288
Eastern Screech-Owl	3	1					22
Great Horned Owl	9	3	2	1		3	43
Barred Owl	4	1		2	1		17
Long-eared Owl		1					10
Short-eared Owl							1
Owl sp.	1			1			2

## 2009-2010 Christmas Bird Counts

	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak - Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harrison	Lake McConaughy
Belted Kingfisher		1	2			4		3
Red-headed Woodpecker								1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	70	3		39	11		6
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		1						
Downy Woodpecker		73	7	5	61	27	1	33
Hairy Woodpecker	5	11	5	1	8	2	1	3
Northern Flicker	12	115	19	10	39	56	1	70
Loggerhead Shrike	1					1		
Northern Shrike		8	10	4	cw	5	1	2
Shrike sp.								
Blue Jay	7	214	8	10	75	25	1	28
Black-billed Magpie	3							31
American Crow	26	372	587	30	350	34	6	3
Horned Lark	1	141	145	144	32	125	216	933
Black-capped Chickadee	2	66	23	33	185	4	9	18
Tufted Titmouse					12			
Red-breasted Nuthatch	3	2	1	1	1		3	9
White-breasted Nuthatch	17	86	11	4	58	11	1	12
Pygmy Nuthatch				1				
Brown Creeper	2	4	1		1			2
Carolina Wren		2				2		
Winter Wren		2			1			
Marsh Wren			1					1
Golden-crowned Kinglet		11						7
Eastern Bluebird		147	7		10			28
Mountain Bluebird								2
Townsend's Solitaire				cw			2	6
Hermit Thrush		1						
American Robin	340	1,233	2,445	43	2	184	1	687
Gray Catbird								
Brown Thrasher								
European Starling	274	1,447	1,945	495	899	2,962	67	1,048
Cedar Waxwing	30	239	13		101	260		13

## 2009-2010 Christmas Bird Counts

	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca	Scottsbluff	Total
Belted Kingfisher	10	1	2			2	25
Red-headed Woodpecker	10			1	1		13
Red-bellied Woodpecker	44	13	5	122	16	1	331
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker							1
Downy Woodpecker	147	21	10	147	11	5	548
Hairy Woodpecker	19	8	3	17	2	1	86
Northern Flicker	58	14	11	26	8	22	461
Loggerhead Shrike							2
Northern Shrike	3	1	1		1	1	37
Shrike sp.				1			1
Blue Jay	256	29	14	98	39	104	908
Black-billed Magpie						10	44
American Crow	62	40	82	79	28	13	1,712
Horned Lark	160	163	30	125	417	151	2,783
Black-capped Chickadee	99	47	2	262	52	12	814
Tufted Titmouse				55			67
Red-breasted Nuthatch	18	3	3	2		5	51
White-breasted Nuthatch	95	41	9	184	15	cw	544
Pygmy Nuthatch							1
Brown Creeper	20	3		17			50
Carolina Wren	3			6			13
Winter Wren	2			4			9
Marsh Wren							2
Golden-crowned Kinglet	16	3					37
Eastern Bluebird	82	3	2	45			324
Mountain Bluebird							2
Townsend's Solitaire						5	13
Hermit Thrush	3						4
American Robin	686	18	90	28		437	6,194
Gray Catbird			1				1
Brown Thrasher	cw				1		1
European Starling	2,235	1,932	11,062	2,002	60	1,498	27,926
Cedar Waxwing	56	1	7	143			863

## 2009-2010 Christmas Bird Counts

	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak - Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harrison	Lake McConaughy
Yellow-rumped Warbler		15						
Spotted Towhee		1			1			1
Eastern Towhee								
American Tree Sparrow	88	720	634	337	204	408		120
Fox Sparrow		17			3	3		
Song Sparrow		21	2		26	4		4
Lincoln's Sparrow								
Swamp Sparrow								
White-throated Sparrow		7			11			
Harris's Sparrow		56	8		28	22		3
White-crowned Sparrow						5		5
Dark-eyed Junco	26	904	251	115	681	749	14	672
Slate-colored		122	55	43	330		7	206
Oregon		14	3	18			3	87
Pink-sided				3	1			37
unspecified subspecies	26	768	193	51	350	749	4	342
Lapland Longspur		92			cw			759
Snow Bunting								5
Northern Cardinal	7	199	7		148	50		17
Red-winged Blackbird	7	482	1		219	44		41
Western Meadowlark						125		
Meadowlark sp.		41			47			6
Rusty Blackbird		24	1		1			
Common Grackle		1				615	cw	
Great-tailed Grackle						510		
Brown-headed Cowbird		41			181	4		
Purple Finch		59						
House Finch	18	129	103	16	5	10	3	146
Red Crossbill							2	
Common Redpoll								
Pine Siskin		2	2	84				153
American Goldfinch	29	622	303	163	26	73	38	179
House Sparrow	45	550	171	139	477	312	72	248
TOTAL SPECIES	36	61	59	32	51	55	24	78
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	1,424	9,117	8,274	2,203	4,984	13,566	528	8,542

## 2009-2010 Christmas Bird Counts

	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca	Scottsbluff	Total
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1			2			18
Spotted Towhee							3
Eastern Towhee		1					1
American Tree Sparrow	490	410	61	266	36	16	3,790
Fox Sparrow	3	1			1		28
Song Sparrow	49	3	4	27		2	142
Lincoln's Sparrow				1			1
Swamp Sparrow			1	1			2
White-throated Sparrow	14			4			36
Harris's Sparrow	34	6	3	15	4		179
White-crowned Sparrow	2			22		35	69
Dark-eyed Junco	1,033	490	68	1,322	303	162	6,790
Slate-colored	195		59	1,322	2	40	2,381
Oregon	13		2			31	171
Pink-sided			7			7	55
unspecified subspecies	825	490			301	84	4,183
Lapland Longspur		12	2	1			866
Snow Bunting							5
Northern Cardinal	224	1	8	317	21	2	1,001
Red-winged Blackbird	49	1	37,570	12	317	98	38,841
Western Meadowlark	17		cw		1	cw	143
Meadowlark sp.	37	6		114			251
Rusty Blackbird		3		1	1		31
Common Grackle			50	1	1		668
Great-tailed Grackle			154				664
Brown-headed Cowbird	2	12		3			243
Purple Finch				8			67
House Finch	129	13	54	5	25	195	851
Red Crossbill	1						3
Common Redpoll	1						1
Pine Siskin	2		13	cw		79	335
American Goldfinch	146	167	80	151	111	116	2,204
House Sparrow	928	890	64	663	117	257	4,933
TOTAL SPECIES	64	59	59	68	40	51	116
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	14,996	7,286	52,197	10,652	1,941	23,340	159,050



## CBC Participants, continued

**Calamus-Loup** Mark Brogie, William Flack, Kathi Gerten, Robin Harding, David Heidt (compiler), Brian Nelson, Lanny Randolph, Duane Wolff (8)

**Crawford** Kathy DeLara, Phyllis Drawbaugh, Bruce Walgren (compiler), Donna Walgren (4)

**DeSoto** Jonas Grundman, Chris Harman, Jim Hartman, Clem Klaphake, Jim Kovanda, Sandy Kovanda, Sue Mattix, Don Paseka, Janis Paseka, Jerry Toll, Steve Van Riper, Gary Vequist (12)

**Grand Island** Tom Blanchard, Tony Curtis, Dan Glomski, Karen Hamburger, Bob Hausmann, Michele Kock, Ron Kruse, Ann Kruse, Connie McCartney (compiler), Mary McCartney, Jim Meyer, Steve Morris, Patricia Smith, Enrique Weir, Erika Wilson, Chuck Witter (16)

**Harrison** Bruce Walgren (compiler), Donna Walgren (2)

**Lake McConaughy** Mary Cay Burger, Stephen Dinsmore (compiler), Keith Dyche, Luke Hamilton, Roger Hamilton, Helen Hughson, Bill Huntley, Alice Kenitz, Bette Klaphake, Clem Klaphake, Kay Niyo, Mary Sue Shoemaker, Ross Silcock (13)

**Lincoln** Irene Alexander, Colleen Babcock, Bob Boyce, Anita Breckbill, Karen Brown, Linda R. Brown (compiler), Barbara J. DiBernard, Rick Eades, Larry Einemann, Mike Foster, Joe Gubanyi, Sue Guild, Mike Hootman, Julie Huddle, Michelle Johnson, Tim Knott, Josef Kren, Thomas E. Labedz, Daniel Leger, Dwain Leonhardt, Linda Maslowski, Pete Maslowski, Bruce Mellberg, Kevin Poague, John Quinn, Ken Reitan, Terry Sims, April Stevenson, Ned Stringham, Chris Thody, Muffy Vrana, Jake Walker (32)

**Norfolk** Ben Brogie, Ed Brogie, Mark Brogie, Donna Christiansen, Robin Harding, David Heidt, Lanny Randolph, Paul Timm, Duane Wolff (compiler) (9)

**North Platte** Scott Allison, Monte Brown, Virginia Clark, Richard Darling, Sue Darling, Tim Hajda, Gregg Hoover, Roger Lawson, Lynn Dee Nielson, Jim Petersen, Marcia Petersen, Mary Sue Shoemaker, Matthew Walker, T.J. Walker (compiler) (14)

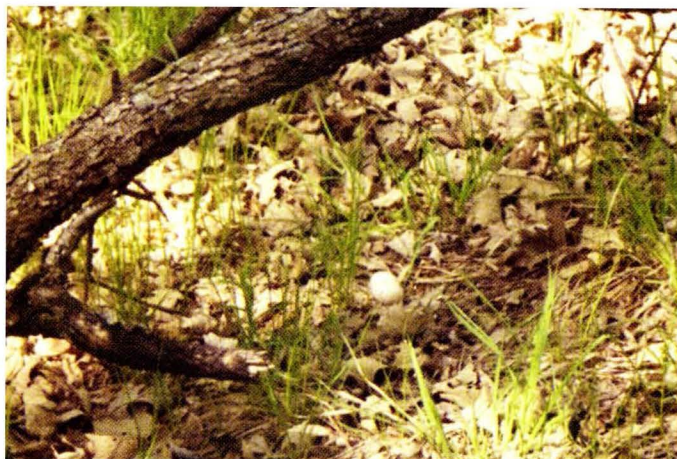
**Omaha** Elliott Bedows, Ruth Bentzinger, Laurine Blankenau, Nelli Falzgraf, Bob Fuchs, Betty Grenon (compiler), Jonas Grundman, Joe Hack, Mace Hack, Clem Klaphake, Jim Kovanda, Sandy Kovanda, Catherine Kuper, Steve Lamphere, Terry Lassek, Sue Mattix, Arthur Morse, Jerry Mulliken, Greg Nelson, Don Paseka, Janis Paseka, Sandy Reinken, Neal Ratzlaff, Al Reyer, Mary Jo Rome, Kathleen Rose, Rick Schmid, Steve Schmitt, Eric Scholar, Jerry Toll, Penny Zahurones (31)

**Ponca** Pat Dunn, Jeff Fields, Bill Huser (compiler), Bill Morris, Jennifer Wolff (5)

**Scottsbluff** Bob DeLara, Kathy DeLara, Phyllis Drawbaugh, Ann Duey, Luke Hamilton, Vonie Hatch, Charlotte Herrell, Michelle Hoff, Helen Hughson, Alice Kenitz (compiler), Brad McKinney, Connie McKinney, Bonnie Schoen, Ruben Siegfried (14)

# 2009-10 CBC Site Data

	Date	Species	Individuals	Observers	Low Temp (° F)	High Temp (° F)	Sky	Precipitation
Beaver Valley	18 Dec	36	1,424	7	32	45	cloudy	none
Branched Oak/Seward	17 Dec	61	9,117	16	16	31	pt cloudy	none
Calamus-Loup	2 Jan	59	8,274	8	-10	-4	cloudy	none
Crawford	2 Jan	32	2,203	4	17	31	pt cloudy	none
DeSoto-Boyer	30 Dec	51	4,984	12	27	28	cloudy	lt snow am
Grand Island	19 Dec	55	13,566	16	26	30	N/A	none
Harrison	1 Jan	24	528	2	1	22	cloudy	none
Lake McConaughy	2 Jan	78	8,542	13	10	21	cloudy	lt snow
Lincoln	19 Dec	64	14,996	32	23	26	cloudy	none
Norfolk	19 Dec	59	7,286	9	17	30	fog/cloudy	none
North Platte	19 Dec	59	52,197	14	13	38	clear	none
Omaha	19 Dec	68	10,652	31	19	23	cloudy	none
Ponca S.P.	2 Jan	40	1,941	5	-22	-1	cloudy	none
Scottsbluff	19 Dec	51	23,340	14	18	41	cloudy	none
Total		116	159,050	183	13	26		

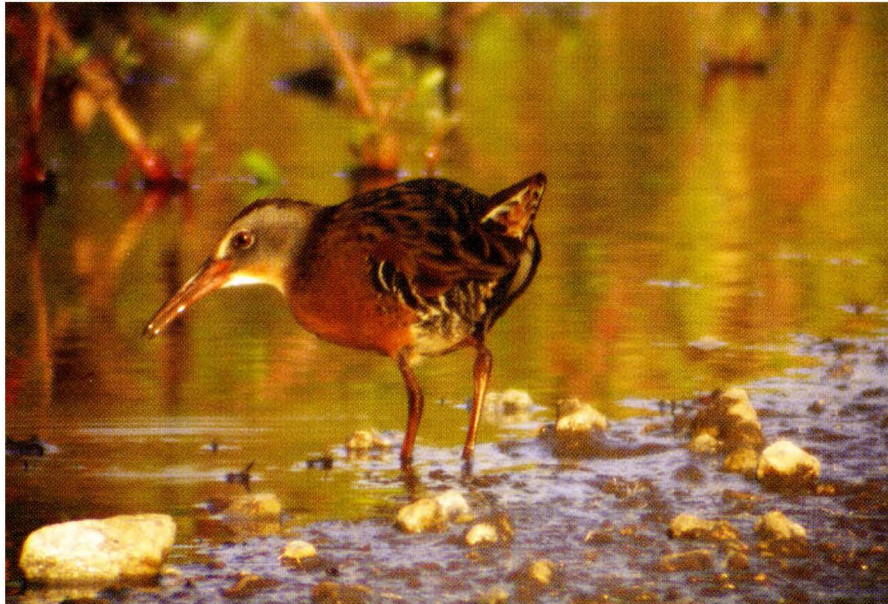


Whip-poor-will eggs  
(top), adult on nest  
(bottom), Ponca S. P.,  
Dixon Co.,  
16 May 2009.  
Photos by  
Josh Samuelson.



Female Wilson's  
Phalarope in  
breeding plumage,  
SE of Broken Bow,  
Custer Co.,  
26 April 2009.  
Photo by  
Tim Hajda.





Virginia Rail, Tamora Basin WPA, Seward Co., 26 Sept 2008. Photo by Joe Gubanyi.

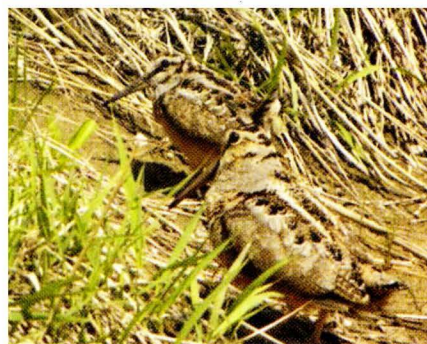
Snow Bunting, Pawnee Lake, Lancaster Co., 7 Oct 2009. Photo by Paul Dunbar.



Adult and fledged Woodcock, Walnut Creek Lake, Sarpy Co., 8 May 2010. Photo by Clem Klaphake.



First year male Summer Tanager on niger seed feeder at Fairmont, Fillmore Co., 2 April 2009. Photo by Juanita Rice.



## Observations of Piping Plovers (*Charadrius melodus*) Color Banded in Nebraska and Re-sighted on the United States Gulf Coast

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### INTRODUCTION

Threatened and endangered migratory birds present a challenge to conservation efforts because they use different habitats during different times of the year. As a result, successful efforts in one part of their range may be nullified by negative events taking place in other parts of their range. In many cases, information that links individual birds or populations to specific breeding, non-breeding and migratory areas across the species' range is not available. Without these links, it can be difficult to coordinate conservation efforts across the species' range and species recovery efforts may be less effective. The observation of uniquely marked individuals can be useful in linking different regions and habitats used throughout a species' annual cycle. As part of our efforts to monitor and protect Piping Plovers (*Charadrius melodus*) in Nebraska, we initiated a research and banding program in 2008. Here we describe the color banding scheme we are using along the lower Platte River and report re-sightings of color banded plovers from non-breeding areas along the United States Gulf Coast.

Piping Plovers are small (17 - 18 cm long) migratory shorebirds that nest along the North American Atlantic Coast and in the Great Lakes and Great Plains regions; they over-winter along the Atlantic, Gulf and Mexican coasts and in the Caribbean (Haig and Oring 1988, Elliott-Smith and Haig 2004, <http://www.natureserve.org>). There are two putative subspecies based on genetic differentiation and geographic location. *C.m. melodus* is found along the Atlantic Coast and *C.m. circumcinctus* is found in the Great Plains and Great Lakes. The two differ in appearance based on the completeness of the black neckband; the neckband may not be complete in *C. m. melodus*, while in *C. m. circumcinctus* the neckband usually is complete (Moser 1942, AOU 1945, 1957, Wilcox 1959, Haig and Oring 1988, Elliott-Smith and Haig 2004, Miller et al. 2010).

In the United States, the Great Plains population of Piping Plovers is federally listed as threatened. In Nebraska, the Piping Plover is listed as a state threatened species. The authority for this listing status is provided by the Nebraska Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act (Nebraska Revised Statutes §§ 37: 801 - 811). Historically, Piping Plover numbers declined as a result of unregulated hunting (Bent 1927), but the principal reason for the current decline is the continuing loss of breeding habitat due to human activity (USFWS 1988, 2009, Elliott-Smith and Haig 2004, <http://www.natureserve.org>). In addition to the loss of breeding habitat, Piping Plovers in the Great Plains are threatened by wild, feral

and pet animal predation, water pollution, hydro-peaking, shoreline stabilization and bank armoring, loss of river sandbars, and the consequences of water management decisions (Elliott-Smith and Haig 2004, <http://www.natureserve.org>, <http://www.iucnredlist.org>). Efforts by state and federal agencies and NGOs are underway to help plover populations recover across their range.

## METHODS

In 2008 and 2009, 37 adult and 32 hatch year Piping Plovers were individually color-banded near the lower Platte River in Nebraska. We define the lower Platte River as the 103 river miles (166 kilometers) between the Loup River confluence (near Columbus, Platte County; river mile 103) and the Missouri River confluence (near Plattsmouth, Cass County; river mile 0). Adults were captured using a simple box trap placed over their nests during incubation. Hatch year plovers were captured by picking them up off the sand before they were capable of flight (for details see Brown and Jorgensen 2008, 2009). All plovers re-sighted as part of this study were originally captured and color banded at human-created, off-river nesting sites: sand and gravel mines or lakeshore housing developments (Brown and Jorgensen 2008, 2009).

Each plover was given a light blue colored leg flag, indicating its Platte River origin, on its upper leg (upper right in 2008, upper left in 2009 and in the future), a metal USGS individually numbered metal band on the opposite upper leg and various color band combinations on its lower legs for individual identification (orange, yellow, red, green, gray, and black). See Figures 1 and 2 for details. Leg flag and color band combinations are coordinated by the Piping Plover band coordinator (G. Pavelka, USACE) and the United States Bird Banding Laboratory at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (<http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl>). Color banded plovers were re-sighted as part of ongoing monitoring and research programs. Re-sightings in Nebraska were made by the authors; re-sightings along the United States Gulf Coast were made by various observers and reported to the plover band coordinator and the programs that originally color banded the plovers (G. Pavelka, pers. comm.).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To date, eight light blue flagged plovers have been re-sighted along the United States Gulf Coast during the non-breeding period. All birds were observed while they were foraging near the water's edge on open sandy beaches. Five of these birds were color banded in 2008 and re-sighted during the winter of 2008 - 2009; three were color banded in 2009 and re-sighted during the winter of 2009 - 2010. Three of these birds were color banded near Ashland, two near North Bend, one near Waterloo, one near Fremont and one near Schuyler. All eight birds were originally captured and color banded as adults. One of the 2008 - 2009 birds was seen on a beach sandbar complex near New Orleans, Louisiana (Raccoon Island). The remaining four 2008 - 2009 birds were seen on a series of beach sandbar complexes located between Corpus Christi and Aransas, Texas (North Pass/Redfish Bay, Mollie Beattie, Mustang Island/Bayside Flats, and South Padre Island/Bayside). One of the plovers color banded in 2009 was seen at St. Joseph State Park, Florida, one was



seen on Matagorda Island, Texas, and one was seen on Galveston Island, Texas. See Figure 3 for details of these re-sightings.

A previous color banding study of Piping Plovers on the Platte River did not report sightings of plovers during the non-breeding season (Lingle 1993); ours is the first study that has identified non-breeding season locations of Nebraska's Platte River plovers.

While the observations presented here are limited, they do provide an anecdotal basis for understanding the issues that might affect plovers during the non-breeding season. For instance, the 2010 oil spill off the

Figure 1. Schematic diagram illustrating the color banding scheme used with Piping Plovers found along the lower Platte River in Nebraska. The light blue flag may be on either the upper right or left leg; the metal numbered USGS band is placed on the opposite upper leg. The combination of color bands on the lower legs are unique to each plover and are used to identify individuals.

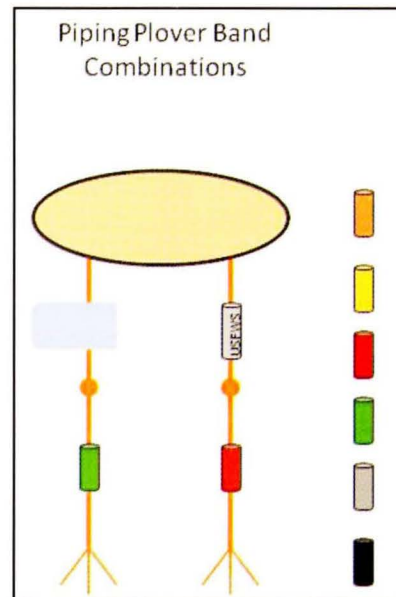


Figure 2. Piping Plover wearing colored leg bands. Photo courtesy of Joel Sartore/ joelsartore.com.

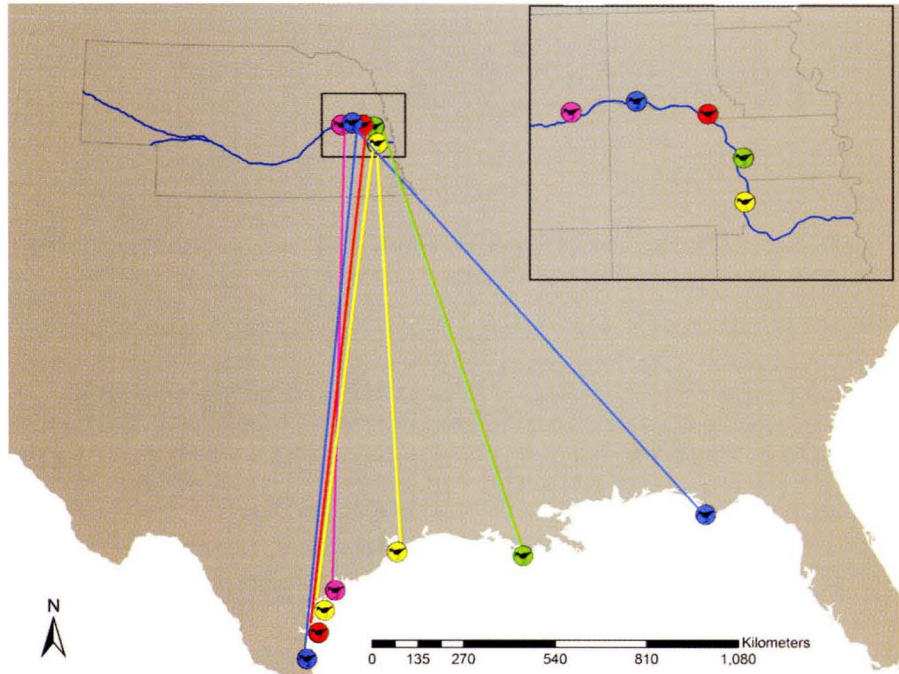


Figure 3. Locations where eight Piping Plovers were originally color banded on the lower Platte River in Nebraska (the southernmost yellow symbol represents two individual birds) and where they were re-sighted along the United States Gulf Coast.

Louisiana coast may negatively impact Piping Plovers that spend the non-breeding season on beaches in the area. Continued monitoring of Piping Plovers in their non-breeding habitat is crucial for the long-term conservation and recovery of the species. We encourage anyone who sees a Piping Plover with colored leg bands to make note of the color combination and the exact location of the bird and pass the information on to us or United States Bird Banding Laboratory at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (<http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl>).

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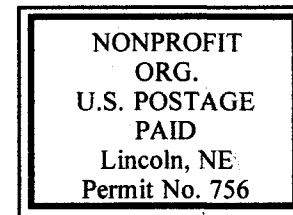
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