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Winter Field Report, December 2009 to February 2010

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WINTER FIELD REPORT, December 2009 to February 2010

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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

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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.