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SOUTH DAKOTA  
ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

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SOUTH  
BIRD



DAKOTA  
NOTES

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VOL. 45 JUNE 1993 NO. 2

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IN THIS ISSUE

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER by Melvin Bollinger .....	Cover
PRESIDENT'S PAGE .....	23
1992 REPORT OF THE RARE BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE .....	24
GENERAL NOTES—Third Documented State Nest Record of The Ruby-Throated Hummingbird at Pickerel Lake State Recreation Area; Golden Eagle Attacks Fox Squirrels; Abnormally Plumaged House Finch; Common Grackle Banded in Aberdeen Recovered in Arkansas; Philadelphia Vireos in Clay And Union Counties—Fall 1992; Whimbrels at Bear Butte Lake .....	28
BOOK REVIEWS .....	32
SEASONAL REPORTS .....	33
CHRISTMAS COUNTS .....	36

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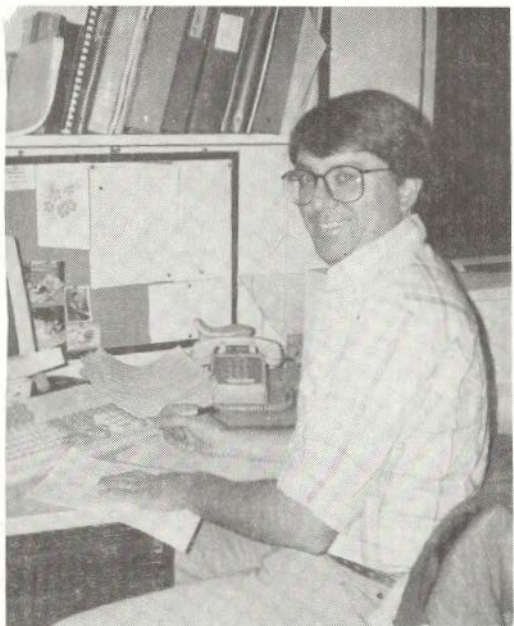
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# PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Look in any current birding magazine and you soon realize that birding has become a high-tech endeavor. Advertisements hype new spotting scopes, with nitrogen filled barrels, and binoculars with four-lens ocular systems (that provide excellent resolution), etc., etc. Computer software, which, at the touch of a key, generates life lists, country lists, state lists, county lists, backyard lists (tree lists?), and lists by year, month, week, day, hour, and minute. Software is also available to help you plan that next field trip. (Birders can also network their observations by a modem, high-tech bragging!) No longer does the birder have to listen to scratchy records to learn bird songs. Digital recordings on compact discs provide clean, clear sound.



This new technology, however, does not come cheaply. You almost need to win the lottery to afford this equipment.

Here's a shopping list for the high-tech South Dakota birder:

1. Field guide (preferably one with eastern and western species) .. \$19.00
2. State bird book ..... \$25.00
3. Binoculars (mid-range price) ..... \$250.00
4. Compact Discs to learn songs of eastern and western species . \$72.00
5. Compact disc player ..... \$250.00
6. Spotting scope and tripod (mid-range price) ..... \$400.00
7. A computer to keep lists (includes printer) .....\$1600.00
8. Birding software ..... \$100.00
9. Complete library of specialty guides  
(advanced birding, hawks, gulls, Bent's *Life Histories*, etc.) . \$500.00
10. Membership to state ornithological society (average) ..... \$15.00
11. Subscriptions to 2-3 other societies and/or popular  
birding magazines ..... \$125.00
- Total (tax not included): .....\$3356.00

Now for those with money leftover; four-wheel drive vehicles (to reach those out-of-the-way birding hot spots in comfort), cellular phone in vehicle (instant access to all rare bird hot-lines, or call in the rare bird you've just observed), also bird bath heaters, suet feeders, niger feeders, hummingbird feeders, oriole feeders, sunflower feeders, 35 mm camera with 2000 mm lens and motor drive, 8 mm VCR camera and player, bird-

er's buddy vest (carries 200+ field guides in easy access pockets), bird call and on and on and on..... Dennis Skadsen, Box 113, Grenville SD 57329.

## 1992 REPORT OF THE RARE BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

Paul F. Springer  
1610 Panorama Drive  
Arcata, CA 95521

The SDOU Rare Bird Records Committee met on 17 May 1992 at Sturgis and on 13 September 1992 at Aberdeen. The current members of the committee are Nathaniel Whitney (acting chairman), Paul Springer (secretary), Gilbert Blankespoor, Bruce Harris, and David Swanson. All members attended each meeting or voted in absentia.

A description of the committee's purpose and voting procedures is presented in the September 1988 issue of *South Dakota Bird Notes* (40:67-70). Observers of rare and unusual birds in South Dakota are urged to report them to any of the following: Records Committee members, compiler of the quarterly Season report in *Bird Notes*, or the editor of *Bird Notes*. A *Bird Observation Form* is available for this purpose. **Reports should be as detailed and complete as possible to provide the committee with the greatest amount of information on which to judge their acceptance and to preclude the need for requesting more information from the observer.**

A listing of those species for which descriptions are requested is given on the latest version of the checklist of South Dakota Birds. Species for which descriptions are no longer required are Barrow's Goldeneye in Rapid City, Whooping Crane, Three-toed and Black-backed woodpeckers in the Black Hills, Varied Thrush, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Newton Hills, and Le Conte's Sparrow. Observers who have had approval of a previous report of a species on the review list need not submit a descriptive report for further observations of the same species.

Observers are asked to submit descriptive reports of any species that are rare or unusual at a particular season or location within the state. Persons whose records are accepted (Classes 1 and 2) are encouraged to publish them in *Bird Notes*. Citations are given for those records listed in this report that have been published.

Following are the results of the committee's actions since the previous report in the June 1992 issue of *Bird Notes*. The numbers in parentheses within a species' listing indicate the committee's vote. If not stated, the vote was unanimous (5-0), or 4-0 if the observer was a committee member. The committee emphasizes that a rating of Class 3 or 4 does not imply any personal criticism of the observer. Rather, these classes simply indicate that the committee did not find the description complete enough to be entirely convincing.

### **CLASS 1 (Accepted — Specimen, photograph, or sound recording).**

Clark's Grebe. 27 July 1991, 4 in channel between Lake Traverse and Mud Lake, Roberts Co., photographed, Kim Eckert and Micki Buer.

King Rail. 30-31 May 1992, 1 below Gavin's Point Dam, Yankton Co., photographed, Rose Van Sickle.  
 Sabine's Gull. 20, 22, 24 September 1991, 1 at Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge, Bennett Co., photographed, Barry Jones.  
 Sabine's Gull. 4-6 October 1991, 2 below Oahe Dam, Stanley Co., photographed, Bruce Harris.  
 Rufous Hummingbird. 31 August-3 September 1991, 1 at Bowdle, Edmunds Co., MyRon Zimmer.  
 Mountain Chickadee. Mid November 1990-mid January 1991. 1 near Hot Springs, Fall River Co., photographed, Kathleen Anderson.  
 Carolina Wren. 18 August 1992, 1 near Vermillion, Clay Co., photographed, Kurt Dean (SDBN 45:5).  
 Summer Tanager. 16-17 May 1992, 1 near Belle Fourche, Butte Co., photographed, Alice Shaykett.  
 Green-tailed Towhee. 12-13 May 1992, 1 near Belle Fourche, Butte Co., photographed, Alice Shaykett.  
 Sharp-tailed Sparrow. 6 July 1991, 1 near Leola, McPherson Co., 1 photographed, J. David Williams.

**CLASS 2 (Accepted — Satisfactory written description).**

Pacific Loon. 16 October 1991, 1 near Arlington, Brookings Co., Jeffrey and Deanna Palmer.  
 Clark's Grebe. 24 and 30 May 1987, 1-2 at Bear Butte Lake, Meade Co., Jocelyn Baker.  
 Clark's Grebe. 15 November 1987, 1 at Bear Butte Lake, Meade Co., Nathaniel Whitney.  
 Clark's Grebe. 12 July 1988, 1 at Belle Fourche Reservoir, Butte Co., Richard Peterson.  
 Yellow-Crowned Night-Heron. 14 July 1989, 2 at Reynold's Slough Game Production Area, Lake Co., Dan Reinking.  
 American Black Duck. 21 January 1989, 1 near Brookings, Brookings Co., Kurt Forman (4 = Class 2, 1 = Class 3).  
 Surf Scoter. 26 October 1990, 1 at Sodak Park Resort, Big Stone Lake, Roberts Co., Bruce Harris.  
 Barrow's Goldeneye. 8 April 1984, 1 near Clear Lake, Deuel Co., Bruce Harris.  
 Barrow's Goldeneye. 16 December 1990, 1 below Oahe Dam, Stanley Co., Richard McEntaffer.  
 Whooping Crane. 6 November 1989, 3 at Stone Lake, Sully Co., Todd Frerichs.  
 Whimbrel. 28 May 1990, 1 at Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Brown Co., Floramay Ann Miller.  
 Whimbrel. 28 May 1991, 1 at Milwaukee Lake, Lake Co., Stephen Dinsmore.  
 Black-legged Kittiwake. 1 December 1991, 1 below Gavin's Point Dam, Yankton Co., Steve Van Sickle.  
 Barred Owl. 14 January 1988, 1 at Oakwood Lakes State Park, Brookings Co., Dan Reinking.  
 Barred Owl. 13 January 1989, Kamp Game Production Area, Brookings Co., Dan Reinking.  
 Barred Owl. 10 September 1989 and 5 June 1990, 1 at Sioux Falls, Minnehaha Co., Augie Hoeger.

- Barred Owl. 7 April 1992, 1 or 2 near Yankton, Yankton Co., Richard Peterson.
- Barred Owl. 27 August 1992, 1 near Elk Point, Union Co., David Swanson.
- Rufous Hummingbird. 17 August 1986, 1 at Rapid City, Pennington Co., Nathaniel Whitney.
- Rufous Hummingbird. 2 August 1988, 1 at Rapid City, Pennington Co., Nathaniel Whitney.
- Pileated Woodpecker. 18 April 1991, 1 near Wentworth, Lake Co., Tom Tornow.
- Alder Flycatcher. 31 May 1986, 1 at Sodak Park Resort, Blue Stone Lake, Roberts Co.; 1 June 1986, 1 at North Drywood Lake, Roberts Co.; 29 May 1987, 25 and 29 May 1990, 24 May 1991; 1-2 at Clear Lake, Deuel Co., Bruce Harris.
- Cassin's Kingbird. 13 August 1991, 1 near Spring Creek Day School, Todd Co., Bruce Harris.
- Carolina Wren, 30 August-8 September 1992, 1 at Vermillion, Clay Co., David Swanson.
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. 26 May 1992, 1 near Hitchcock, Spink Co., Paul Springer.
- Varied Thrush. 18 September 1987, 1 at Sioux Falls, Minnehaha Co., Augie Hoeger.
- Varied Thrush. 2 January 1988, 1 at Gary, Deuel Co., Bruce Harris.
- Varied Thrush. 14-20 October 1991, 1 at Kadoka, Jackson Co., Ken Graupmann.
- Loggerhead Shrike. 21 December 1986, 1 near Fort Pierre, Stanley Co., Floramay Ann Miller.
- Yellow-throated Vireo. 8 June 1990, 1 at Philip, Haakon Co., R. V. Summerside.
- Philadelphia Vireo. 20 August and 4 September 1991, 1 at Sioux Falls, Minnehaha Co., Augie Hoeger.
- Blue-winged Warbler. 17 May 1990, 1 at Brookings Co., Dan Reinking.
- Brewster's Warbler. 10 May 1992, 1 at Sioux Falls, Minnehaha Co., Augie Hoeger.
- Palm Warbler. 8 September 1991, 1 at Badlands National Park, Pennington Co., Barry Jones.
- Cerulean Warbler. 19, 20, 27 June 1990, 1 at Sodak Park Resort, Big Stone Lake, Roberts Co., Bruce Harris.
- Louisiana Waterthrush. 18 May 1990, 1 at Sioux Falls, Minnehaha Co., Augie Hoeger.
- Kentucky Warbler. 21 May-14 June 1992, 1 at Sioux Falls, Minnehaha Co., Augie Hoeger.
- Hooded Warbler. 20 May 1992, 1 at Union County State Park, Union Co., David Swanson, SDBN 44:63-64.
- Le Conte's Sparrow. 30 September 1988, 8 at Lone Tree Lake; 2 October 1988, 2 at Clear Lake; Deuel Co., Bruce Harris.
- Le Conte's Sparrow. 6 June 1989, 2 at Troy, Grant Co., Dan Reinking.
- Le Conte's Sparrow. 16 June 1990, 1 near Hurley, Turner Co., Jon Little.
- Le Conte's Sparrow. 9 September 1991, 1 at Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge, Bennett Co., Barry Jones.

Sharp-tailed Sparrow. 6 September 1991, 1 at Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge, Bennett Co., Bary Jones.

Sharp-tailed Sparrow. 19 June 1992, 5 near Leola, McPherson Co., Paul Springer.

McCown's Longspur. 8 October 1992, 200 near Smithwick, Fall River Co., Richard Peterson.

Eastern Meadowlark. 3, 4, 18 July 1992, 1 at Union County State Park, Union Co., Jon Little.

**CLASS 3 (Not accepted -- Identification possibly correct but description not completely convincing).**

Whooping Crane. 14 April 1991, 6 near Aberdeen, Brown Co., (2 = Class 2, 3 = Class 3). Observer was not entirely certain of identification because of distance from the birds.

Rufous Hummingbird. 26 August and 8 September 1988, 1 at Custer, Custer Co. (1 = Class 2, 4 = Class 3). Possibility of female Broad-tailed Hummingbird, which is similarly colored, not ruled out.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. 30 November-1 December 1991, 1 at Pierre, Hughes Co. (2 = Class 2, 3 = Class 3). Immature bird. Possibility of Red-naped Sapsucker not ruled out.

Le Conte's Sparrow. 12 July 1989, several at Pott's Dam, Potter Co., and at Stone Lake, Sully Co. (1 = Class 2, 5 = Class 3). Possibility of Grasshopper Sparrow not ruled out, and description of song fit that species better than Le Conte's Sparrow. Several other observers subsequently surveyed these areas for one or more years without observing this species but did observe a number of Grasshopper Sparrows which the original observer had not reported at Stone Lake.

**CLASS 4 (Not accepted — Identification probably inaccurate).**

Chipping Sparrow. 18 December 1988, 2 birds; 17 December 1989, 8 birds; 16 December 1990, 6 birds; Pierre, Hughes Co. (1 = Class 2, 1 = Class 3, 3 = Class 4). Males were described as having a bright rust cap which is not present in winter birds and which could fit an American Tree Sparrow. Numbers reported are unusual inasmuch as there is only one accepted winter record of the Chipping Sparrow in the state. Species usually winters north only to Texas and Louisiana.

**SUBMITTED FOR CONSIDERATION.**

Cattle Egret. 25-26 May 1992, 1 at Belle Fourche, Butte Co.

Black-crowned Night-Heron. 7 June 1987, 1 at Belle Fourche, Butte Co.

Eurasian Wigeon. 14 and 21 June 1992, pair near Aberdeen, Brown Co.

Barrow's Goldeneye. 10 November 1988, 1 near Arlington, Kingsbury Co.

Black-necked Stilt. 16 May 1992, 1 near Sturgis, Meade Co.

Iceland Gull. 10 November and 1 December 1991, 1 at Gavin's Point Dam, Yankton Co.

Northern Three-toed Woodpecker. 2 July 1992, 1 near Aberdeen, Brown Co.

Alder Flycatcher. 15 May 1991, 1 near Lake Preston, Kingsbury Co.

Cordilleran Flycatcher. 13 September 1992, 1 at Aberdeen, Brown Co.

Carolina Wren. 6 and 9 March 1992, pair at Aberdeen, Brown Co.

Carolina Wren. 19 December 1992, 1 near Sioux Falls, Minnehaha Co.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. 13 September 1989, pair at Sioux Falls, Minnehaha Co.

Blue-winged Warbler. 11 May 1992, 2 at Aberdeen, Brown Co.  
 Townsend's Warbler. 30 October 1992, 1 at Aberdeen, Brown Co.  
 Pine Warbler. 16 September 1990, 1 at Badlands National Park, Jackson Co.  
 Palm Warbler. 2-3 May 1992, 3 near Aberdeen, Brown Co.  
 Worm-eating Warbler. 30 April 1992, 1 near Aberdeen, Brown Co.  
 Hooded Warbler. 23 May 1992, 1 near Aberdeen, Brown Co.  
 Summer Tanager. 20 May 1988, 1 at Sioux Falls, Minnehaha Co.  
 Western Tanager. 2 May 1992, 1 at Aberdeen, Brown Co.  
 Chipping Sparrow. 18 December 1991, 1 near Hecla, Brown Co.  
 Sharp-tailed Sparrow. 11, 12, 14 July 1992, Spring Lake, Walworth Co.  
 Field Sparrow. 29 February 1992, 1 at Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Brown Co.  
 Lark Sparrow. 18 December 1988, 1 at Pierre, Hughes Co.  
 Hoary Redpoll. 28 December 1992, 35-40 at Mina Lake, Brown Co.  
 Eastern Meadowlark. 14 June 1990, 1 near Blunt, Hughes Co.



## GENERAL NOTES

**THIRD DOCUMENTED STATE NEST RECORD OF THE RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD AT PICKEREL LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA.** The Ruby-throated Hummingbird is a rare breeder in extreme Northeastern South Dakota, and possibly in Southeastern South Dakota where its status is uncertain (SDOU 1991). Harris published two nesting observations, SDBN 39:66-67, and in Seasons, SDBN 40:97-99. Both observations are of females on nests at Sodak Park, located along the west shore of Big Stone Lake in Roberts Co.

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are seen from June through July in many areas of Northeastern South Dakota. Recent observations are from Buffalo Lake (in Marshall County), Pickerel Lake and Waubay National Wildlife Refuge (in Day County). Sodak Park, Hartford Beach State Park, and Sica Hollow (in Roberts County). Cabin owners report that hummingbirds commonly frequent nectar feeders from May through August on Pickerel Lake. A resort owner on Buffalo Lake reported hummingbirds as being common during the summer at her feeder.

In spring 1992, I placed a nectar feeder in my yard at Pickerel Lake State Recreation Area. Beginning the first week of June, a pair of hummingbirds began frequenting the nectar feeder. I did not see the male and female drinking from the feeder together. The female regularly left the feeder and flew towards a creek about 250 feet east of the feeder. I thought the female might be nesting along the creek. Hummingbirds normally construct their nests over brooks (Johnsgard 1983). Attempts to locate a nest along the creek were unsuccessful.

On 25 June, between 8 and 9 PM, the pair displayed courtship behavior in my yard. The male performed what Stokes (1989) describes as a pendulum-arc-flight. The male flew back and forth above the female, which perched near the ground on a large blade of grass. The male began



the flight four to five feet above ground level on one side of the female. Near the female, he dropped to within inches above her head. Leaving the female, he again gained an altitude of four to five feet, hover for several seconds, then repeat the procedure from the opposite direction. This display continued for several minutes. The male continually gave several short chirps during these flights.

I observed the male on two more dates, 29 and 30 June. No further observations of male hummingbirds occurred until 10 August. On this date I saw a male, which I believed to be a migrant. Males usually leave after copulation, taking no part in nest activity (Harrison 1979).

On 23 August, I found an unused nest located in a Green Ash growing on the creek bank. A horizontal branch held the nest five feet above ground level and 10 feet above the creek bed. The hummingbird built the nest using cottonwood down covered with lichens. The nest was attached to the branch with spider silk. The nest measured 45 mm in diameter and 33 mm in height. The nest appeared damaged and unused, possibly predated or more likely damaged during heavy rains before this date.

I obtained further breeding evidence on 29 August, catching a female in a mist net set up in my yard. The female had a brood patch, evidence that she was still incubating eggs or brooding nestlings.

Between 26 and 29 August, no hummingbirds were seen at the feeder. A late bloom of Spotted Jewelweed (*impatiens biflora*) possibly provided enough natural nectar for hummingbirds. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were last seen at the feeder on 30 August.

#### Literature Cited

- Harrison, H. H. 1979. A Field Guide to Western Birds' Nests. Houghton Mifflin Co. 279 pp.  
Johnsgard, P.A. 1983. The Hummingbirds of North America. Smithsonian Institution Press. 303 pp.  
South Dakota Ornithologists' Union. 1991. The Birds of South Dakota. 2nd ed. NSU Press. 411 pp.  
Stokes, D. W. and L. Q. 1989. A Guide to Bird Behavior, Volume 3. Little, Brown and Co. 397 pp.

Dennis Skadsen RR Box 113 Grenville, SD 57239.

**GOLDEN EAGLE ATTACKS FOX SQUIRRELS.** A friend of mine and I were traversing back roads west of Aberdeen, South Dakota, when we spotted a large Golden Eagle on top of a tall telephone pole. The area was open, with no trees within a quarter of a mile in all directions. I told my friend that this shy bird would not let us get very close, so you can imagine how surprised we were when we drove right up to the large bird.

We stopped to get a good look at the bird and soon discovered why we had not spooked it. Two squirrels were trapped on the pole. The eagle was engrossed with the problem of how to get its talons around one of the mammals. The bird repeatedly left its perch, flew out into the nearby barren fields, and then swooped back towards the pole, to spook the squirrels off their isolated sanctuary. After about 10 or 15 minutes of futile maneuvering, the eagle gave up and went searching for a more cooperative quarry. What saved the squirrels was that they were agile enough to move around the pole more quickly than the large and cumbersome raptor. *Jerry Stanford, 108 15th Ave SE, Aberdeen SD 57401.*

SOUTH DAKOTA BIRD NOTES 45(2): 29

JUNE 1993

**ABNORMALLY PLUMAGED HOUSE FINCH.** On 31 March 1993, a yellow-orange House Finch joined a group of about a dozen that had been at my feeders throughout the winter. At first glance, the coloration was about the same as the yellow of a goldfinch or Evening Grosbeak, except in being more orange.

The odd bird stayed only slightly over a week. It was readily accepted by the rest of the finch flock, although it appeared to be more aggressive than the others. Various field guides mention the existence of orange variants of this species, but I do not know how often they occur, and I am unaware of their being previously reported from South Dakota. *Jerry Stanford, 108 15th Ave SE, Aberdeen SD 57401.*

**COMMON GRACKLE BANDED IN ABERDEEN RECOVERED IN ARKANSAS.**

A Common Grackle that I banded in Aberdeen, SD, on 23 June 1992 was recovered in Montrose, AR, on 17 February 1993. The bird (band 1043-43680), was an adult female. Many of our grackle banding recoveries are from Arkansas (see SDOU, 1991, *The Birds of South Dakota*), but a subsequent season recovery of a bird banded in South Dakota is of interest. *Dan Tallman, Northern State University, Aberdeen SD 57401.*



**PHILADELPHIA VIREOS IN CLAY AND UNION COUNTIES—FALL 1992.**

While birding at Union County State Park on 21 September at approximately 10 AM, Swanson and Liknes observed a Philadelphia Vireo in a clump of deciduous trees at the crest of the highest hill in the park. This bird was foraging in the clump with one Warbling Vireo, three Red-eyed Vireos and a Yellow Warbler. The Philadelphia Vireo had olive upperparts, merging to an olive-gray crown. The wings were also uniformly olive and without wingbars. The crown was darker olive-gray than the light grayish crown of the nearby Warbling Vireo. A dark gray stripe passed from the dark grayish lores, through the eye, to the nape, where it merged with the olive upperparts. This eye stripe gave the Philadelphia Vireo a more contrasting facial pattern than the Warbling Vireo. The underparts showed a great deal of yellow and the yellow was brightest on the throat and upper breast, a feature that separates the Philadelphia Vireo from yellowish, fall Warbling Vireos (Kaufman, 1990. *A Field Guide to Advanced Birding*. Houghton-Mifflin, Boston). The chin at the base of

the bill was whitish, but this color changed abruptly to a bright yellow throat. The yellow of the throat and breast extended onto the sides and upper belly, but was not as bright there, and faded to whitish on the flanks, lower belly, and undertail coverts. The legs were dark gray and the bill was heavy and grayish. The heavy bill separates this bird from the similar Tennessee Warbler. On 3 October at 0920, Swanson and Dean banded a second Philadelphia Vireo at Myron Grove Lake Access, Clay Co. Photographs were obtained at the time of banding. The appearance of this bird was very similar to the Philadelphia Vireo of 21 September, as it also demonstrated the prominent facial pattern and the identical distribution of yellow on the underparts. Measurements of this bird were as follows: Unflattened wing chord = 65.5 mm, Tarsus = 19.7 mm, Tail = 45.5 mm. *The Birds of South Dakota* (SDOU, 1991, NSU Press, Aberdeen) lists the Philadelphia Vireo as an uncommon migrant East River and Stephens et al. (1955, *The Birds of Union County, South Dakota*, Occ. Papers of the Nebr. Ornith. Union, No. 1) do not list the Philadelphia Vireo for Union County. These reports have been reviewed and accepted by the SDOU Rare Bird Records Committee. David Swanson, Eric Liknes, and Kurt Dean, Department of Biology, Univ. of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD 57069-2390.

**WHIMBRELS AT BEAR BUTTE LAKE.** On 17 May 1992, at approximately 1030, we found seven Whimbrels foraging in a loose flock on the north shore of Bear Butte Lake, Meade Co. We observed the birds for about 15 minutes from about 100 meters. The light was good, with the sun overhead and at our backs. It was immediately apparent that these were large shorebirds, with long and noticeably down-curved bills (about twice as long as the head). The legs were also long and dark gray. The overall body color was grayish-brown and the head was distinctly marked with black-and-white stripes. The pattern of stripes on the head was as follows: a dark stripe from the base of the bill through the eye, a white superciliary stripe, and a pair of dark stripes bordering a median white crown stripe. The body size of these birds was about equal to that of nearby Blue-winged Teal and about twice as big as nearby Killdeer. These birds were distinguished from Long-billed Curlew by their smaller size, shorter, down-curved bills, gray-brown, rather than buffy brown, body color and distinct black-and-white striping on the head. The remote possibility of Eskimo Curlew was eliminated by the larger size of these birds, their longer bills, and their distinct head stripes. *The Birds of South Dakota* (SDOU 1991) lists the Whimbrel as a rare spring migrant statewide. This record has been reviewed and accepted by the South Dakota Rare Bird Records Committee. David Swanson and Kurt Dean, Dept. of Biology, Univ. of South Dakota, Vermillion 57069 and Steve Van Sickle, 305 E. 16th St., Yankton 57078.



## BOOK REVIEWS

**A GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF NEPAL.**—Carol and Tim Inskipp. 1991. Smithsonian Institution Press: Washington DC, 400 pp. Hardbound \$55.00.

This volume summarizes the known distribution of the 834 birds recorded in Nepal. Since the first edition, the authors have recorded 14 new species, and added 3000 new distribution records to their database.

The book begins with background information on the country's varied topography, climate, and vegetation. The climate ranges from tropical in the lowlands, to Arctic in the high Himalayas. Nepal is best known for having eight of the highest mountains in the world, including Mount Everest. Further chapters provide information on bird distribution, conservation, migration, history of ornithology in Nepal, and bird-watching areas.

A small portion of the book, about 54 pages, covers species identification. Several groups are described and illustrated, including raptors, shorebirds, gulls, and passerines. Unfortunately, only black-and-white ink drawings illustrate these birds except for eight color plates illustrating rosefinches, buntings and five groups of warblers. The quality of these color plates ranges from good to poor. The warbler plates are rather stiff. The plate portraying buntings is more lifelike. The range in quality might be expected, since four artists were involved in the project. The black-and-white drawings include in-flight views of the underparts of several raptors, snipes and woodcocks, wing profiles of raptors, and in-flight portraits of several gulls.

The information provided on species in this section includes brief descriptions of plumage and distinguishing field marks. Also given are songs and vocalizations of a few sandpipers, all the owls described, and many passerine species. These data are lacking for the remaining birds described in the book.

The bulk of this volume is the species accounts. Most, but not all, accounts contain a distribution map, period of occurrence bar, and altitude bar. Occasionally, a black-and-white pen drawing of the bird is included. The text denotes who first recorded the species, abundance, seasonal status, habitat, and range. The distribution maps are divided into squares based on geographic coordinates. Each square is about 56 km<sup>2</sup>. Symbols placed in each square indicate the species' status's. An extensive bibliography lists 819 references used in the book.

From information provided in this book, the reader discovers Nepal is not an easily traveled country. Many of the birding areas listed are accessible only by several days of trekking (walking). Some areas are forbidden or restricted to foreigners, and accommodations and food present further problems in one of the world's poorest countries.

This volume works mainly as a bird-finding guide and distribution atlas. Someone unfamiliar with identifying birds in Nepal should find another volume that concentrates on identification. However, the book serves as an important resource for conservationists concerned with pre-

servicing Nepal's natural resources. Like much of the world, Nepal is suffering from destruction and loss of native habitats. Nearly all the wetlands in the eastern half of the country have been drained for agricultural uses. Native lowland grasslands are gone except those protected in nature preserves. Nepal's forests are disappearing at an alarming rate, and seventy-seven percent of Nepal's breeding birds depend on these forests. *Dennis Skadsen RR Box 113 Grenville, SD.*



## SEASONAL REPORTS

### 1992-93 WINTER SEASON REPORT

Compiled by Dennis Skadsen  
RR Box 113  
Grenville, SD

This winter season was another sleeper! Very few winter finches were observed, Pine Siskins being the most numerous species. The northeast corner of the state experienced an invasion of Northern Goshawks. Goshawks were also reported as far south as Lake and Minnehaha counties. Snowy Owls also invaded the northeast counties. Raptors were quite numerous, with 14 species reported, including two Gyrfalcons observed in Stanley Co.

Rare birds for the period included East River observations of Townsend's Solitaires in Roberts Co., and Varied Thrushes in Brown and Roberts counties. Also reported was a rare wintering Loggerhead Shrike in Pennington Co., a Fox Sparrow in Brookings Co., and a Swamp Sparrow in Fall River Co.

The open, snowless winters of the past ended in 1992. The northeast corner of the state had 100% snow cover from 1 November through the end of the reporting period. The entire state received numerous snowfalls during the period. Most of this precipitation came in gentle vertical snowfalls, not the high velocity horizontal blizzards typical of South Dakota.

Observers cited: Dave Bartling (dB); Todd Bassett (TB); Les Baylor (LB); Barbara Bernstein (BB); Dan Brady (DB); Ken Cameron (KC); Charley Cimburek (CC); Connie Dean (CD); Kurt Dean (KD); Dennis Evenson (DE); Ardell Gauger (AG); Ken Graupmann (KG); Maggie Hachmeister (MH); Bruce K. Harris (BKH); Tom Hays (TH); Jan A. Kieckhefer (JAK); Jon R. Kieckhefer (JRK); Robert W. Kieckhefer (RWK); Lester R. Lauritzen (LRL); Eric Liknes (EL); Jon Little (JL); Michael M. Melius (MMM); Ernest E. Miller (EEM); Lance Nielson (LN); Jeffrey S. Palmer (JSP); Marge J. Parker (MJP); Juanita L. Peterson (JLP); Richard A. Peterson (RAP); D. George Prisbe (DGP); Rex Riis (RR); Bud & Alice Shaykett (B&AS); Lew Shelsta (LS); Dennis R. Skadsen (DRS); Mark S. Skadsen (MSS); Mike Speiser (MS); Jerry C. Stanford (JCS); Dave Swanson (DS); Lisa Swanson (LS); Dan Tallman (DAT); Steve Van Sickle

(SVS); Nathaniel R. Whitney (NRW); J. David Williams (JDW); MyRon Zimmer (MZ).

Abbreviations used: LHSP—Lake Herman State Park, Lake Co.; PLSRA—Pickerel Lake State Recreation Area, Day Co.; SLNWR—Sand Lake National Wildlife Area, Brown Co.; WNWR—Waubay National Wildlife Refuge, Day Co.

Pied-billed Grebe - 5 December, Haakon Co. (RAP, JLP). 2 January, Fall River Co. (JSP).

Ross' Goose - 30 January, Brookings Co. (JSP).

Green-winged Teal - 17 February, Canyon Lake, Pennington Co., 3 (NRW).

American Black Duck - 2 January and 17 February, Lake Yankton Co. (SVS). 6 January, Lake Yankton, Yankton Co., 2 (DS, KD).

Lesser Scaup - 2 January, Minnehaha Co. (JL).

Oldsquaw - 8, 15 December, Missouri River, Yankton Co. (SVS).

Barrow's Goldeneye - 7 January, 1, 20 February, Canyon Lake, Pennington Co. (NRW).

Hooded Merganser - 5 December, Hughes Co. (BKH). 1 February, Canyon Lake, Pennington Co. (NRW).

Common Merganser - 3 January, Minnehaha Co. (JL).

Red-breasted Merganser - 16 January, Missouri River, Charles Mix Co., 3 (BKH).

Bald Eagle - Reported from Brown (JCS) (SLNWR), Buffalo (JDW), Charles Mix (BKH), Day (WNWR), Jackson (KG), Pennington (NRW) (EEM), Roberts (TB), and Yankton (JSP) counties.

Northern Harrier - Reported from Brown (JCS), Jones (JSP), Spink (BKH), Stanley (RAP, JLP), Sully (BKH), and Turner (LRL) counties.

Sharp-shinned Hawk - 21 December, Yankton Co. (SVS). 4 January, Roberts Co. (LN). 20 February, Custer Co. (MJP). Also reported from Minnehaha Co. (MSS).

Cooper's Hawk - 25 February, Day Co. (JCS).

Northern Goshawk - All period, PLSRA (DRS). 8 December, Roberts Co., 2 (BKH). 12 December, Roberts Co. (BKH, MSS). 12 December and 16 January, LHSP (JSP). 29 January, Codington Co., 4 (BKH). 2 February, WNWR (WNWR). 23 February, Minnehaha Co. (MSS).

Red-tailed Hawk - Reported from Brown (JCS), Charles Mix (DB), Gregory (RAP, JLP), and Minnehaha (JL) counties.

Ferruginous Hawk - 4 December, Hughes Co. (BKH). 30 January, Stanley Co. (RAP, JLP). 2 January, Pennington Co. (JSP).

Rough-legged Hawk - Reported from Aurora (DB), Brown (JCS), Brule and Buffalo (DB), Charles Mix (DB) (BKH), Custer (MJP) (JSP), Day (WNWR), Hand (BKH), Jackson (KG), Meade (EEM), Pennington (MMM) (NRW), Roberts (BKH), and Stanley (RAP, JLP) counties.

Golden Eagle - Reported from Brown (JCS) (SLNWR), Custer (MJP), Hand and Hyde (BKH), Jackson (KG), Meade (EEM), and Stanley-2 (RAP, JLP) counties.

Merlin - 7 December, Spink Co. and 27 February, Brown Co. (JCS), 16 December, Tripp Co. (JDW). 30 January, Stanley Co. (RAP, JLP). 7 February, Jackson Co. (KG). Also reported from Minnehaha Co. (MSS).

Peregrine Falcon - 6 December, Yankton Co. (DS, KD). 7 December, Yankton Co. (SVS), 14 February, Pennington Co. (MMM, MS).

Gyrfalcon - 12 December, Stanley Co., 2 (RAP, JLP).

Prairie Falcon - 4 December, Beadle Co., 6 December, Sully, 2 and Hyde Co., 1 January, Deuel Co. (BKH). 16 December, Charles Mix Co., 17 December, Aurora Co., 2, 14 January, Jerauld Co., and 31 January, Clay Co. (DB). 19 December, Jackson Co. (NRW). 2 January, Custer Co. (JSP). 25 January, Pennington Co., and 30 January, Stanley Co. (RAP, JLP). 6, 30 January, Yankton Co. (DS, KD, EL).

- Sharp-tailed Grouse - 9 February, Day Co., 6 (DRS).  
 American Coot - 25 January, Canyon Lake, Pennington Co. (RAP, JLP).  
 Killdeer - 27 December, Pennington Co. (NRW).  
 Common Snipe - 3 January, Lawrence Co. (JSP).  
 Franklin's Gull - 5 December, Oahe Dam, Hughes Co. (BKH).  
 California Gull - 5 December, Oahe Dam, Hughes Co., first ever winter season observation (BKH).  
 Thayer's Gull - 5 December, Oahe Dam, Hughes Co. (BKH).  
 Mourning Dove - 11 December, WNWR (WNWR). 15 January, Clay Co. (KD, EL). 23 January, Minnehaha Co. (JL). 15 February, Yankton Co. (RAP, JLP).  
 Eastern Screech-Owl - Reported from Brown Co. (JCS).  
 Snowy Owl - 6 December, Hyde Co. (BKH). 7 December, Marshall Co. (WNWR). 9 December, Deuel Co. (AG). 15 December, Roberts Co. (fide DE). 16 December, Hyde Co. (JDW). 7 January, Deuel Co. (dB). 8 January, WNWR (WNWR). 16 February, SLNWR (SLNWR). 28 February, Brown Co. (JCS).  
 Short-eared Owl - Reported from Clay (RAP, JLP), Clay (DS, LS), Custer (MMM), and Deuel (DE) counties.  
 Belted Kingfisher - Reported from Pennington Co. (NRW).  
 Red-bellied Woodpecker - 3 January, Minnehaha Co. (JL). 30 January, Hughes Co. (RAP, JLP).  
 Black-backed Woodpecker - 28 February, Pennington Co. (MMM).  
 Pileated Woodpecker - 19 January, Roberts Co., Sodak Park (BKH).  
 Black-billed Magpie - 31 December, Roberts Co. (WNWR). 2 February, Roberts Co., 2 (fide CC). 18 February, WNWR (DRS).  
 Red-breasted Nuthatch - Reported from Brookings (JAK), Brown (JCS), Codington (BKH), and Yankton (SVS) counties.  
 Brown Creeper - Reported from Brookings (JRK, RWK), Brown (JCS), Lake (JSP), Lawrence (NRW), Minnehaha (JL), and Pennington (NRW) counties.  
 Canyon Wren - 2 January, Fall River Co. (JSP).  
 Winter Wren - 2 January, Fall River Co. (JSP).  
 Mountain Bluebird - 8 February, Jackson Co. (KG).  
 Townsend's Solitaire - 12 December, Roberts Co. (BKH, MSS).  
 American Robin - During period, Brown (JCS), Custer (MJP), Jackson (KG) (NRW), and Roberts (BKH) counties. All period PLSRA (DRS). 25 December, Jackson Co., 150+ (RAP, JLP).  
 Varied Thrush - 12 December, Roberts Co. (BKH, MSS). Also observed in Brown Co. (DAT et al.).  
 Bohemian Waxwing - 10 December, Pennington Co., 7, and 7 February, Pennington Co., 70-100 (NRW). 13-14 December, Meade Co., 46 (EEM). 18 December and 16 January, LHSP, 2 (JSP). 6 February, PLSRA. 12+ (DRS).  
 Northern Shrike - Reported from Brown (JCS), Deuel (BKH), Edmunds (MZ), Grant and Hughes (BKH), Jackson (KG), Lake (JSP), Minnehaha (JL) (MSS), Roberts (BKH), Stanley (RAP, JLP), and Yankton (SVS) counties.  
 Loggerhead Shrike - 22 January, Pennington Co. (NRW).  
 Northern Cardinal - All period, Brookings Co. (JAK). 27 January, Deuel Co. (LS). 5 February, Beadle Co. (RAP, JLP). 9 February, Deuel Co. (BKH).  
 Fox Sparrow - 19-28 February, Brookings Co. (JAK, RWK).  
 Song Sparrow - 2 January, Fall River Co. (JSP).  
 Swamp Sparrow - 2 January, Fall River Co., only second winter record reported for state (JSP).  
 Harris' Sparrow - 5 January to 28 February, Brookings Co., 3 (JAK, RWK). 22 January, Yankton Co. (SVS). 27 January, Clay Co. (DS, EL).  
 Red-winged Blackbird - 26 December, Roberts Co. (BKH, KC). 27 December, Pennington Co. (NRW, LB, TH). 2 January, Yankton Co. (SVS). 30 January, Brown Co., 60 (JCS).

Rusty Blackbird - 27 December, Pennington Co. (NRW, LB, TH). 16,31 January, Yankton Co. (SVS). 18 January, Pennington Co. (NRW). 25 January, Pennington Co. (RAP, JLP). 5 February, Beadle Co. (RAP, JLP).  
 Common Grackle - Reported from Beadle (DS, LS), Brown (JCS), Deuel (BKHI), and Yankton (SVS) counties.  
 Rosy Finch - December and January, Custer Co. (MH).  
 Pine Grosbeak - 28 February, LaFrambois Island, Hughes Co., male (RR)  
 Purple Finch - Reported from Day (DRS), and Deuel (BKHI) counties.  
 Cassin's Finch - 6,30 January and 4,10,25 February, Mead Co. (EEM). 9 January, 3,10,17 February, Pennington Co. (NRW).  
 House Finch - Reported from Beadle (RAP, JLP), Brown (JCS), Meade (EEM), Deuel (BKHI), Minnehaha 100+ (JL), Pennington (NRW), and Roberts (BB) counties.  
 Red Crossbill - 2 December, Brookings Co., 2 (JAK). 29 January, Codington Co., 20 (BKH).  
 Common Redpoll - Reported from Butte Co. (B&AS).  
 Pine Siskin - Reported from Brookings (JAK), Brown (JCS), Day (DRS), Deuel (BKHI), Lake (JSP), and Yankton (SVS) counties.

Late Spring and Fall 92 Records:

Tundra Swan - 13 October, Marshall Co., 700 (DGP).  
 Hooded Merganser - 8 November, Davison Co., 12 (DGP).  
 Osprey - 5 September, Davison Co. (DGP).  
 Broad-winged Hawk - 2 September, Sanborn Co. (DGP).  
 Merlin - 8 August, Stanley Co., and 14 September, Potter Co. (DGP).  
 Short-billed Dowitcher - 16 October, Hanson Co., Latest ever.  
 Long-eared Owl - 6 October, Davison Co. (DGP).  
 Eastern Bluebird - 16 October, Hanson Co., 16 (DGP).  
 Northern Shrike - 12 October, Marshall Co., ties earliest ever (DGP).  
 Connecticut Warbler - 5 September, Davison Co., accidental fall migrant (DGP).  
 Mourning Warbler - 10 October, Davison Co., very late (DGP).  
 Summer Tanager - 3 June, Edmunds Co. (MZ).  
 Northern Cardinal - 18 October, Davison Co., 3 (DGP).



**CHRISTMAS COUNTS**  
**1992 - 1993**

Location	Date	# Observers, compiler	Temperatures (°F)
Sand Lake	18 Dec 1992	8, William Schultz	-4 - +26
Sioux Falls	19 Dec 1992	24, Gil Blankespoor	8 - 20
Rapid City	27 Dec 1992	-, Ester Serr	-
Pierre	20 Dec 1992	14, Summerside	-
Madison	-	-	-
Yankton	2 Jan 1993	9, Willis Hall	0 - 10
Shade Hill	19 Dec 1992	3, Dave Griffiths	-9 - +20
Badlands	19 Dec 1992	10, Joe Zarki	-1 - +24
Brookings	19 Dec 1992	22, Nelda Holden	2 - 18
Deuel Co.	3 Jan 1993	4, Bruce Harris	8 - 18
Wilmot	27 Dec 1992	4, Bruce Harris	0 - 10
Aberdeen	19 Dec 1992	12, Montgomery	2 - 8



	ABR	BAD	BRK	DJE	HOT	MAD	PIR	RAP	SAN	SHA	SIU	STR	WAU	WIL	YAN	TOTALS	
Great Blue Heron				1			1					1			1	5	
Snow Goose						801	2		2							805	
Canada Goose			2		15	4841	21000	3	150	510	631		1			27153	
White-fronted Goose						50										50	
Wood Duck												1				1	
Green-winged Teal								3			2				5	10	
Mallard	21		34		2558	2267	1845	1161	1200	315	52	63			5517	15033	
American Black Duck															1	1	
Northern Pintail								1	1						3	5	
Northern Shoveler											1					1	
Gadwall								80			1				9	90	
American Wigeon							1	105								106	
Redhead								4								4	
Ring-necked Duck								2								2	
Lesser Scaup											1					1	
Common Goldeneye						15	11	45	2						13	86	
Barrow's Goldeneye							1	1								2	
Bufflehead						6		10								16	
Hooded Merganser							2	1								3	
Common Merganser							24	32	3						145	204	
Bald Eagle			1		7	1	12	2	9	2	3	1	1		21	60	
Northern Harrier							1									1	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1			1			1	2		1		1	1			8	
Goshawk	1		5			2							4	1	1	14	
Red-tailed Hawk			2		2		1	3			13				10	31	
Ferruginous Hawk			2					2								4	
Rough-legged Hawk			2		3			5			2	2			1	15	
Buteo sp.															3	3	
Golden Eagle			3		4		2		1	1		2				13	
American Kestrel	1			1		3	1	1	2		1	2			4	16	
Merlin	2								1							3	
Prairie Falcon			2	1	1	1			1	2						8	
Falco sp.														1		1	
Gray Partridge				5	32		13	20					8	20		98	
Ring-necked Pheasant	28			57	23	1	28	205	42	266	92	78		452	238	53	1563

Waubay  
Sturgis18 Dec 1992  
19 Dec 199214. Doug Leschisin  
6. Ernie Miller-  
0-22

	ABR	BAD	BRK	DUE	HOT	MAD	PIR	RAP	SAN	SHA	SIU	STR	WAU	WIL	YAN	TOTALS
Sharp-tailed Grouse		3			1		68	40	21	33		33				199
Wild Turkey		25			85		31	302			14	183	13		25	678
American Coot							1	8							1	10
Killdeer								1								1
Common Snipe					1							3				4
Ring-billed Gull							77									77
Herring Gull							27									27
Glaucous Gull							1									1
Rock Dove	163	107	145	75	78	60	530	294	29	34	91	73	39	184	48	1950
Mourning Dove			1					1			2					4
Eastern Screech-Owl		1														1
Great Horned Owl	5	11	20	2		1	23	5	2		4		2			75
Long-eared Owl							1									1
Short-eared Owl				1												1
Belted Kingfisher			1					7			3	1			1	13
Lewis' Woodpecker												5				5
Red-naped Sapsucker												1				1
Red-bellied Woodpecker				1			4				3			3	7	18
Downy Woodpecker	16	6	52	8	5	22	29	20	10	2	39	11	14	13	26	273
Hairy Woodpecker	5	9	15	6		5	16	11	3	1	12	14	6	5	7	115
Northern Flicker	8	13	2		24		13	27	1	1	4	3	1	1	32	130
Horned Lark	5	739	29	1		203	278	35		88	56	389	36		42	1901
Gray Jay								6				126	26			158
Blue Jay	8		27	7	5	13	11	46	5		47			14	19	202
Pinyon Jay					100			1								101
Black-billed Magpie		44			6		17	43				14			4	128
American Crow	36	3	225	28	112	29		387	10		1362		2	19	107	2320
Black-capped Chickadee	38	21	194	19	34	49	135	227	10		220	129	53	40	43	1213
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1		2		6		6	55				10	2			82
White-breasted Nuthatch	10	6	55	11		17	19	21		1	51	8	22	23	14	258
Brown Creeper	2		2		3	1	4	8			8	1				29
Golden-crowned Kinglet	2		2			3		9			28					44
Canyon Wren								5								5
Carolina Wren											1					1

	ABR	BAD	BRK	DJE	HOT	MAD	PIR	RAP	SAN	SHA	SIU	STR	WAU	WIL	YAN	TOTALS
Townsend's Solitaire	1	81			23		6	35		1		5		1		153
American Robin	17	46			92		101	11		1				6	31	305
Varied Thrush														1		1
Bohemian Waxwing						1						350				351
Cedar Waxwing	145		80			55	1	31	4		9		32	48	99	504
Northern Shrike	1	3	5	1	2	3	2	6	8	2	8	1	3		1	46
Loggerheaded Shrike							1									1
European Starling	86	5	380	160	220	614	329	898	230		561	262	38	9	368	4160
sparrow sp						5										5
Northern Cardinal			1			7					5				17	30
Rufous-sided Towhee					2											2
American Tree Sparrow		157	53	3	79	12	164	12	33		204	15	1		258	991
Chipping Sparrow						1										1
Song Sparrow			4									1				5
White-throated Sparrow			1													1
Harris' Sparrow	2		2					2			2					8
Dark-eyed Junco			63		350	40					112		3	6	59	633
Slate-colored Junco	33	17		2			98	137	1			168				456
Oregon Junco		9		1			1	45				25				81
White-winged Junco								234				19				253
Lapland Longspur		123														123
Snow Bunting			10	25					1				67	3		106
Red-winged Blackbird					4		180	14	336				1		13	548
Western Meadowlark		1			3											4
Yellow-headed Blackbird									20							20
Rusty Blackbird						206	1	1					1			209
Brewer's Blackbird				3			3									6
Common Grackle			18	3		13	4	1	111				2			152
Brown-headed Cowbird			2	3			2									7
Purple Finch	42		37	4		5	10	4			9		1			112
Cassin's Finch								3				1				4
House Finch	16		24	1				7			100	20		8	38	214
Red Crossbill	5				4			29				2				40
Common Redpoll								9		15	6					30

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	ABR	BAD	BRK	DJE	HOT	MAD	PIR	RAP	SAN	SHA	SIU	STR	WAU	WIL	YAN	TOTALS
Pine Siskin	203		281	21	31	91	6	75			70	26		15	1	820
American Goldfinch	1	7	95	27	26	69	35	42	54	3	46	105	18	9	17	554
Evening Grosbeak					29			88				537				654
House Sparrow	695	227	774	376	66	1608	430	324	720	650	246	149	135	145	214	6759
<b>TOTAL INDIVIDUALS</b>	1600	1673	2711	846	3982	11161	25795	5073	3247	1755	4108	2763	986	812	7279	73791
<b>TOTAL FORMS</b>	32	28	42	29	35	38	54	66	32	20	41	41	31	23	41	107