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Spring Field Report, March 2010 to May 2010

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SPRING FIELD REPORT, Mar 2010 to May 2010

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INTRODUCTION

There was much of interest this spring. Early and late dates, early breeding, even a few rarities, are scattered through the species accounts. A few highlights are mentioned here. Mark Brogie found 6 species of Gallinaceous birds in one hour in Knox Co - quite a feat. Glossy Ibis reports continue to increase, and Mississippi Kites were found in new areas. Cranes made news: a leucistic Sandhill, another Common, and good numbers of Whoopings. Piping Plovers may be spreading out a bit, given the disappearance of the expanses of sand at L McConaughy, and amazing finds are being made by the team studying Mountain Plovers in Kimball County. Several shorebird species made a huge push 30 Apr: check out the accounts, beginning with American Avocet. The shorebird star had to be Bailey, the transmitter-wearing Long-billed Curlew, who made a rapid transit from wintering to summering grounds. Not far behind was XN, a banded Hudsonian Godwit seen on Chiloe Island, Chile, and next in Dakota Co, Nebraska. Black-billed Magpies have been hit hard in recent years and their progress is mixed, but Carolina Wrens took a beating last winter. A few survived, however, and we will watch their progress. A Bewick's Wren was a rarity in the southwest, but there was no doubt that the top rarity for the season was the Hermit Warbler photographed at Crescent L NWR; it was Nebraska's second. Additional rare Parulids found were Pine and Hooded Warblers. An amazing find, for the second year in a row, was singing Baird's Sparrows, seemingly acting territorially, in extreme northeast Sioux County. It will be interesting to see if they remain into summer.

ABBREVIATIONS

ADF: Arbor Day Farm, Nebraska City
BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co
Calamus Res: Calamus Reservoir WMA/SRA, Loup and Garfield Cos
CLNWR: Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Garden Co.
FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co

Cem: Cemetery

Harvard Marsh: Harvard WPA, Clay Co

HCR: Harlan Co Res, Harlan Co

ICSP: Indian Cave SP, Nemaha and Richardson Cos

Jack Sinn: Jack Sinn Memorial WMA, Saunders and Lancaster Co

LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co

LNB: L North and Babcock, Platte Co

LO: L Ogallala, Keith Co

LPB: La Platte Bottoms, Sarpy Co

m.ob.: many observers

NLB: North Lake Basin WMA, Seward Co

NOU: Nebraska Ornithologists' Union

NWR: National Wildlife Refuge

PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co

PP: Pioneers Park, Lincoln

PRSP: Platte River SP, Cass Co

Res: Reservoir

RWB: wetland complex in several counties of south central and southeast Nebraska

Schramm: Schramm Park SRA, Sarpy Co

SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)

SCP: Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center, Lancaster Co

SP: State Park

Swanson Res: Swanson Reservoir WMA and SRA, Hitchcock Co

WGP: Walnut Grove Park, Omaha

Whitehead Marsh: Whitehead Saline Wetlands, Lincoln

WP: Wilderness Park, Lincoln

OBSERVERS

AK: Alice Kenitz, Gering

ARu: Alice Rumery, Kearney

ARy: Al Reyer, Bellevue

B&DW: Bruce & Donna Walgren, Casper, WY

BF: Bill Fink, San Francisco, CA

BFH: Bill F. Huser, South Sioux City

BG: Betty Grenon, Bellevue

BH: Brian Hula, Bellevue

BN: Brian Nordstrom, Prescott, AZ

BP: Becky Potmesil, Alliance

BWh: Ben Wheeler, Ord

CF: Craig Fosdick, Logan, UT

CG: Cory Gregory, Ames, IA

CH: Candace Havely, McCook

CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, Bellevue

CS: Cheryl Samusevich, Lincoln

CW: Chris Wood, Ithaca, NY

D&JP: Don and Jan Paseka, Ames

DH: Dave Heidt, Norfolk

DL: Dan Leger, Lincoln
DR: Dean Rosenthal, Milford
DSt: Dave Stage, Elkhorn
DW: Duane Wolff, Norfolk
EB: Elliott Bedows, Bellevue
EBe: Eric Bents, Omaha
ECT: Edna Claire Thomas, Morrill
ET: Edward Tickle, Lincoln
GJ: Gail Johnson, Warminster, PA
GR: Gary Roberts, Fremont
GW: Gordon Warrick, Lincoln
G&WH: Glen & Wanda Hoge, Alma
IB: Ian Batterman, De Pere, WI
JaG: Janet Greer, Council Bluffs, IA
JAR: Janet Anderson-Ray, Cheyenne, WY
JB: Jesse Bolli, Beatrice
JC: John Carlini, Lincoln
JF: Jay Favinger, North Platte
JG: Joe Gubanyi, Seward
JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Lincoln
JH: Justin Haahr, North Platte
JJ: Jan Johnson, Wakefield
JLL: Jeanine L. Lackey, Doniphan
JMo: Jim Mountjoy, Lincoln
JO: Jim Ochsner, Ogallala
JP: Jim Petersen, North Platte
JPK: Judy P. Kassick, Friend
JR: Justin Rink, Omaha
JRi: Juanita Rice, Fairmont
JSe: John Sebastiani, Hockessin, DE
JSi: James Sipiora, Arlington, TX
JSt: Jon Strong, Omaha
JT: Jerry Toll, Omaha
JW: Jake Walker, Lincoln
JWH: John W. Hall, Omaha
JWo: Janice Wobbenhorst, Belden
KB: Kelli Bacon, Lincoln
KD: Kathy DeLara, Mitchell
KDy: Keith Dyche, Shenandoah, IA
KK: Ken Kranik, Alliance
KP: Kevin Poague, Lincoln
KS: Kent Skaggs, Kearney
KSc: Kathy Schwery, Plattsmouth
L&BP: Loren and Babs Padelford, Bellevue
LD: Linda Deeds, North Platte
LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln
LF: Laurence Falk, Nebraska City
LJH: Luke J. Hamilton, Oshkosh
LK: Lanny Kizer, Loup City

LO: Linda Ollinger, Wilsonville
LR: Lanny Randolph, Minden
LRu: Linda Rudolph, Iowa City, IA
MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton
ME: Mike Ellis, Omaha
MK: Michelle Koch, Lincoln
MM: Marty Mathieson, Shelton
MMi: Mark Miller, Longmont, CO
MUs: Moni Usasz, Lincoln
NR: Neal Ratzlaff, Omaha
NS: Nathan Senner, Ithaca, NY
PD: Paul Dunbar, Hastings
P&DD: Phyllis and Dean Drawbaugh, Scottsbluff
PDo: Pam Dong, South Pasadena, CA
PR: Paul Roisen, Sioux City, IA
PS: Phil Swanson, Omaha
RBo: Rob Bogardus, McCook
RE: Rick Eades, Lincoln
RGS: Randy G. Stutheit, Lincoln
RH: Robin Harding, Minden
RiS: Richard Staniforth, Winnipeg, MB
RK: Randy Kraus, Lenoir City, TN
RM: Robert Manning, Omaha
RL: Roger Lawson, Curtis
RS: Rick Schmid, Omaha
RSi: Ruben Siegfried, Gering
RSt: Ruth Stearns, Lincoln
RV: Richard Vitters, Fremont
RW: Rick Wright, Tucson, AZ
SG: Suzanne Gucciardo, Fort Calhoun
SJD: Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA
SMc: Scott McConnell, Laramie, WY
SQ: Susan Quinn, Nebraska City
SR: Sarah Rehme, Lincoln
SS: Shari Schwartz, Lincoln
ST: Scott Taylor, Lincoln
SW: Scott Wessel, Wausa
TEL: Thomas E. Labedz, Lincoln
TG: Tom Gannon, Lincoln
TH: Tim Hajda, Broken Bow
TJW: T.J. Walker, Brady
TK: Tyson Kahler, Grand Island
VC: Virginia Clark, North Platte
VN: Valerie Newman, Scottsbluff
WF: William Flack, Kearney
WM: Wayne Mollhoff, Ashland
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA
ZC: Zachary Cheviron, Los Angeles, CA

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Greater White-fronted Goose: Routine reports.

Snow Goose: Impressive were the 400,000 in Antelope Co 14 Mar (MB). As many as 14 were late and easterly in Nemaha Co 29 May (CNK).

Ross's Goose: Best counts were 400 in Antelope Co 14 Mar (MB) and 120 at Jack Sinn 10 Mar (LE).

Cackling Goose: Spring aggregations are not as large as those in fall; the 2000 in Buffalo Co 17 Mar (WF) was a near-record count.

Canada Goose: First brood noted was in North Platte: "fluffies" were seen 26 Apr (TJW).

Mute Swan: Reports continue from the Omaha region; 2 adults were at Venice 13 Mar (fide JaG, DL photos) and a juvenile molting to adult plumage was at Zorinsky L, Omaha, 21 Mar (JR).

Trumpeter Swan: An adult was out of place in Boone Co as late as 31 May (DH). Some 25 were reported in all, most migrants; best count was 12 on a Custer Co playa 31 Mar (BWh).

Tundra Swan: The only report of this rare migrant was of one at Calamus Res 24 Mar (JSe).

Wood Duck: One at Norfolk 3 Mar (WF) was early that far north.

Gadwall: Routine reports.

American Wigeon: Routine reports.

Mallard: Routine reports.

Blue-winged Teal: Routine reports.

Cinnamon Teal: Reports were more widespread than usual, especially eastward, including a rare report of 1-2 as far east as Lincoln 7-9 Apr (LE). Also easterly was a hybrid in Sarpy Co 8-13 Apr (JR, L&BP, EB). Another hybrid was in the e RWB 24 Apr (JGJ), along with 5 Cinnamons at various e RWB locations 9-30 Apr (PD, JGJ, WF).

Northern Shoveler: Routine reports.

Northern Pintail: "Quite a few pairs" on playas in Perkins Co 26 May (TJW) suggested breeding. As yet breeding has not been confirmed in the southwest, although Mollhoff considered it "probable" in Perkins Co during 1984-89 (Breeding Bird Atlas I).

Green-winged Teal: As with Northern Pintail, this species has only bred a few times south of the Platte Valley. Thus "quite a few pairs" on Perkins Co playas 26 May (TJW) were of interest.

Canvasback: A male lingered in North Platte through 14 May (TJW), which was late away from the nw Sandhills summer range.

Redhead: Three at Alma SL 31 May (G&WH) were tardy; breeding is unknown in that part of the state.

Ring-necked Duck: The 560 in Hamilton Co 20 Mar (CW) was a good count; a single lingered to 29 May in the same county (JGJ).

Greater Scaup: At least 60 were reported statewide 7 Mar (JGJ) through 17 Apr (WRS), a good showing; later stragglers were 3 in Hamilton Co 3 May (JGJ) and one at Alma SL 8 May (TH).

Lesser Scaup: Best count was a moderate 1549 at BOL 30 Mar (LE); last was one in Sarpy Co 21 May (WRS et al.).

- Surf Scoter:** Single immature males were found at LO 12 May (TH) and in Sarpy Co 21 May (LRu, WRS, SG, PS). These are only the 6th and 7th documented spring records.
- Black Scoter:** A surprise was an adult male at Oak L, Lincoln, 7 Apr (LE, JMo, JC, SS), only the 3rd documented spring record.
- Bufflehead:** A pair in sw Cherry Co 23 May (WM) may have been potential breeders, although there is only one documented record of breeding for the state.
- Common Goldeneye:** A probable hybrid with Barrow's Goldeneye was in Lincoln Co 21 Mar (TH, TJW).
- Hooded Merganser:** Adult males in May are suggestive of local breeding; one was near Peru 8 May (WRS). This is only the 8th report of an adult male in the period mid-Apr through May; there are only 3 confirmed breeding records for the state.
- Common Merganser:** The 4000-5000 at BOL 14 Mar (JR) was an excellent count, second only to the estimated 200,000 at HCR on the same day in 2003.
- Red-breasted Merganser:** Good numbers were reported, topped by 50+ at BOL 27 Mar (EB) and 48 at L Yankton, Cedar Co, 3 Apr (BFH).
- Ruddy Duck:** Routine reports.
- Gray Partridge:** The range of this species in Nebraska has contracted, with most reports in recent years from Knox, Cedar, and n Antelope Cos; at least 2 pairs were s of Creighton in n Antelope Co 14-19 May (MB).
- Ring-necked Pheasant:** Southwest counties have high populations at present; two census routes (20 x 2-minute stops) in Hitchcock Co 17 Apr found 893 and 659 roosters (TJW). The first egg was found 28 Apr in Lincoln Co (TJW), rather early.
- Sharp-tailed Grouse:** A male was at a Greater Prairie-Chicken lek near Winnetoon all spring, 20 Mar-19 May (MB); hybridization has occurred between these species.
- Greater Prairie-Chicken:** Reports from the east edge of the range were encouraging: 5 were at Buckskin Hills WMA, Dixon Co, 27 Mar (BFH) with a female there 27 May (JJ), and one flushed from a Dodge Co cornfield 2 Apr was the observer's first for the county (D&JP). Two leks with a total of 15+ birds were found in Butler Co 10 Apr (SR), and 2 were at Kirkpatrick Basin South WMA, York Co, 8 May (JGJ). Other reports of interest were 2 leks in the cedar canyons of se Lincoln Co 27 Apr (TJW), and 3 in Harlan Co 31 Mar (PDo).
- Wild Turkey:** An amazing 800+ were tallied in Knox Co 20 Mar (MB).
- Northern Bobwhite:** Winter may have affected populations in Dodge Co; first for the year for the observer were 2 found 10 May (D&JP). Apparently a small population exists on the FF flood plain; 2 were seen there 21 May (EB).
- Pacific Loon:** A basic-plumaged bird at BOL 30 Mar (LE) was only the 4th spring record for the state.
- Common Loon:** Most reports were from the east, where alternate-plumaged birds were found 25 Mar (JR), rather early, through 14 Apr (JR) as expected. Later reports tend to be westerly and of sub-adult birds; one in basic plumage was in Hall Co 27 Apr (D&JP), 2 near-adults in North Platte 26 Apr (fide TJW, photos VC), and two (un-aged) were at LM 13 May (TJW).
- Pied-billed Grebe:** The 85 in Lancaster Co 7 Apr (LE) was an excellent count for spring; the record is 100.
- Horned Grebe:** Two at Bridgeport 13 Mar (LJH) were rather early.

Red-necked Grebe: A surprise was an adult in n Antelope Co 8 May (BFH, WF, PR, MB); apparently it is the first for Antelope Co and only the third documented spring record for the state.

Eared Grebe: Routine reports.

Western Grebe: Routine reports.

Clark's Grebe: The only reports were of 2 on Swanson Res 25 Apr (CH) and one at Mother L, Cherry Co, 25 May (WM).

American White Pelican: Routine reports.

Neotropic Cormorant: Nebraska's 11th record was of 2 at BOL 15-16 May (JR, JC, SS, ET photo). This species is increasing in numbers northward on the Great Plains.

Double-crested Cormorant: Flocks flying over Sarpy Co 11 Apr contained 2300 birds (L&BP), an excellent tally. Several were on nests at a private Interstate 80 lake in Lincoln Co 26 May (TJW).

American Bittern: The 5 at NLB 16 May (JC, SS) was a good count; habitat appeared to be suitable for breeding this spring.

Least Bittern: Reports from locations to the nw of the expected se Nebraska range seem to be increasing in recent years. Far-flung singles were near the North Platte airport 14 Apr (TJW), second-earliest on record, and at CLNWR 21 May (CG).

Great Blue Heron: Birds were reported back on rookeries in 3 locations across the state on the same day, 22 Mar in Sarpy Co (CNK), in Lincoln (ET), and in Lincoln Co (TJW).

Great Egret: Reports were widespread but in low numbers, best count was the 6 at Whitehead Marsh 7-8 Apr (LE, RSt). Uncommon in the Panhandle, with fewer than 30 spring records, one was in Scotts Bluff Co 22-23 May (AK).

Snowy Egret: Second-highest spring count on record was the 15 at LPB 30 Apr (CNK). Only about 20 were reported in all, however. This species is a statewide migrant, unlike Great Egret; a Snowy was in Scotts Bluff Co 5 May (RSi).

Little Blue Heron: This species is rare in spring; an adult with plumes was at PP 27 Apr (DL).

Cattle Egret: Three along the Middle Loup River in Custer Co 31 Mar (BWh) were the 4th-earliest on record. Reports were widespread but in low numbers, best count was only 11, in the e RWB 30 Apr (JGJ).

Green Heron: Only the 5th Panhandle spring report, one was in Scotts Bluff Co 22-23 May (AK).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Few were reported; one at Jack Sinn 9 Apr (LE) was on the early side.

Glossy Ibis: The influx of this species in recent years is nothing short of phenomenal. Of about 44 records, all but 3 have occurred 2005-2010, with records each of those years of 3, 10, 2, 6, 8, and 12 birds respectively. This spring, about 12 were reported statewide 24 Apr-29 May (m. ob.). Only one hybrid was suspected, that at Harvard Marsh 8 May (JGJ). Reports have been most numerous in the e RWB and this year was no exception, with about 8 birds: one was in York Co 24 Apr (JGJ); 2 were in Clay Co on 30 Apr and one on 2 May (JGJ); one was in Nuckolls Co 30 Apr (JGJ); singles in Seward Co at Straightwater WMA 3 May (JGJ) and at NLB 6-8 May (LE, L&BP) were possibly the same bird; and 3 were in Hamilton Co 29 May (JGJ). The remaining reports, probably of 4 birds, were westerly: one was in n Garden Co

29 Apr and possibly the same bird 9.5 miles farther north 6 May (CG); one was in Scotts Bluff Co 2 May (CG photo, KD, RSi); and 2 were in Sheridan Co 17 May (LE).

White-faced Ibis: This species has also become much more common in recent years; more than 450 were reported, including counts of 117 in the e RWB 30 Apr (JGJ), 102 in Garden Co 28 May (JGJ), and 80 at North Platte 7 May (TJW). A flock of 50 in McPherson Co 25 May contained 20-25% immatures (WF).

Turkey Vulture: Rather early was one at SCP 7 Mar (ZC); most show up beginning in late Mar. Best counts were a record-tying 80 in a kettle over BOL 4 Apr (JR) and an excellent 50 apparently circling a Lincoln roost site 31 Mar (LE).

Osprey: One at BOL 22 Mar (GR) was rather early; the 5-6 there 30 Apr (ET) was a good count. One in Scotts Bluff Co 22-23 May (AK) may have been one of the pair that has attempted breeding there the past 2 years without success.

Mississippi Kite: This spring brought signs that this species might be freeing itself from the confines of Ogallala, as reports were received from several other locations; one observer (TJW) suggested, though, that the influx might have been merely a result of strong southerly winds, an idea supported by the occurrence of all reports away from Ogallala in the short period 23-28 May. Two appeared rather early in Ogallala 26 Apr (JO), and 3 were there 27 May (KDy). Elsewhere, singles were in Lincoln 23 May (DL) and 24 May (TEL), Norfolk 23 May (MB - only the second ne Nebraska record for this observer), Hooker Co 25 May (WF), w Douglas Co 26 May (DSt), and Culbertson 28 May (JSt - this observer's first for Hitchcock Co).

Bald Eagle: The 800 at Calamus Res 24 Mar (JSe) was by far the highest spring count on record.

Northern Harrier: Routine reports.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: One in Dakota Co 15 May (BFH) was tardy.

Cooper's Hawk: This species has become a common breeder statewide, even in cities. Details of nesting in an Omaha neighborhood for the last 6 years were received; this year was the first time the previous year's nest was reused (ME). Several nests were reported from Adams and Lancaster Cos (PD, LE); birds were incubating in Lancaster Co 9 Apr (LE).

Northern Goshawk: Singles in Lincoln 5 Mar (JMo) and near Giltner 18 Mar (JaG) were not unexpected, but one identified as an adult in Nebraska City 15 May (LF, SQ) was one of very few May reports away from the northwest.

Red-shouldered Hawk: There were a few more reports than usual. Singles were seen at BOL 7 Mar (RSt, JMo) and 30 Apr (ET), over Offutt Base L, Sarpy Co, 21 Mar (JR), at PL 1 Apr (LE), and at FF 1 May (JR). No evidence of breeding was reported.

Broad-winged Hawk: About 20 were reported from York Co eastward 7 Apr-29 May (m. ob.); the 29 May report was of 2 birds over FF (JR), a site where breeding is suspected to occur on occasion.

Swainson's Hawk: The 107 or so birds were reported statewide 2 Apr-11 May (m. ob.), with best count 60 in Lincoln Co 26 Apr during a "huge push" (TJW). A dark morph bird was in sw Kimball Co 27 May (KDy).



Leucistic Sandhill Crane near Hershey 9 Mar 2010. Photo by Virginia Clark.

Red-tailed Hawk: Unusual was a white bird paired with a normally-plumaged bird in cen. Nebraska 31 Mar (BWh). Such white birds are noted on occasion, but mostly in migration.

Ferruginous Hawk: One was on a nest in se Grant Co 25 May (WM).

Rough-legged Hawk: The 8 in Knox Co 1 Mar (MB) was an excellent count. Last reported was in Seward Co 6 May (LE), rather late. Latest dates are in mid-May.

Golden Eagle: Easterly were two on the Platte-Buffalo Co line 6 Mar (MM) and one in Hall Co 6 Mar (TK); an adult in Hooker Co 17 May (TH) was easterly for the date.

American Kestrel: Routine reports.

Merlin: Routine reports.

Prairie Falcon: Easternmost were singles (same bird?) near Harvard 14 Mar (JGJ) and Verona 18 Mar (JGJ); another was seen on a trip from Hordville to Valparaiso 5 Mar (JLL).

Peregrine Falcon: The usual migrants were reported, a total of 12, mostly eastward, 6 Apr-17 May (m. ob).

Virginia Rail: Rather early were singles at McCook 16 Apr (RBo) and Fremont 17 Apr, the latter caught in a fish net and photographed (fide RM). A family group with juveniles was in Sioux Co 30 May (TJW), a rather early date.

Sora: Rather early were singles in Dakota Co 16 Apr (BFH) and at Jack Sinn 17-19 Apr (BH, JC, SS). A good count was the 14 in Seward Co 8 May (JG).

Common Moorhen: Despite some enticing-looking habitat in the east, the only report was of one at NLB 20 May (MK fide JGJ).

American Coot: One at Lewellen 1 Mar (LJH) was rather early. Best count was an excellent 1790 at Whitehead Marsh 30 Mar (LE).

Sandhill Crane: A strikingly leucistic bird near Hershey 8-15 Mar (JH, VC, RL) was photographed 8 Mar (JH, VC); it is easy to see how such a bird could be misidentified as a Whooping Crane, except for its size and extent of red on its crown. Best count of Sandhills was 250,000 in Buffalo Co 22 Mar (SQ). The breeding pair in Morrill Co returned to its territory 24 Mar (KD), and a pair had returned by 7 Apr to a field next to Kiowa WMA, Scotts Bluff Co, for the second year; no breeding was detected last year (KD).

Common Crane: Becoming an annual occurrence was the presence of one near Hershey 18-24 Mar (VC photos; TJW). (See photo March *NBR*, page 5.) There have been 6 separate reports of Common Crane 2007-2010 in the area between Buffalo and Garden Cos; it is possible that all are of the same bird. A photo was provided belatedly of one near North Platte 12 Mar 2009 (JF); there was a previous 2009 report of one near Lewellen 19 Mar (fide MB); as mentioned above, these may have been of the same bird.

Whooping Crane: An adult in Hall Co 5 Mar-3 Apr (JLL) was early, followed by 2 adults in Kearney Co 20 Mar-5 Apr (fide JLL); these early migrants lingered for some time, in contrast to the remaining 48 birds which passed through 23 Mar-21 Apr, with no groups staying longer than 6 days (fide JLL). Biggest group was the 11 in Custer Co 11 Apr (fide JLL). An overlooked area for this species is the Central Table playa wetlands in the Arnold area of w. Custer Co (BWh photo).

Black-bellied Plover: Routine reports.

American Golden-Plover: Routine reports.

Snowy Plover: Reports are fewer as LM refills; reports reflected the species' status pre-LM sand-flats, with only 3, all from the e RWB: singles were in Adams Co 30 Apr (JGJ), Fillmore Co 2 May (JGJ), and Clay Co 18 May (PD).

Semipalmated Plover: The 104 in the e RWB 2 May (JGJ) was a good count; highest counts are in the 200-300 range.

Piping Plover: The once-extensive sandy habitat at LM is being inundated as the reservoir level rises; only 12 were found there 28 May (JGJ). At least one was at CLNWR 14 May (CG), continuing the rather recent breeding presence there, and a nesting pair was near Milburn Dam, Blaine Co, 27 May (WF), the first time since 1987 that nesting has occurred there (fide WM). One of 3 in the e

RWB 2 May was color-banded at L Sakakawea, North Dakota (JGJ). The Platte River continues to provide good albeit ephemeral habitat; 12 were counted in Sarpy and Cass Cos 14 May (JGJ) and 10 were in the Rowe Sanctuary area 17 May (BN). Most other reports were from the east, some 26 birds in all (m. ob.).



Common Crane northwest of North Platte 12 Mar 2009. Photo by Jay Favinger.

Killdeer: Routine reports.

Mountain Plover: The only observer reports were of 2 in Kimball Co 28 May (JGJ) and 3 in sw. Kimball Co 27 May (KDy), but extensive data are being gathered by the continuing efforts of a partnership between Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, and Nebraska Environmental Trust, and updated regularly on Facebook (OK, I'm not as old as you think!) under "Nebraska Mountain Plover Chick Survival Study". First nest was reported 30 Apr and 16 nests had been marked by May 12, when an 8-inch snowfall and freezing temperatures arrived. Amazingly, several nests survived. More in the Summer Report!

Black-necked Stilt: Only one was reported away from the w Sandhills, in Clay Co 14 May (PD). About 10 were found in Sheridan Co 16-31 May (LE, LJH).

American Avocet: A major influx occurred 30 Apr, when a record 354 were counted in the e RWB, including a record single-location tally of 106 in Seward Co (JGJ). An amazing 303 were found at LPB and Offutt Base L, Sarpy Co, (L&BP), 103 were at Whitehead Marsh (LE), and 70 were at BOL (ET). Strangely, the 4 highest spring counts on record for this species are from the e RWB eastward. Breeding occurs on occasion in the e RWB; a pair was mating at the Trumbull wetland complex, Clay Co, 3 May (PD).

Spotted Sandpiper: Routine reports.

Solitary Sandpiper: Routine reports.

Greater Yellowlegs: Routine reports.

Willet: As with American Avocets, there was a big push of Willets 30 Apr; best count was the 74 in the e RWB 30 Apr (JGJ), and 5 were as far east as Sarpy Co (L&BP).

Lesser Yellowlegs: Routine reports.

Upland Sandpiper: Routine reports.

Whimbrel: The only report of this rare but regular spring migrant was of one at CLNWR 14 May (CG).

Long-billed Curlew: First reported were 17 in Garden Co and 5 in Keith Co 6 Apr (TH), moving north at about the same time as the transmitter-wearing bird "Bailey", which left its nw Mexico winter location 8 Apr and arrived in Garden Co 9 Apr- just a short hop! (CG, JGJ, SJD). Bailey settled in at a location 11 miles ne of last year's nesting site (CG, JGJ, SJD).

Hudsonian Godwit: Numbers were low; best count was only 15 in Dakota Co, and in the e RWB a surprisingly low 14 (JGJ). Arrival was early; previous early dates were 6, 7, and 11 Apr, but this spring there were 3 locations reporting birds 9-11 Apr. Nine were in the e RWB 9 Apr, increasing to 14 the next day (JGJ), one was easterly in Sarpy Co 10 Apr, increasing to 5 on 11 Apr (L&BP), and 15 had arrived in Dakota Co 10 Apr (BFH). One of the Dakota Co birds was color-banded; "XN" was banded as an adult in sc Alaska in summer 2009, was seen wintering on Chiloe Island in southern Chile, and again, of course, in Dakota Co this spring (NS fide BFH).

Marbled Godwit: A recently-discovered breeder in the state, two were "giving the observer hell" in Sheridan Co 23 May (WM).

Ruddy Turnstone: Only 4 were reported, in Clay and Fillmore Cos 15-18 May (JGJ, PD).

Sanderling: Routine reports.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Best count was an excellent 1440 in the e RWB 8 May (JGJ); highest counts are 3000+.

Western Sandpiper: There were more reports than usual of this rare spring migrant. One in Dakota Co 10 Apr (BFH, details) was record early by 2 days. Two were at Trumbull wetland complex, Adams Co, 30 Apr (PD), one was at Ayr L, Adams Co, 1 May (PD), 2 were in the e RWB 2 May (JGJ), and 3 were at Hultine WMA, Clay Co, 3 May (PD).

Least Sandpiper: One in the e RWB 18 Mar (JGJ) was rather early, and a record spring count was the 500+ at LPB 5 May (CNK). The 321 in the e RWB 2 May (JGJ) was also an excellent count.

White-rumped Sandpiper: One in the e RWB 26 Apr (LR, RH) was on the early side; earliest dates are 19, 23, and 24 Apr. Best count was 1600 in the e RWB 8 May (JGJ); record count is 7000.

Baird's Sandpiper: Routine reports.

Pectoral Sandpiper: The 200-300 in Sarpy Co 5 May (CNK) was an excellent tally; highest counts are 500+.

Dunlin: Routine reports.

Stilt Sandpiper: Three in Seward Co 14 Apr (LE) were rather early; earliest dates are 9, 10, and 10 Apr.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Routine reports.

- Short-billed Dowitcher:** Spring migrants occur almost exclusively in May; this spring there were 11 reports of about 40 birds 3-21 May (m. ob.). The best count was 15 in Colfax Co 14 May (JJ) and the westernmost sighting was in Lincoln Co 4 May (TJW).
- Long-billed Dowitcher:** Numbers were low until the major push 30 Apr (see American Avocet and Willet), when 1230 appeared in the e RWB (JGJ), dwarfing the total before then of 32; numbers increased to 1995 there by 2 May (JGJ). Record spring count is 4750.
- Wilson's Snipe:** Best count was a moderate 47 in Dakota Co 4 Apr (BFH). Two were winnowing at Jack Sinn 19 Apr and another was there 16 May (JC, SS); breeding has occurred there previously.
- American Woodcock:** This species was widely reported in the e half of the state (m. ob.), nw to n Antelope Co 8 Apr (2, WF) and 20 Apr (6, MB). Earliest were singles at BOL 7 Mar (RSt, JMo).
- Wilson's Phalarope:** The huge influx of shorebirds 30 Apr involved this species also; 7520 were in the e RWB 2 May (JGJ), 3rd-highest on record, with 3035 arriving 30 Apr (JGJ) and 3000 in Clay Co 3 May (PD). A preferred staging location for this species is the North Platte SL, where "thousands" were still present 14 Jun (TJW), an unprecedented number at that location and date.
- Red-necked Phalarope:** Rare in the east, one was at Whitehead Marsh 12 May (LE).
- Bonaparte's Gull:** One in basic plumage was rather early at Jack Sinn 31 Mar (LE); the 180 in Sarpy Co 10 Apr (JR) was a good count.
- Franklin's Gull:** Routine reports.
- Ring-billed Gull:** Routine reports.
- California Gull:** The only report was of 2 at BOL 27 Mar (EB); this species occurs more often eastward in spring than in fall, though still rare.
- Herring Gull:** Routine reports.
- Thayer's Gull:** Two or three were reported, a typical spring for this regular migrant: 3 were at LO 28 Feb (JMo), an immature was at Oak L, Lincoln, 9-12 Mar (JGJ, m. ob.), and a similar or the same bird was at BOL 16-21 Mar (LE, JGJ).
- Lesser Black-backed Gull:** This species also is a regular migrant in low numbers, although the only report this spring was of an adult at BOL 26-30 Mar (DL, m. ob.).
- Glaucous Gull:** At least 4 were reported, a typical spring. Single immatures were at BOL and Oak L, Lincoln, 7 Mar (JMo) through 25 Mar (m. ob.); these sightings were likely of the same bird. Elsewhere, one was at Calamus Res 14 Mar (MB), an immature was at HCR 19 Mar (JRi, CW), and an immature was at LM 25 Apr (JMo), which was one of only 4 reports later than 12 Apr.
- Least Tern:** Routine reports.
- Caspian Tern:** The only report of this regular migrant was of one in Adams Co 17 May (PD).
- Black Tern:** Routine reports.
- Common Tern:** The only report of this uncommon migrant was of one in Colfax Co 14 May (JJ).
- Forster's Tern:** The 50-100 at Swanson Res 18 May (WM) was a good tally. High counts for spring are 100+.
- Rock Pigeon:** Routine reports.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: A small population in Papillion appears to be mostly feral cage-raised birds (WRS); there have been a few instances of such birds mixing with wild birds to date in Nebraska.

White-winged Dove: Now a regular species in small numbers statewide, 5 singles were reported: one easterly in Waterloo 12-15 Apr (JaG, photo), one in Milford 18 Apr (DR fide JGJ), one in Kearney 14 May (ARu), one in North Platte 20 May (JP), and one in Lincoln 27 May (RGS fide JGJ).

Mourning Dove: One in a Scottsbluff yard 8 Mar (P&DD) was rather early; winter records are very few there.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Routine reports.

Black-billed Cuckoo: None were reported; this is an uncommon summer resident.

Barn Owl: The only reports were westerly, as expected: singles were s of Gering 27 Mar (AK) and at Brady 29 Apr (TJW).

Eastern Screech-Owl: Routine reports.

Great Horned Owl: Routine reports.

Burrowing Owl: In recent years the number of reports from the e RWB has increased. This spring there were reports from a prairie dog town at Hultine WPA, Clay Co, 11 Apr (JMo) and 8 May (JGJ), as well as unspecified locations in the e RWB 25 Apr (JLL, KS) and Clay Co 16 Apr (PD). All of these sightings may have been from Hultine WPA.

Barred Owl: A pair using an Elkhorn nest box had 2 eggs 13 Mar and 2 small chicks 4 Apr (DSt), similar dates as in the previous two years (DSt). A nest in Lincoln had a downy chick 8 May (LE). Reports along the Republican River are few; 2 were 4 miles from Webster Co in Nuckolls Co 18 Mar (WF). Other westerly reports were of one at Wood Duck WMA, Stanton Co, 15 Apr (WF) and one at George Syas WMA, sw Platte Co, 10 Apr (WF).

Long-eared Owl: Reports in late Apr and May might indicate breeding birds; singles were in Knox Co 15 May (MB), at a location near Bennington 11 Apr and 21 May (EBe), and in Oak Glen WMA, Seward Co, 26 May (RSt).

Short-eared Owl: The only report of breeding was of one at a nest site in ne Sioux Co 14-16 May (TH); 5 were counted in the same general area 30 May (KDy). There were reports of singles from Forest Lawn Cem, Omaha, 7 Mar (JR), Broken Bow 25 Mar (TH), and LNB 13 May (LE). The LNB bird may have been breeding nearby at that date.

Northern Saw-Whet Owl: None were reported; this is a scarce winter visitor, generally departing by mid-Apr.

Common Nighthawk: Routine reports.

Common Poorwill: One in the cedar canyons of se Lincoln Co 22 Apr (LD) was 2nd-earliest on record.

Chuck-will's-widow: One at Bohemia Prairie, Knox Co, 15 May (MB) continues the species' presence at this northerly outpost. The only other report was of 1-2 at Oak Glen WMA, Seward Co, 17-26 May (LE, JG).

Whip-poor-will: Three singles arrived very early in the northeast: one in nw Antelope Co 20 Apr (MB), another the same date near Center, Knox Co, (SW), and one at Niobrara SP, Knox Co, 21 Apr (SW). Record early dates for the state are 15, 18, 18 Apr. One was near Bohemia Prairie WMA, Knox Co, 7 May (WF), a previously-known location, and another was westerly at Redbird WMA, Holt Co, 8 May (WF). An excellent count was the 17 at Oak Glen WMA, Seward Co, 26 May (JG).

Chimney Swift: One at Brady 13 Apr (TJW) was rather early that far west.

White-throated Swift: Reports are few as far east as Sheridan Co, where it breeds in the extreme west of the county; one was found there 16 May (CNK, B&DW).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: One was at Brady 5 May (TJW), about as far west as this species occurs in spring; one was there in 2006, and a pair summered there in 2004 without breeding evidence noted (TJW).

Broad-tailed Hummingbird: One was reported near Scotts Bluff NM, Scotts Bluff Co, 25 May (VN fide KD). This and about 5 other spring reports of this species are undocumented; these are likely as it is considered a rare spring migrant. There are records for sw Kansas and the Black Hills of South Dakota in spring and a couple of intriguing Jun records for Nebraska.

Belted Kingfisher: Routine reports.

Lewis's Woodpecker: One at Fort Robinson SHP, Dawes Co, 13-16 May (TH, m.ob.) delighted the spring NOU meeting membership; this species is a rare spring migrant in the Panhandle, generally limited to areas of Ponderosa Pine. (See photo Mar *NBR*, page 4.)

Red-headed Woodpecker: Routine reports.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Still a rare bird in Scotts Bluff Co, one in the observer's yard 8-10 May was her first in a few years (KD).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Routine reports.

Hairy Woodpecker: Counts of 11 at both HCR 19 Mar (CW) and at FF 3 Apr (RW) established new highs for this low-density species.

Downy Woodpecker: The 25 at FF 2 Apr (RW) was a good count.

Northern Flicker: A red-shafted bird was rather late at North Platte 7 Apr (TJW). Last dates are in mid-Apr.

Pileated Woodpecker: There were several reports from FF (m. ob.), with best count 3 on 1 May (JR), but a surprise was one at DeSoto NWR, Washington Co, 24 Apr (JSi). None were reported from the other known breeding location, ICSP.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: This species is rare as far west as the Panhandle; one was in Dawes Co 16 May (DL, JWo).

Western Wood-Pewee: One was east of the expected range, but not unprecedented, at Santee, Knox Co, 27 May (CF). This is the 10th spring report east of the breeding range.

Eastern Wood-Pewee: Routine reports.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: One at ADF 22 May was well-described (LF, SQ); no others were reported.

Acadian Flycatcher: Reports in recent years suggest that this species is expanding its range northwestward; one was at WP 19-23 May (LE, DL), there were 4 at FF 22 May (JR) and singles were reported there through 28 May (JR, GR), and one was in a Papillion yard 29 May (PS photo).

Alder Flycatcher: Reports were as expected from the southeast: about 6 birds 21-28 May (m. ob.).

Willow Flycatcher: Routine reports.

Least Flycatcher: One was reported at FF 13 Apr (EB), a very early date; reports prior to 22 Apr are undocumented.

Cordilleran Flycatcher: The 4 reports 15-23 May in Sheridan and Scotts Bluff Cos (RSi, D&JP, AK), were likely of migrants, as they were from areas where breeding is not expected. A 5th report, of one calling at Soldier Creek Wilderness, Sioux Co, Co 29 May (KDy) may have been of a breeding bird.

Eastern Phoebe: One was building a nest in Clay Co 8 Apr (PD), rather early.

Say's Phoebe: Nest-building was underway early in nw Antelope Co 20 Apr (MB).

Great Crested Flycatcher: Routine reports.

Cassin's Kingbird: Routine reports.

Western Kingbird: One in Scotts Bluff Co 27 Apr (RSi) was rather early there, as was another at Brady 28 Apr (TJW). This species has a strange affinity for the eastern edge of Eppley Airfield in Omaha; perhaps the Missouri River is somewhat of a barrier. No fewer than 60 were there 27 May (DSt), up from the 21 there 1 May (JT). The 60 is in fact the 3rd-highest spring count on record for this species. See Eastern Kingbird.

Eastern Kingbird: Best count was only 35, at Eppley Airfield 27 May (DSt), palling in comparison to the 60 Western Kingbirds there the same day (DSt).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: Four singles were reported, all in the southeast: one at BOL 2 May (RSt), one in Jefferson Co 9 May (JW), one in Pawnee Co 22 May (ST fide JGJ), and one at Eppley Airfield with the plethora of Westerns and Easterns 27 May (DSt).

Northern Shrike: Last for the winter was one at Calamus Res 24 Mar (JSe), about on time. The only other reports were of 2 in Scotts Bluff Co 13 Mar (KD) and one in Morrill Co the same day (LJH).

Loggerhead Shrike: Routine reports.

White-eyed Vireo: There were 3 reports, which is more than usual. Singles, possibly the same bird, were at FF 2 May (PS) and 20 May (JR), and one was in Johnson Co 2 May (CNK). These are the 23rd-25th reports since 1981.

Bell's Vireo: Routine reports.

Yellow-throated Vireo: One at WP 24 Apr (MUS) was a bit early; earliest dates are in mid-Apr. Pushing the edge of the range were one at Verdigre 8 May (BFH), one at Hastings 21 May (PD), and one near Broken Bow 11 May (TH). Recent years have seen more such reports away from the Missouri Valley.

Plumbeous Vireo: One at Bridgeport 13 May (LJH) was a bit east of the usual migration corridor.

Blue-headed Vireo: Routine reports.

Warbling Vireo: Routine reports.

Philadelphia Vireo: The only reports of this uncommon migrant were of singles at ICSP 1 May (RSt) and in Dodge Co 3 May (GR).

Red-eyed Vireo: Routine reports.

Blue Jay: Routine reports.

Pinyon Jay: Hard to find during the breeding season, and harder to prove nesting, 2-3 were located along Corkscrew Road in Sioux Co 16 May, at an area they occupied in 2008 (WM, m. ob.). These birds were building a nest, which may have been a second attempt at that date (WM).

Black-billed Magpie: In a situation somewhat similar to that of the Black-capped Chickadee, numbers of this species declined significantly for a few years beginning around 2004, a decline generally attributed to West Nile Virus. Recently there have been signs of a slow recovery, mostly in the northeast part of the range. First sightings for a few years were made in Dakota Co (BFH), nw Antelope Co (MB), and in Madison Co (WF, DH). However, populations in the west may still be in decline; one observer (TJW) suggests that the loss of open riparian woodland ("We either have NO trees or all trees.") has degraded the preferred habitat for magpies in the west. They are still "scarce" in Scotts

- Bluff Co (AK), and the first for the year in sw Nebraska was not seen until May (TJW), prompting the observer to comment that "they are all but gone from sw Nebraska". Two in North Platte 7 May were the observer's first there in 2-3 years (VC).
- American Crow:** The 318 in Seward Co 22 Mar (CW) was a good count.
- Horned Lark:** Fledged juveniles were with adults in Dodge Co 19 Apr (D&JP); earliest fledging dates are in late Mar.
- Purple Martin:** Routine reports.
- Tree Swallow:** The 2nd-earliest on record were 2 at Jack Sinn 10 Mar (LE); previous modal early dates were 15, 17, 18 Mar.
- Violet-green Swallow:** Routine reports.
- Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** Three at FF 3 Apr (JR) were rather early; earliest dates are 30 Mar, 1, 2 Apr.
- Bank Swallow:** One in Lincoln 7 Apr (JMo) was 3rd-earliest on record.
- Cliff Swallow:** Routine reports.
- Barn Swallow:** Routine reports.
- Black-capped Chickadee:** The 35 at FF 3 Apr (RW) was an excellent count.
- Tufted Titmouse:** Routine reports.
- Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Nesting occurs in the current range in the northwest, along the Niobrara Valley, in the Nebraska National Forests at Halsey, and in Cherry Co. However, a pair was nest-building at PP 25 Apr (CNK) and at least one bird was still there 24 May (LE, JR, JC, SS).
- White-breasted Nuthatch:** At the edge of the Platte River Valley range, one taking food from a feeder into trees 13-14 May (JO) may have been breeding.
- Pygmy Nuthatch:** Routine reports.
- Brown Creeper:** At least one pair continues to breed at FF; a pair was carrying food 20 May (JR), and one was singing 23 May (JR).
- Rock Wren:** Two were at Ashfall Fossil Beds SHP, Antelope Co, 29 May, where one had arrived 5 May (MB). There is a single prior breeding record there, in 1992.
- Carolina Wren:** The winter of 2009-2010 was long and cold, putting immense pressure on this cold-sensitive species. Many observers noted that individuals in their yards survived into Jan or Feb but then disappeared; a rough estimate from observer comments is that at least 50% of the previously resident birds did not survive the winter. Nevertheless, there were survivors, generally those at residential feeders, and it seems that new recruits have appeared; one wintered in a Bellevue yard and had a mate by 28 Mar (CNK), and one in another Bellevue yard 13 Apr was the first heard all winter (EB). Birds disappeared from a Lincoln yard but one had returned by 22 Mar (JMo). On the other hand, former forest haunts were still unoccupied into Apr and May: FF 3 Apr-21 May (JR, L&BP, WRS et al), PRSP 21 Apr (JGJ), and ICSP (JMo) lacked birds. There were a few surprising reports, considering the winter and location: one was at Calamus Res during Mar (JSe), one was in Gosper Co 5 Apr (WF), one was in Hayes Co 14 May (TJW), and one was in Norfolk 27 May (MB).
- Bewick's Wren:** A singing bird was in a Wilsonville yard for a few days prior to 11 Apr (LO, details); it is only the 23rd record of the species since 1969.
- House Wren:** Earliest was one in Lancaster Co 11 Apr (RSt), rather early.

Winter (Pacific?) Wren: Surprising was one in Scotts Bluff Co 9 May (JAR); in light of the recent split of Pacific Wren it would be of interest to determine identity of such western reports.

Sedge Wren: Westerly were 2 in Antelope Co 23 May (DH).

Marsh Wren: Routine reports.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Although a few winter on occasion in the se, this winter would likely have precluded that. Two at WP 2 Mar (LE) thus may have been early arrivals.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Routine reports.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Three at FF 6 Apr (L&BP) tied the record early date. Arrival is later in the west, where the species has only recently become established; 4 were at Swanson Res 3 May (TJW) and one was in Scotts Bluff Co 13 May (AK).

Eastern Bluebird: Although some winter most years, the cold winter delayed spring arrivals; "first-of-year" for the observer were 4 in Omaha 7 Mar (JR).

Mountain Bluebird: Routine reports.

Townsend's Solitaire: A few linger into May in the west, but breeding is rare. Last reported were in Sioux and Dawes Cos 15-16 May (TH, RSi).

Veery: An excellent showing of 8 was reported, including 3 in the Panhandle, where western *Catharus fuscescens salicicola* is likely; none were identified as either subspecies however. The 3 westerly birds were singles at CLNWR 14 May (CG), in Box Butte Co 14 May (RSi), and in Dawes Co 16 May (RSi). Elsewhere, singles were at WP 5 May (DL), at Schramm 6 May (DSt), in Lancaster Co 6 May (RSt), in Buffalo Co 17 May (BN), where rare, and in FF 21 May (EB).

Gray-cheeked Thrush: Along with Veery, there were many more of this species than usual. About 15 were reported 8-21 May, all from the e RWB eastward, as expected (m. ob.).

Swainson's Thrush: Routine reports.

Hermit Thrush: Routine reports.

Wood Thrush: One was carrying nest material at ICSP 8 May (WRS, SG).

American Robin: This homeowner knows about bird-friendly yards: 4 nests were in the observer's yard in Scotts Bluff Co 10 May (KD).

Gray Catbird: One in Otoe Co 30 Mar (SQ) either returned early or wintered; the latter seems unlikely given the winter conditions.

Northern Mockingbird: There were 8 reports of 10 birds, earliest 11 Apr, all but two from se Nebraska (m. ob.). The exceptions were one in Custer Co 29 Apr (TH) and one far to the nw in ne Sioux Co 30 May (KDy). Wintering is rare, and arrival is in late Mar and Apr.

Brown Thrasher: Right on time for first arrivals in the east was one in Lancaster Co 6 Apr (TG); likewise one in se Lincoln Co 19 Apr (TJW) was on the early side there.

European Starling: Routine reports.

American Pipit: Routine reports.

Sprague's Pipit: The only report of this regular but hard to find migrant was of one at SCP 13 Apr (KP).

Cedar Waxwing: This species has a main spring migration peak in Apr and a minor one in late May, the latter possibly birds wintering farther south than the earlier migrants (see *Birds of Missouri*, Robbins and Easterla). This spring showed

this difference: 3 small flocks totaling 25 birds were at FF 28 May (ARy), while in se Lincoln Co cedar canyons a remarkable record high total aggregation of "thousands" of birds (12-15 groups of 300-500) was noted 19 Apr (TJW).

Golden-winged Warbler: Only one was reported, fewer than usual, at FF 13 May (JR).

Tennessee Warbler: This species is rare in the Panhandle, where there are about 40 records in all. This spring saw two reports: one at CLNWR 14 May (CG) and one or two in Sheridan Co 15-16 May (RSi, JWo). Westerly in addition were 2 at Brady 3 May (TJW) and another in Lincoln Co 22 May (TJW). Best count was a moderate 36 at WGP 22 May (JWH).

Orange-crowned Warbler: Routine reports.

Nashville Warbler: Only the 6th Panhandle report for this easterly migrant was one in Dawes Co 16 May (CNK). Another was westerly in Custer Co 17 May (LE).

Northern Parula: The 15th Panhandle report was of one at CLNWR 26 May (CG, photo). Tying the 2nd-highest count on record was the 17 at FF 29 Apr (JR).

Yellow Warbler: Rather early for westerly locations were singles at McCook 21 Apr (RBo) and in Custer Co 23 Apr (TH). First in the southeast were not found until 1 May, singles at 3 locations (TEL, RSt, LE).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: There was a better than usual showing of this species, with about 11 reported 8-23 May, all in the east (m. ob.).

Magnolia Warbler: Only 3 were reported, singles at WGP 21 May (NR, ARy) and 22 May (JWH), and in Sarpy Co 21 May (GJ).

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler: Easternmost was one in Custer Co 6 May (TH); there are a few records farther east.

Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler: One at WP 2 Mar (LE) and another at ADF 10 Mar (LF) probably wintered there. Best count reported was a moderate 100+ at Gering Cem 8 May (KD).

Black-throated Green Warbler: Four were reported, about the norm: singles were at Schramm 6 May (DSt), in Sarpy Co 8 May (fide CNK), and two were in Hormel Park, Dodge Co, 20 May (GR).

Hermit Warbler: The fortuitous residence of graduate student Cory Gregory at CLNWR continued to produce rarities, this time the state's second Hermit Warbler 21 May (CG, photo). (See also photo Mar *NBR*, page 9.)

Blackburnian Warbler: The nine or so reported were more than usual. As many as 4 were at WGP 15-21 May (JSt, NR, BF), 2 were in Lincoln 20 May (TEL), one was at Hastings 21 May (PD), and singles were at FF 21 May (EB) and 23 May (GR).

Yellow-throated Warbler: All reports were from the two known regular summer locations, FF and Neale Woods (Missouri River Ecology Trail), Washington Co. First at FF was 12 Apr (RS), rather early, and best count was an excellent 7 at FF on both 29 Apr and 1 May (JR). Record count is 10 at FF.

Pine Warbler: A surprising discovery at PP (maybe not so surprising- Pygmy Nuthatch?) was a singing male Pine Warbler 13 Apr (JMo), seen again the same day by local observers (DL, JC, SS). This bird continued singing through 23 May (DL). No evidence of breeding was reported, although 2 singing birds were reported in the period 16 Apr-1 May (KSc, LE, RE). This is only the 6th documented record for spring for this species. The occurrence brought to light a previous sighting in Nebraska City 14 Apr "several years ago" (JC, SS; no details).



Hermit Warbler at Crescent Lake NWR 21 May. Photo by Cory Gregory.

Palm Warbler: More than usual were reported, a total of about 15, most from the east as expected, 29 Apr-16 May (m. ob.). Westerly were singles in Custer Co 7 May (TH) and Dawes Co 16 May (RSi). Five were identified to subspecies: all were the western *Dendroica palmarum palmarum*, the expected taxon in Nebraska.

Bay-breasted Warbler: The only report of this rare spring migrant was of one at Hormel Park, Dodge Co, 31 May (GR), 3rd-latest on record.

Blackpoll Warbler: This statewide spring migrant was reported in normal numbers 8-22 May (m. ob.).

Cerulean Warbler: Only 2 were reported, both in FF 23 May, one at the same place as last year (JR, GR). This is a rare, edge-of-range species in Nebraska.

Black-and-white Warbler: Routine reports.

American Redstart: Routine reports.

Prothonotary Warbler: A surprise was one at SCP 21 Apr (KP), 5th-earliest on record and somewhat westerly. All other reports this spring were of the usual 1-2 singing birds at FF beginning 1 May (JR, m. ob.).

Worm-eating Warbler: There are very few recent reports of this rare casual spring overshoot; one was at WP 12 May (LE).

Ovenbird: Routine reports.

Northern Waterthrush: There were more reports than usual, a total of 24 birds statewide 29 Apr (JR) through 29 May (JR). The latter, in Omaha, was the 4th-latest spring migrant on record.

Louisiana Waterthrush: This was an excellent spring for this species; at least 17 birds were reported. Two at ICSP 4 Apr (JMo) were early, but earliest dates are

in late Mar. Most reports were from known summering locations, including FF, ICSP, and PRSP. Excellent counts of 7 at ICSP 8 May (WRS, SG) and 6 at PRSP 18 Apr (JC, SS) indicated the suitability of these two locations. A nest at PRSP was photographed (see March 2010 *NBR*, page 4) 16 and 21 May (GR, JC, ET); although there are several reports of adults feeding young, this is only the 3rd nest found since 1980, the others at FF. A little westerly was one in Johnson Co 2 May (CNK); there are few spring reports away from known summer locations.

Kentucky Warbler: None were reported, despite a search of regular locations at ICSP 8 May (WRS, SG).

Mourning Warbler: The fewer than usual reports were of singles at FF 13 May (JR) and 30 May (GR), and at WGP 19 May (JWH).

MacGillivray's Warbler: None were reported; this is a regular migrant in the west.

Common Yellowthroat: Routine reports.

Hooded Warbler: The 3 reports were encouraging for this rare casual spring migrant. Single singing males were at FF 13 May (JR) and WP 18 May (LE) and a female was at WP 20 May (JGJ).

Wilson's Warbler: Surprisingly, only 9 of this generally fairly common spring migrant were reported, all 8-28 May (m. ob.).

Canada Warbler: Only one was reported, down from recent years; it was at WGP 22 May (JWH).

Yellow-breasted Chat: Easternmost was one in Harlan Co (no date given; G&WH); there has been a small population in the area in recent years.

Summer Tanager: Numbers of this species continue to increase in its core Nebraska range and it is appearing more often away from this range. Unexpected locations were Loup Co, where 2 were photographed 3 May (LK), CLNWR 21 May (CG photo), and another in the Panhandle in Sheridan Co 29 May (BP). These are the 8th and 9th Panhandle records. Good numbers continue at ICSP, with 4 there 8 May (WRS, SG), and reports continue at FF, where the species probably is breeding, with 1-2 reported beginning 6 May (JR, fide CNK). PRSP hosted 1-2 on 15-16 May (MUs, JC, SS, KSc) and one was at Neale Woods 23 May (CNK). There were 3 reports from WP: a first year male 6 May (ET), and singles 9 May (LE) and 20 May (JGJ).

Scarlet Tanager: The 5 at FF 28 May (JR) was an excellent count, and somewhat out of range was one in Holt Co 9 May (WF); breeding occurs in the Niobrara River Valley west to Brown and Keya Paha Cos.

Western Tanager: Routine reports.

Green-tailed Towhee: The only report of this rare migrant was of one in Scottsbluff 13 May (RSi).

Spotted Towhee: One in Gage Co 8 May (JB) was tardy; most have left the east by May.

Eastern Towhee: Only the 2nd Custer Co record for the observer was a "pure-looking" bird 29 Mar (TH); this is westerly for this species and record early away from the southeast, where a few winter on occasion. Singles in Colfax Co 5 Apr (JJ), 28 Apr (LE) and 13 May (WF) were a bit west of the usual summer range for pure birds, as were singles in Holt Co 14 May (LE) and Dawson Co 25 May (WF).

Cassin's Sparrow: A late spring arriver, this species barely makes the spring report most years; two were singing at Agate Fossil Beds NM, Sioux Co, 30 May (TJW).

American Tree Sparrow: Departure was rather early; none were reported after the 2 at FF 8 Apr (GR). Latest dates are in May.

Chipping Sparrow: Earliest dates are in late Mar, but one in Lancaster Co 1-5 Mar (CS photo) was record early.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Routine reports.

Brewer's Sparrow: The only reports were of one in Banner Co 9 May (SMc) and 3 in sw Kimball Co 27 May (KDy); this species generally has to be targeted in its extreme w Nebraska sage habitat to be found.

Field Sparrow: Routine reports.

Vesper Sparrow: The 120 in Adams and Clay Cos 6 Apr (PD) is a record high spring count; fall high counts are much higher.

Lark Sparrow: Routine reports.

Lark Bunting: Routine reports.

Savannah Sparrow: Singles in Sarpy Co 22 May (JR) and in Custer Co 26 May (TH) were rather late for migrants; the few known breeding areas are in the north and west.

Grasshopper Sparrow: One in Banner Co 20 Apr (SMc) was the earliest Panhandle date on record by a week; spring arrival dates are about a month later there than in the east.

Baird's Sparrow: Clearly the most exciting news of the spring was the discovery 15 May by Tim Hajda and Wayne Mollhoff of up to 3 singing, apparently territorial, birds in extreme ne Sioux Co, near where some were found in May 2009 along Sugar Loaf Road. Luckily for attendees at the NOU Spring Meeting at nearby Chadron, many birders saw these birds through 16 May. (See photo Mar *NBR*, page 9.) One was in the same area 30 May (KDy). It will be interesting to see if the birds are still present in Jun; the 2009 birds could not be found in Jun. Strangely, another was singing in a field occupied also by Chestnut-collared Longspurs about 9 miles s of Harrison on Highway 29 on 16 May (TH).

Henslow's Sparrow: Like Brewer's Sparrow, Henslow's has to be searched for in its restricted habitat; the only report was of one at SCP 18 May (KP).

Le Conte's Sparrow: Earliest migrants arrive at the end of Mar, but one at Rowe Sanctuary, Buffalo Co, 13 Mar (IB) was one of only 3 earlier Mar records, all of which may have been of birds that wintered nearby or in n Kansas.

Nelson's Sparrow: None were reported. This is another limited-habitat species that has to be searched for; the few spring records are in late May.

Fox Sparrow: Good numbers, about 25, were reported 10 Mar (LE) through 11 Apr (NR), all in the east as expected. The several birds noted at BOL during the early winter were absent 4 Mar (LE), suggesting inability to survive the severe winter conditions.

Song Sparrow: An interesting sighting was of 40-50 at a marshy playa in Lincoln Co 3 Apr (TJW); this species occurs near water both in migration and when breeding.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Routine reports.

Swamp Sparrow: One at ADF 26 Mar (LE) was rather early; one at Schramm 6 Mar (RS) may have wintered in the area. There are only a few Mar reports prior to 20 Mar, as well as a few winter reports in the southeast.

White-throated Sparrow: Even in the south and east this is a rare bird in winter; one at a feeder in South Sioux City 3 Mar (BFH) may have been a survivor.

White-crowned Sparrow: This species is also a rare winterer in the south and west, usually at feeders; one was at the Rowe Sanctuary feeders, Buffalo Co, 7 Mar (JMo).

Harris's Sparrow: Routine reports.

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: Routine reports.

Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco: One in Dodge Co 11 May (RV) was tardy; there are a few early Jun dates but most leave in Apr.

Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco: Two forms are included here, Oregon (*Junco hyemalis montanus*) and Pink-sided (*J. h. mearnsi*). An Oregon in Custer Co 22 Apr (TH) was 3rd-latest on record; there are 2 later dates in Apr. A Pink-sided in Antelope Co 8 Apr (KK) was easterly.

Dark-eyed (Gray-headed) Junco: One hit a garage door s of Gering 12 Apr and stayed through 15 Apr (AK), the observer's first "for years". Most unexpected was one near North Platte 22 May (TJW), only the 8th record with any details. Occurrence is unpredictable, but mostly in winter in the west. These are large juncos, essentially like White-wingeds, but without wing bars and with a reddish "saddle".

McCown's Longspur: Routine reports

Lapland Longspur: Large numbers were reported in Mar: 6400 were estimated in Dixon Co 24 Mar (JJ), and "thousands" were in the e RWB 7-9 Mar (JGJ). High spring counts are in the 10,000 range. The 1200 in a "mono-specific flock" in Polk Co 8 Mar (WF) was a nice find. One in Custer Co 26 Apr (TH) was 3rd-latest on record.

Smith's Longspur: A photo taken at SCP 2 Apr (GW) was generally agreed to be of this species; see <http://www.ilbirds.com/index.php?topic=34735.0> for an interesting discussion of this difficult identification. This is only the 15th spring record of this elusive migrant.

Chestnut-collared Longspur: Routine reports.

Snow Bunting: Following good numbers during the winter, only one was reported, and that was on the first day of the spring period, in Madison Co 1 Mar (RiS). Most depart in late Feb-early Mar.

Northern Cardinal: One was reported from the western outpost in Scotts Bluff Co 22 May (AK). The 40 at SCP 7 Mar (ZC) was an excellent count.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: One in Morrill, Scotts Bluff Co, 13 May (ECT) was westerly; it is rare there in spring.

Black-headed Grosbeak: Routine reports.

Blue Grosbeak: Routine reports.

Lazuli Bunting: Easterly reports in recent years are fairly numerous; this year there were 3. Singles were at Geneva Cem 30 Apr (JGJ), rather early, at Friend 16 May (JPK), and in Dodge Co 19-20 May (fide RS). A hybrid female with wing bars was at FF 13 May (JR).

Indigo Bunting: Routine reports.



Smith's Longspur at Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co, 2 Apr 2010. Photo by Gordon Warrick.

Dickcissel: Arrival was about on time in the east, early May, but one at CLNWR 14 May (CG) was early for the west, where early dates are generally mid- to late May.

Bobolink: Arrival was rather early, with 3 in Lancaster Co 1 May (RSt) and one in Dodge Co 3 May (D&JP). There are only about 8 records for Apr.

Red-winged Blackbird: Flocks usually appear in Mar, although the 10,000 in Clay Co 6 Mar (RSt) was a little early for that number. The 16,000 in Lincoln Co 21 Mar (TJW, TH, CW) was more typical, but still an excellent count. A mixed flock of about 2250 containing about 35% females in Saunders Co 7 Mar (CNK) was a bit early for that number of females.

Eastern Meadowlark: One in Lincoln 10 Mar set an early date for a singing bird (RE). One in Scotts Bluff Co 1 Apr (RK) was early that far west, as was another at North Platte 7 Apr (TJW).

Western Meadowlark: Routine reports.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Routine reports.

Rusty Blackbird: Reports were encouraging, with about 135 reported 12 Mar-11 Apr, most as expected in the east (m. ob.). Best count was an excellent 30-40 in Washington Co 17 Mar (JR). A male with a large flock of Red-winged Blackbirds in Lincoln Co 21 Mar (TJW, TH, CW) was westerly; there are only about 8 Panhandle reports.

Brewer's Blackbird: Routine reports.

Common Grackle: Best count was a spring record 11,222 in Lancaster Co 31 Mar (LE).

Great-tailed Grackle: Tying the 4th-earliest date were 4 at Fairmont 1 Mar; 17 were there 4 Mar (JRi). There are few reports from the Sandhills, thus 2 at Atkinson 9 Apr (JGJ) were of interest.

Brown-headed Cowbird: Routine reports.

Orchard Oriole: One in Lancaster Co 18 Apr (KB) was the 6th-earliest on record.

Baltimore Oriole: Routine reports.

Bullock's Oriole: Easternmost was one in Hitchcock Co 14 May (TJW); this species is rare east of the Panhandle.

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch: None were reported; most depart by mid-Mar.

Purple Finch: Numbers were good for this species, with a total of at least 55 through 21 Apr (m. ob.). Westerly were 2-3 in Lincoln Co 3 and 15 Mar (TJW).

Cassin's Finch: None were reported; this species is erratic in winter.

House Finch: A pair with a single early fledgling were near North Platte 19 May (TJW).

Red Crossbill: Fledged young were being fed in Dawes Co 16 May (CNK). Strange happenings continued at PP with an apparent pair present; a female was seen 16 Apr (LE) and 17 Apr (RS, BG), and a male was observed 22 May (MUs) and 23 May (MB). There were no sightings of the two together, however. There are single old nest records for Douglas and Lancaster Cos. The male seen on 23 May was a "very large-billed bird" (MB); the breeding birds of nw Nebraska are large-billed Ponderosa Pine specialists (Groth Type 2, subspecies *Loxia curvirostra bentii*), but we have no doubt not heard the last word on Red Crossbill taxonomy.

White-winged Crossbill: A "dull male" in pines at the Fort Niobrara NWR Visitor Center, Cherry Co, 11 Apr was identified by a Colorado birder (MMi fide PD). This species is erratic and can turn up anywhere at any time.

Common Redpoll: The only report was of a flock of "well over 200" in Stanton Co 4 Mar (DW fide MB); this followed only 2 reports for fall and winter.

Pine Siskin: This species has a propensity to breed in early spring at wintering locations; one of 17 birds at Forest Lawn Cem, Omaha, was "singing strongly" 7 Mar. On 29 Apr 2 fledglings were seen following adults, and the male of another pair was flight singing (JR). Singing and chasing was taking place in Lincoln for a month or so prior to 21 Apr (JMo). One was still in a Dixon Co yard 29 May (JJ), rather late.

Lesser Goldfinch: That famous migrant trap, CLNWR, has hosted at least one Lesser Goldfinch each of the last 3 summers 25 May-12 Jun (2008-2010, CG); the 2010 sighting was 27 May (CG). Two were in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 31 May (KD). Reports of this species have dramatically increased beginning in 2008; prior to 2008 there were 11 records of 14 birds, and from 2008 to spring 2010 there have been 19 records of 48 birds.

American Goldfinch: Routine reports.

Evening Grosbeak: A rather amazing showing involving 28 birds at Camp Norwesca, Dawes Co, and 2 n of Hay Springs in Sheridan Co delighted NOU members 16 May (TH, D&JP, B&DW, m.ob.). This appears to be the first record of this species in Nebraska since a few apparently bred in the Crawford area in the early 1990s.

House Sparrow: Routine reports.