



THE BLUEBIRD

The voice of ASM since 1934

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***The Audubon Society of Missouri
Missouri's Ornithological Society Since 1901***

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Manuscripts for *The Bluebird*—to the editor by:

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Deadlines for submissions to the Seasonal Survey Compilers

Winter (Dec. 1-Feb. 28)—to Joe Eades by Mar. 10

Spring (Mar. 1-May 31)—to Kristi Mayo by June 10

Summer (June 1-July. 31)—to Josh Uffman by Aug 10

Fall (Aug. 1-Nov. 30)—to Peter Kondrashov by Dec. 10

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Front Cover— An immature male Vermilion Flycatcher was, without a doubt, the highlight of this winter season. It was located by landowner Nancy Thompson at her Perry County farm on December 19, and was seen by many observers through January 11. Photo by Josh Uffman.

THE BLUEBIRD is published quarterly by The Audubon Society of Missouri. The submission of articles, photographs, and artwork is welcomed and encouraged. The views and opinions expressed in this journal are those of each contributing writer and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of The Audubon Society of Missouri or its officers, Board of Directors, or editors. Send address corrections to ASM, 2101 W. Broadway, PMB 122, Columbia, MO 65203-1261.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER—BRUCE BECK



Dear Fellow Birders,

You know who we are by what we do.

Last year the membership of the 111-year-old Audubon Society of Missouri was 347 individual, family, life and contributing members. The activities and contributions of ASM and its members are impressive.

We communicate. The MOBirds listserv in 2010 had 708 subscribers posting over 5,200 messages on nearly 4,000 topics. The use of the listserv still grows, keeping us in contact with one another and aware of birds and related issues

across the state.

The ASM website mobirds.org is packed with useful information for Missouri birders. The Tools tab directs us to the official Missouri annotated checklist of bird species, species distribution and frequency by e-bird region, the **Missouri Birders' Guide**, and site checklists for MDC conservation areas and state parks. The Education tab leads to Ornithology 101, the Ornithological Year, **Beginners' Resources**, **book reviews**, the **photo gallery**, and **Internet links**. The ASM tab provides a birding events calendar, the ASM by-laws, lists of ASM officers, board members, committee chairs, meeting minutes and committee reports, and a means to request matching funds for bird conservation and educational projects and scholarships. You can join ASM, donate to ASM, and register and pay on-line for ASM events. The Bird Records Committee and CACHE/SPARKS tabs are covered below.

ASM has an active Facebook page.

The seven-member committee of experts on the Missouri Birds Records Committee is responsible for confirming unusual sightings, reporting unusual sightings in *The Bluebird* quarterly, and compiling the official checklist of Missouri birds. ASM is the MBRC sponsor, making us in practice the ornithological society of the state.

The Bluebird is the official quarterly publication of ASM. The MBRC writes the official quarterly and annual reports of bird activity in the state. In addition, notable birding areas are described and educational and public interest stories are published.

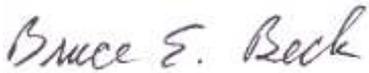
CACHE and SPARKS (Conservation Area Checklist/State Parks checklist) facilitate the posting of bird sightings at state conservation areas and state parks. The information is used by biologists in the Missouri Department of Conservation and Department of Natural Resources and universities. Beginning in 2006, 351 birders have contributed data to CACHE and SPARKS, with 24,081 trips totaling 28,919 hours. These reports have all been added to e-bird. Site checklists are available to the general public.

ASM uses the funds as matching grants for bird habitat restoration and bird-related education, for website development and maintenance. ASM is reimbursed by MDC and DNR for website and database development and maintenance and for reporting. Since 2006 ASM has generated about \$76,000 above the costs of developing and maintaining the databases. In turn, ASM has given \$50,700 and committed \$25,440 more for restoration of bird habitat and for educational programs. We have partnered with 16 organizations to conduct bird surveys and to improve bird habitat, including the Missouri Prairie Foundation, Audubon Missouri, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ducks Unlimited, the Missouri River Bird Observatory, the Conservation Federation of Missouri, MDC, DNR, and Hamilton Wildflower Nursery. In educational projects we have partnered with the Greater Ozarks Audubon Society, Missouri State University and the Community Foundation of the Ozarks in Springfield, and with Ozarks Rivers Audubon Society and the City of Rolla. We have granted graduate research scholarships in partnership with Paul and Fran Bauer.

Spring meetings of ASM have been held in recent years in St. Louis, Kansas City, Springfield, Columbia, St. Joseph, Cape Girardeau, Chillicothe and Joplin. Meeting birders from across Missouri and from neighboring states is most rewarding. The opportunity to see different areas of our state, hosted by local birders, is invaluable. The folks in Joplin just a few weeks ago hosted an outstanding meeting with over 150 bird species recorded. Many attendees listed one or more life birds. The program on Cliff Swallows was excellent. We are grateful to the Audubon chapter members throughout Missouri for their dedication and hospitality.

ASM's fall meetings have been held at Lake of the Ozarks State Park or nearby since 1937, with the exception of only seven years. **ASM's business, educational programs and field trips are conducted** at these meetings. Good fellowship and good food are equally valuable. Put September 21-23 on your calendar for the 2012 Fall Meeting.

The dedication and activity of ASM's members make our society vibrant and meaningful. We should be proud and eager to invite friends to join.



Bruce Beck, President
Audubon Society of Missouri

In Memoriam

Dr. Leo Galloway, ASM Honorary Director

Long time Saint Joseph, MO birder, Leo Galloway, passed away February 18, 2012 at the Saxton Riverside Care Center in Saint Joseph. Many of you older Missouri birders will remember him from his birding activities around the state and beyond. His other interests involved biking and quilting. I believe that he rode his bicycle on roads in every county in the state of Missouri. Each year (excepting the last several years) he would ride his bike for 100 miles on the day of his birthday. He made quite a few quilts and some of his entries in various quilting shows won prizes. He was an exceptional birder and a good friend. He will be missed! A memorial service was held February 21 in St. Joseph. Dr. Galloway is survived by his wife, Ruth. —Larry Lade

I remember Dr. Galloway from the numerous conversations we had at Squaw Creek NWR in the early 80's when I was doing my master's there. He was such a kind man and full of energy. I also remember him riding his bike around the refuge while birding and just enjoying life. I had not seen him in years when I went to Smithville Lake Dam, not so long ago, to see a rare bird...maybe W. Grebe varieties?... and I was surprised to see him in the corner of the parking lot, sitting on a chair with his spotting scope. As he was such a short man and as he was obviously a very elderly man, I knew as I drove in the lot that it had to be him!! As always, he was a kind and gracious soul and gladly let me look through his scope at the birds. He really didn't remember me but I will always remember him. I had went to bird that day but, far more importantly, left with a deep gratitude of seeing him again. May he rest in peace!!—Terry L. Miller; Kearney High School; Ecology/College Zoology/ Genetics/Botany/Astronomy Teacher

**Repeat of Winter Raptor Survey Along Interstates I-55
and I-70, 1-2 January 2012**

Paul M. McKenzie
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Columbia, MO 65203

On 1-2, Jan. 2012, I repeated the raptor survey that I initiated in 2011 (McKenzie 2011). As in 2011, I counted all raptors perched or in flight within an approximate 220 m transect (1/8-mi.) along opposite sides of the interstate. I determined that this was likely the largest distance where birds could be safely and accurately identified without the aid of binoculars and would enable me to conduct the survey as a driver or as a passenger. I recorded, species, numbers, and divided I-55 into two sections: mile marker 0.0 at the Arkansas/Missouri line to mile marker 80.0 at Benton and from mile marker 80.0 to mile marker 191.0 in Arnold just south of St. Louis. These two sections correspond well to the Mississippi Lowlands, or Bootheel, and the Ozark Border Natural Divisions of Missouri described by Thom and Wilson (1980) and Robbins and Easterla (1992). The third section surveyed was I-70 from mile marker 210.0 in Wentzville to mile marker 130.0 in Columbia. I surveyed a total of 270 mi. (80 mi. in section 1, 110 mi. in section 2, and 80 mi. in section 3). Surveys were conducted between 1400 and 1600 on 1 Jan and between 0830 and 1000 and between 1130 and 1300 on 2 Jan. Because of traffic congestion, sections of I-270 and I-64 (connecting interstates between I-55 and I-70) between Arnold and Wentzville were not surveyed. From total raptors counted and mileage driven, I calculated a rough estimate of the number of raptors per mile that was observed (Table 1).

Raptor diversity and abundance was noticeably lower in 2012 than in 2011 (Table 2). A total of 75 raptors of 4 different species was observed during the 2012 survey compared to 143 individuals and 7 species observed in 2011. As in 2011, the highest species diversity and abundance was in the Bootheel section (Section 1) of the survey (Table 1). Differences are undoubtedly due to wind conditions estimated on 1-2 Jan 2012. Unlike 2011 when wind speeds were judged to be only 5-10 mph, wind speeds on 1 Jan were estimated at 10-15 mph with gusts to 20 mph on Jan. 1 and 20-30 mph with gusts 35-40 mph on 2 Jan. In fact, winds were so high on 2 Jan that there was a high wind advisory for much of the state and it was somewhat diffi-

Table 1. Species of raptors observed in 2012.

Section	RT ^a	HH	KRT	RLH	UB	NH	AK	Total
1-Bootheel	46	1	1	3*	3	1	2	57
2-Ozarks	9	0	0	0	2	0	1	12
3-I-70	3	0	0	0	1	0	2	6
Total	58	1	1	3	6	1	5	75

^aRT= Red-tailed Hawk, HH= Harlan's Hawk, KRT= Krider's Red-tailed Hawk, RLH= Rough-legged Hawk (*2 light morph, 1 dark morph), UB= Unidentified *Buteo*, NH- Northern Harrier, AK= American Kestrel.

Table 2. Comparison of raptor totals observed between years.

Species	2011	2012
Bald Eagle	1	0
Black Vulture	2	0
Red-tailed Hawk	126	59
Harlan's Hawk	1	1
Krider's Red-tail	0	1
Rough-legged Hawk	0	3
Red-shouldered Hawk	2	0
Unidentified Buteo	1	5
Northern Harrier	1	1
American Kestrel	9	5
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	0
Total individuals	143	75
Number of species	7	4

cult steering the car in a straight line under such conditions. Raptors were noticeably absent from exposed perches and most that were observed were perched in positions that yielded some protection from the windy conditions. This was also likely responsible for the increased number of unidentified buteos that were not sufficiently exposed for accurate identification.

The results in 2012 yielded less than one raptor every mi. in the Bootheel, less than one raptor every 10 mi. in the Ozarks section, and less than one raptor roughly every 13 mi. on I-70 between Wentzville and Columbia. Overall there were almost twice as many raptors and species observed in 2011 than in 2012 and this was surely due to the high wind conditions during the 2012 survey. The **only noticeable highlight of this year's survey was the observation of 3 Rough-legged Hawks** (two light morphs and one stunning dark morph in flight) along I-55 between the Arkansas line and Benton. This was somewhat predictable given the respectable invasion of this species throughout Missouri this winter but the first time this author has observed Rough-legged Hawks along the Bootheel portion of I-55 during trips to and from Baton Rouge during the Christmas holidays in a 15-year period. While results of this survey provide continued evidence that this technique can be used to assess raptor use of habitats along sections of highways in Missouri, it is recommended that such counts not be conducted when wind speeds are greater than 10-15 mph. Given the high wind conditions during **this year's survey, the reduction in numbers and species diversity** was surely predictable but a systematic survey was necessary to fully appreciate the magnitude of the difference.

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BOOK REVIEW

Jeff Cantrell



Save the Last Dance: A Story of North American Grassland Grouse. By Noppadol Paothong. Story by Joel M. Vance. Forward by Paul A. Johnsgard. Forthcoming. More information, preorder information, and the non-profit organization's work to conserve these dancers and their habitat may be found at: www.savethelastdancebook.com

Nowadays when I bird Doris Creek Prairie, Barton County, there is something eerily different and I sometimes get the same ill feeling when I walk out on a mound rise in the middle of Diamond Grove Prairie, Newton County. I am haunted by fairly recent recollections of dragging a friend or two to sit quietly in the back of my S-10 pickup at Doris Creek watching 14–16 prairie chickens face each other with a combat “hop scotch” of sorts, tackling, and spinning. The Doris Creek Prairie and adjacent crop land in the direction of Golden Prairie (one of the prairies Noppadol refers to in his book) used to be a flurry of booming action to the point where I would find myself edging forward in my seat and breathing so deeply I would practically be in a trance. Noppadol states in his book *“I was connected to everything around me – I was part of this”*. His words precisely describe my emotion on how I felt and still today my eyes glaze with the recollection.

Diamond Grove Prairie was a different scene, sadly, for there I caught the last act in a natural history play that Newton County residents may never witness again. Facing east I remember watching silhouettes of only four prairie chickens backlit by pastel prairie daybreaks for only a few days in the early 90s. The year 1995 brought my last view as my Audubon field trip group flushed two prairie chickens; I remember the birds looking like flying footballs. They flew to the east disappearing like dots in the sky where I used to look to the sunrises with booming silhouettes and I never to this day saw them return.

There is no doubt, avid Missouri birders are haunted by some of the same scenes when they look to a landscape that used to mesmerize them with the traditional booming leks, but now it falls silent. This scenario set Nop on a 10 year journey to tell the story of this na-

tion's grassland grouse and share their beauty and bring light to them in a way that our community would take pride in them, as well as to seek answers to save these incredible birds using this valuable book as a resource.

To all of you who have such experiences and to all who adore our native wildlife and wild places, I think you will be whole heartedly engaged from preface to back cover. Save the Last Dance profiles the life history and conservation concerns of each grouse. Historical accounts prelude the fascinating life story, threats, and conservation practices to help safeguard them.

Joel Vance fulfills his reputation as a remarkable story teller. **Vance's narration coupled with Nop's magnificent photographs set the stage for exploring three existing prairie chicken species (greater, lesser, and the Attwater's) plus the extinct Heath Hen, two sage grouse species (Gunnison and greater), the sharp-tailed grouse, and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. Fascinating behind the scenes bonus information is supplied in Noppadol's *Field Notes*.** Here we are truly privileged to share in his personal compassion, delight, empathy, and photography challenges. We are given a backdrop of insight, a glimpse of what took place as Noppadol researched and attempted to photo document these magnificent birds during this decade of dedication.

In the end, it is a very engaging read. The layout flows from species profile to species profile, and the stunning photographs are as close to being in the blind with Nop as you could possibly be. The book gives a detailed account of grouse life history, a documentary on conservation concerns and human involvement, and a comprehensive photo suite of these spectacular creatures that I will continue to reference.

This book gives me encouragement and hope for now, for I continue to bird a Missouri prairie called Mo No I, which is the Osage name for these prairie dancers. I have hope for our present conservation practices and believe in the incredible outreach efforts *Save the Last Dance* will cultivate among birders, wildlife photographers, naturalists and all those looking to save our heritage.



Progress Report: "Assessing the Potential for Brown-headed Nuthatch Reintroduction in Missouri: Habitat Selection at Multiple Spatial Scales."

Richard A. Stanton Jr., 2011 Scholarship Recipient
University of Missouri-Columbia

I am writing to present a summary report to the Audubon Society of Missouri regarding my Brown-headed Nuthatch research to date. Your support has been a tremendous benefit to the project, and I am deeply appreciative of the recognition and support that came with being selected to receive the 2011 Graduate Research Scholarship.

The purpose of my project is to research the habitat choices and breeding success of Brown-headed Nuthatches at the limit of their current range- **and use the result to answer the question: "Can Missouri support a population of reintroduced Brown-headed Nuthatches?" We are addressing this question using a combination of radio tracking and surveys.**

In 2011 we captured 12 Brown-headed Nuthatches from 7 breeding groups and determined their home ranges using radio telemetry. Radios weighed less than two drops of water and they fell off of the birds after about a month. Preliminary analysis indicated that the birds have remarkably large home ranges for their size and that they typically use one area of their home range intensively in addition to the nest site. In 2012 we plan to track up 24 breeding groups. It will be interesting to see whether the same patterns hold for both years. The results should tell us how much land each bird might need if reintroduced to Missouri and what sort of resources make a **particular location in a forest a good place to call "home."**

We surveyed 125 sites in the Ozark and Ouachita National Forests in Arkansas in 2011. We plan to survey about 145 sites in 2012. Our preliminary analysis strongly suggested that how connected managed habitats are is a strong predictor of nuthatch presence.

Brown-headed Nuthatches are a species that specialize in pine and mixed-pine forests. **Nuthatches prefer forests that are in "woodland" or "savannah" conditions. These are conditions where the forest is open and park-like, with an understory harboring a rich mix of grasses and wildflowers. Regularly occurring fires are necessary to create and maintain this condition.**

On the Pine-bluestem Ecosystem Management Area where I conduct most of my research, prescribed fire has been used for over 30 years to manage pine savannahs and woodlands. This management has benefitted birds like the Brown-headed Nuthatch, Bachman's Sparrow, and Red-cockaded Woodpecker. About 19,000 acres of the project area have been brought into a substantially restored condition, and plans are in place to restore a total of about 250,000 acres.

Missouri currently has 45,000 acres of pine woodland and savannah in some stage of restoration and a proposal to restore 116,000 acres has been made. When my project is complete, land managers should be able to identify the quantity of habitat in Missouri that is suitable for Brown-headed Nuthatches in Missouri, and to predict how the amount of suitable habitat will change in response to management actions.

This information can be used to decide whether a reintroduction should happen, and, if so, what needs to be done to assure that the reintroduction is successful.

**Report of the ASM Scholarship Committee
Sue Gustafson, Susan Hazelwood, and Brad Jacobs**

The Scholarship Committee of the Audubon Society of Missouri is pleased to announce that the recipient of the 2012 ASM Graduate Research Scholarship is Vincenzo A. Ellis, a Ph.D. student in Ecology, Evolution and Systematics at the University of Missouri - St. Louis. Vincenzo's graduate advisor is Dr. Robert E. Ricklefs. The \$2000 scholarship will help fund Vincenzo's research entitled "Health and its Relation to Patterns of Abundance and Distribution of North American Birds." The 2012 scholarship has been made possible due to the generosity of Paul and Fran Bauer, a grant from Fidelity to ASM, and additional donors: Harold and Kathleen Anderson, Jo Ann Eldridge, Sue Gustafson, Susan Hazelwood, Bonnie Heidi, June Newman, and John and Nancy Solodar. As we make plans for the 2013 scholarship, stay tuned to MoBirds for info on how you can donate to this important program.

WINTER 2011-2012 SEASONAL REPORT JOSEPH W. EADES

The 2011-2012 winter season was one of the mildest on record and the distribution of many bird species ran parallel to this pattern. January was the 13th warmest on record in St. Louis, but overall the winter there was the third warmest since records have been kept. A record for the date was set in St. Louis on 30 January with a 67 degree F high. January in Cape Girardeau County was the fifth warmest on record. According to Mark Haas, there was only one day in January and February when it failed to rise above freezing there. Many resident species began singing like it was spring by the end of January. Wild Turkeys were gobbling in January! There was almost no snow anywhere in the state.

Many duck species were recorded in locally high numbers while gull numbers were generally quite low. Trumpeter Swan numbers were high in the Northwest but lower than in recent years in East-central Missouri. Red-necked, Eared and Western Grebe provided unusual winter records and there were 2 records for Black-crowned Night Heron. Although gull numbers were low, rarities included California Gull, Little Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake and 2 **Franklin's Gulls**. As one would expect in a mild winter, Bald Eagle numbers were quite low. Wintering vultures of both species continue to increase in number and geographic spread. The advance of the Black Vulture in particular seems to be gaining momentum.

A few prey-related winter irruptive species ran counter to the warm weather trend with good showings for Northern Shrike and unprecedented numbers of Snowy Owls.

The season again featured rare western highlights including a cooperative and long-staying Common Ground Dove continuing from the fall season and a Lesser Goldfinch which spent about a month visiting a feeder at a Polk County residence.

Mast crops must have been poor. Red-headed Woodpeckers were conspicuously absent from many areas where often abundant, with the Four Rivers CBC recording an all-time low. Rare flycatchers made headlines with 2 **Say's Phoebes** and an immature male Vermillion Flycatcher. The wild berry crop was reported as poor and so were numbers of Hermit Thrush, American Robin, and Cedar Waxwing. Eastern Towhee, Savannah and Fox Sparrows reports were widespread and numbers were higher than usual.

GEESE THROUGH SWANS

Greater White-fronted Goose numbers were very high in several sections of the state with 5020 at CCNWR 30 Dec (JU) and 1000 at CBCA on 4 Feb (BR). There were more than 3400 on the CBC at SLNWR 1 Jan (SK) and 1950 were at DCCA *Stoddard* 18 Feb (MG, MH). A flock of 23 was at MSL 1 Jan (DE), 30 lingered at LBL until 1 Jan and 20 were at MCL 15 Jan (PK). Snow Goose numbers were very high at SCNWR with 400,000 21 Dec and 200,000 16 Jan (JB, MR); numbers built to an estimated 1 million there in late Feb (MR); 12,000 were noted passing overhead at BKLCa 31 Dec along with a single **Ross's Goose, another 4 Ross's were noted overhead with** Snows 18 Feb at Big Muddy NWR *St. Charles* (BR). A nice high count of 14 **Ross's was tallied overhead in** *Cape Girardeau* on 27 Feb (MH) and 5 were seen in *Taney* on 3 Dec (GSw, GOAS Field Trip). MSL held 1-2 from 16 Dec-1 Jan (DE). There was a light sprinkling of Cackling Goose reports. There were 14 on 7 Dec at Dexter City L *Stoddard* and 2 stayed until 25 Feb (CB). The high count, by far, was from MSL with 1000 on 1 Jan (DE). There were several reports from southwest Missouri with peak counts of 5 in *Dade* 26 Dec (GSw, NSw), 12 in Rogersville *Green* 31 Jan (GSa, LSa); a single bird was at CCNWR 30 Dec (JU) and 4 were at RMBS 4-12 Feb with 1 remaining on 18 Feb (BR, JU). A very high count for Canada Goose was made at MSL with 109,000 on 1 Jan (DE). Six Mute Swans wintered in *Lincoln* (JU). Trumpeter Swan numbers were quite high in the northern part of the state as many of them were able to winter further north than usual with the availability of open water, 230 were at SCNWR 21 Dec with 189 still there on 16 Jan (JB, MR); 200 were at RMBS 10 Dec (BR), 300 were there 27 Dec with 225 remaining 10 Jan (PL). A half dozen or so Trumpeters visited MSL 17 Dec-1 Jan (DE). The numbers at RMBS were considerably lower than the past few years as the birds lingered further north. Four were near the Asbury Power Plant *Jasper* 19 Dec (JC) and 10 were at SLNWR 16 Jan, which increased to 36 by the end of the period (SK) and 11 were at Jamesport L CA *Daviess* 27 Feb (SK, LL). Tundra Swan made its usual appearances at RMBS, 2 were there 10 Dec (BR), 3 were there on 30 Jan (PL), 1 was at CBCA on 4 Feb and 2 were at RMBS 18 Feb (BR).

DUCKS THROUGH GREBES

Wood Duck was reported much more often than usual with 2 on the Springfield CBC *Greene* 17 Dec (AK), another 2 were at CCNWR on 30 Dec (JU), 3 were in *Taney* 31 Dec (GSa, ESa, LSa) and 1 was at Creve Coeur L *St. Louis* 6 Jan (JU). A migratory pulse of 247 American Wigeon near Puxico *Stoddard* 26 Feb was a nice high count (CB) while 8 was a nice bunch for late Dec at CCNWR on 30 Dec (JU). American Black Duck hit the high water mark with 11 at CCNWR on 30 Dec (JU). An ad male Blue-winged Teal made a splash with a very unusual winter record for the St. Louis area at WD on 28 Jan (JU). A group of 5 Northern Shoveler was unusual for the northern part of the state at MCL on 15 Jan (PK), 35 remained at MSL until 1 Jan (DE) and counts of 700 at CCNWR on 30 Dec (JU) and 210 on 15 Dec at CJL were high (LH). A tally of 1000 Northern

Pintail at BKLCA on 4 Feb represented an early northward pulse (JU). A total of 110 Green-winged Teal on the CBC at SLNWR 1 Jan was high and attributable to the mild winter (SK, LL). A seasonal high count of 850 Canvasback was made at RMBS 19 Jan (JU); other reports were of 2 on 22 Dec at CJL (LH), 17 on 1 Jan at MSL (DE), 1 on 8 Jan at EBP (MS, GOAS), 8 at LS on 22 Feb (JG, CBu) and 1 on 24 Feb at CECL (LH). Redhead were reported from several locations in southwestern Missouri with 7 in *Taney* 3 Dec (GSw, GOAS), a nice high count of 30 in North Strafford *Greene* 5 Jan (GSa), 2 on 8 Jan at EBP (MS, GOAS), 2 on 1 Feb at CJL (LH) and 3 in *Dade* 25 Feb (Marvin DeJong, GSw). A high count for Ring-necked Duck was made with 750 at DCCA 18 Feb (MG, MH) and another nice count of 400 was at CECL on 1 Feb (LH). Greater Scaup was noted by only three contributors, 10 at RMBS on 10 Dec among Lessers (BR), 2 at LBL on 15 Jan (PK) and a group of 8-10 lingered at MSL from 16 Dec-1 Jan (DE). A flock of 80 Lesser Scaup was seen at close range at RMBS 18 Feb and no Greater were noted (BR). A Surf Scoter and a White-winged Scoter were found at RMBS 19 Feb (CM, JU). Four Black Scoters were at RMBS on 10 Dec with a single bird remaining until 18 Feb (BR, PL, JU). Another stayed at LW 24 Dec-15 Jan (CB). A Long-tailed Duck remained at RMBS 10 Dec-18 Feb (PL, BR). The highest reported number for Bufflehead this season was 49 in *Taney* 3 Dec (GSw, GOAS Field Trip). A staggering 2100 Hooded Mergansers on 1 Dec at MCA made for quite a sight! (JB, MR). There were 2 female Red-breasted Mergansers at LBL 28 Dec (JB, MR), 4 were at RMBS 4-6 Dec and 8 Feb (PL) and a single Red-breasted was found on the Maryville CBC 17 Dec (DE). A total of 44 Ruddy Ducks at SCNWR on 16 Jan was an amazing number for that date (JB, MR) and 93 were recorded on the Maryville CBC *Nodaway* on 17 Dec (DE). High numbers persisted through the season at RMBS with a mid-winter peak of 78 on 27 Jan (JU). A Common Loon lingered at LW 10 Dec-15 Jan (CB) and 1 at RMBS 17 Dec was late. The highest count submitted for the season was 17 at TRL 3 Dec (GSw, GOAS). Another was seen at TD 22 Dec (GSa, ESa, LSa). A total of 7 Pied-billed Grebes was a high for the Maryville CBC *Nodaway* 17 Dec (DE), 1 was at BKLCA 31 Dec, 3 were at CBCA 11 Feb (BR) and another was at MCL on 7 Jan (PK). Horned Grebes numbered 13 at LW 10 Dec with 4 remaining through 15 Jan (CB). There were 17 at RMBS on 4 Dec, which seemed to indicate a later than usual migratory push (JU). The high count for the season was 75 at TRL 3 Dec (GSw, GOAS). One may have spent most of the season at RMBS with records on 28 Dec and 31 Jan (JU). It is very unusual for this species to be seen in mid-winter in that location or in that section of the state. The season also saw its share of rare grebes: a Red-necked Grebe made an appearance at RMBS 4 Dec (Bill Rudden, JU) an Eared Grebe was photographed on the FRCA CBC 16 Dec (M. Anderson, BJ) and another was Mozingo L *Nodaway* on 16 Dec (DE-acc.). A Western Grebe at THR *Randolph* 8 Dec (PK) provided a very unusual winter record while another was at LBL (JB, MR) 28 Dec through 3 Feb (SK). One wonders if perhaps these could have been the same bird as the lakes are very close to each other.

CORMORANTS THROUGH FALCONS

Double-crested Cormorant lingered with 2 at OSCA 23 Dec, 5 at DCCA 5 Feb, building to 36 there on 26 Feb (CB); 8-10 spent the winter at RMBS (PL, JU). Twenty American White Pelicans were observed at TD 22 Dec (GSa, ESa, LSa), 170 at CBCA on 1 Jan was an impressive count (BR), 8 were at BL on 16 Jan and 60 were at MCA 28 Jan (JB, JK, MR); 65 were at LW 26 Feb (CB). Not one, but two Black-crowned Night Herons were recorded during the season: 1 in juv plumage on 17 Dec at EBCA on the Columbia CBC (PM-acc.) and another (age unspecified) at Close Park in *Greene* 1 Dec (Jane Simpson, Mary Murphy, Betty Johnson-acc.). The high count for Black Vulture was 750 on the *Taney* CBC on 31 Dec (m. ob.). Wow! No wonder they are showing up all over the place! Another 25 were over Mount Shira and 20 were over the Elk River west of Pineville *McDonald* 03 Dec (LH); 3 were seen at Trail of Tears SP *Cape Girardeau* 14 Jan (MH), 2 were seen at Roaring River SP *Barry* on 2 Feb (JC) and 8 were at DCCA *Stoddard* 18 Feb (MG, MH). An incredible 34 were seen at Bagnell Dam *Camden/Miller* on 3 Dec (DE, Tanner Easterla, Todd Easterla) and 17 were seen there 2-3 Feb (PM, BJ). Smaller numbers have been seen there occasionally for many years. A high count of 500 Turkey Vultures was made at Bagnell Dam *Camden/Miller* on 3 Dec (DE, TE) and a surprising 10 were seen circling at Monkey Mountain CA *Andrew* 16 Dec (JH). This species is now regular even in mid-winter in the St. Louis area, 2 were seen 1 Jan at CBCA (BR) and 1 seen over Ferguson *St. Louis* 30 Dec by a long-time resident was a first ever mid-winter record for that observer in that



Wintering Black Vultures are on the increase in southern Missouri. This is 1 of 17 at Bagnell Dam in Camden/Miller counties on February 3. Photo by Rick Hansen.

location (JU). One was over Joplin *Jasper* 2 Feb (LH), 2 were seen in Neosho *Newton* 5 Feb (JC) and 1 reached *Linn* in northern Missouri about a week earlier than normal on 28 Feb (SK). As might be expected for such a mild winter, Bald Eagle numbers were very low. A count of 23 was made along the Des Moines River *Clark* **19 Dec (KJM, JC) and the season's highest** count came from Newtonia *Newton* with 71 on 8 Jan (JC). Northern Harrier put on a good show with 29 in the air at dusk at STCA *Barton* on 30 Dec and 16 were doing their evening dance at Doris Creek CA *Barton* on 17 Dec (JC). Other locally notable counts totaled 8 on 28 Jan and 4 Feb at BKLCA (JU). Red-shouldered Hawks prepared to nest for the third straight year near St. Joseph *Andrew*. A total of four birds were seen in this area during the last 10 days of Feb (Ryan Evans, fide JH). An extraordinary concentration of 69 Red-tailed Hawks (including 2 Harlan's and 2 Krider's) was at STCA **17 Dec (MR)**. Other "Harlan's were seen in *Greene* 19 Dec (GSa), *Webster* 19 Jan and *Lawrence* 28 Jan (LB, GOAS). A Western (*calurus*) Red-tailed Hawk has returned to CBCA every winter since Dec 2007. It was observed this season 1 Jan-**11 Feb (BR)**. Another "Western" was reported 3 Dec in *McDonald* (LH). Rough-legged Hawk was widely reported but was perhaps not as abundant as might be expected for this lemming-dependent species during a major Snowy Owl irruption. There were 5 at SCNWR during the CBC 21 Dec (MR), 3 were at Dunn Ranch *Harrison* 29 Dec (JB, MR), 6 at STCA (JC), 3 were in the Missouri Bootheel along I-55 on 1-2 Jan (PM), 3 were at Hi-Lonesome Prairie 28 Jan (JB, JK, MR). Singles were seen in *Webster*, *Dade*, *Lawrence* and *Barton* in December (GOAS, m. ob.). An ad Golden Eagle was at SCNWR 24 Jan (Jacob Decker, fide JH), an imm was at SLNWR 28 Feb (SK) and there were two sightings at MNWR *Stoddard* (Brad Pendley). A Merlin perched for great scope views at CBCA on 4 Feb (BR), one was seen in Asbury *Jasper* 19 Feb, another at Mon Shon Prairie *Barton* **5 Feb (JC) and another was found 25 Feb at Bois d'Arc *Greene*** (David and Barb Blevins). Two Peregrine Falcons were observed at RMBS (where regular) 10 Dec, 1 was seen at CBCA 1 Jan (BR) and another was in Chillicothe *Livingston* 3 Feb (SK). A Prairie Falcon was seen at WP 25 Jan (JC, AK) and 2 (1 chasing the other) were seen west of Clinton *Henry* 28 Jan (JB, JK, MR) while 3 were seen in *Lawrence* 28 Jan (LB, GO-AS).

COOTS THROUGH GULLS

American Coot lingered in small numbers throughout the winter in the St. Louis area at RMBS and CBCA (PL, JU). The Maryville CBC reported a high of 139 on 17 Dec (DE). A nice mid-winter high count of 210 was made at LS on 9 Jan (JC). Five Sandhill Cranes were observed at EBCA on 17 Dec (RD); 3 were observed 15 Jan in *Stoddard* and 9 were seen on 28 Jan at OSCA (CBA). A big flight of Killdeer totaled 350 in a *Stoddard* agricultural field 17 Dec (CBA); 7 were tallied on the SLNWR CBC 1 Jan (SK) and 2 were at SCNWR 10 Jan (SK, LL). The return flight seemed to arrive in the St. Louis area in early Feb, with 2 at CBCA on 4 Feb, where none had been seen 1 Jan (BR) with numbers increasing to 10 there on 21 Feb (PL). Two very early Greater Yellowlegs were at EBCA 4 Feb (RD-acc.). A single

bird passing through *Greene* 29 Feb (CBu, GSa) was a more typical early arrival. A Least Sandpiper was a good find at EBCA on the Columbia **CBC 17 Dec (PM, RD); there were 3 “on ice” at CJL 13 Jan (LH), 5 at the same location on 12 Feb (Casey Carr) and 5 in Stoddard 24 Jan (CBa).** A late Dunlin was at Schell-Osage CA *St. Clair* 1 Dec (MR). One hundred fourteen **Wilson’s Snipe** on the Columbia CBC was reportedly by far the largest number of this species ever recorded in Missouri during the winter period, surely due to mild weather and unfrozen available habitat; there were additional scattered reports of 1-2 birds in southern Missouri. American Woodcock courtship displays were first noted in *Perry* on 30 Jan (MH); **15 were displaying 1 Feb at Crowley’s Ridge CA Stoddard (CBa),** 11 were at WSCA 26 Feb (JU) and 17 were counted 27 Feb at Finley Creek Farm *Webster* (GSa, ESa). A seldom-recorded ad Black-legged Kittiwake was at MSL 17 Jan (DE-acc.). LW held **Bonaparte’s Gulls**, with 26 on 10 Dec and 3 on 18 Dec; one was observed at the Poplar Bluff Sewage Lagoons *Butler* 26 Dec (CBa); and 60 were found at TD 28 Jan (JB, JK, MR). A first-cycle Little Gull was an exciting find at THR *Randolph* 4 Dec (RD-acc.). **Franklin’s Gull** made winter headlines again with 1 at LW 10 and 18 Dec (CBa-acc.), 1 in alternate plumage at LBL 28 Dec-9 Jan (JB, MR-acc.) and another, also in alternate plumage, at BL 16 Jan (JB, MR-acc.). Ring-billed Gull numbers were low at RMBS with a peak count of about 1000 on 4 Feb (BR). The seasonal high count came from LBL with 3000 on 16 Dec (PK). An ad California Gull** was reported at CBCA 14 Feb (Connie Alwood, Chris Kirmaier). Herring Gull occurred in very small numbers along the Mississippi River near St. Louis this winter with a peak of about 15 on 11 Feb after a brief cold snap (BR). A single first-cycle **Thayer’s Gull**, the singular report for the season, was at RMBS 10 Dec (CM, Jim Malone, BR). An ad Lesser Black-backed Gull was seen at RMBS 10 Dec (BR), an ad was located in the gull roost there on 28 Dec (JU), another ad was at LBL 16 Dec and a first year bird was there 25 Feb (PK). Glaucous Gull was reported just a few times, 1 at WD 11 Dec (PK), 1 at RMBS 21 Dec and a different bird there on 3 Feb (JU). **Iceland “Kumlien’s” Gull** went unreported.

DOVES THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS

A Common Ground Dove continuing from the fall was seen at WSCA 18 Dec (PL). A solid seasonal high count for Eurasian Collared Dove was of 180 in *Dade* 21 Dec (GSw). A high count of 50 Eastern Screech Owls on the Columbia CBC 17 Dec is truly amazing. The combined total for this CBC constitutes the largest number of this species ever recorded in MO during any season and provides an additional year of data that further supports the fact that for reasons not yet completely understood, the Missouri River corridor and adjacent bluffs has the highest concentration of this species in the state- additional surveys along other sections of the Katy Trail adjacent to the Missouri River should be undertaken but permission to conduct such surveys must be approved by the Missouri DNR- Division of State Parks (PM). There were at least 60 Snowy Owls reported in Missouri during the season, but they weren’t everywhere. **Mark Robbins made a 550 mile**



This Snowy Owl, one of many to be observed in Missouri during this irruption year, was at Wah-Sha-She Prairie in Jasper County from early January through the end of the season. Photo by Kay Thomas.

2-day trip across the northern tier of counties 28-29 Dec and did not record a single one! Mark and Chuck Otte will be writing a comprehensive report **on the season's invasion covering Missouri and Kansas in the near future.** Several were found at Smithville L *Clay*, 2 were reported there (originally found by Doug Willis) on 30 Dec (RD). Three reports were received from southwestern Missouri from *Jasper* (John and Kay Thomas, JC, LH), *Ozark* (Kathy Barnett) and *Greene* (Jesse Edwards), the latter two being the first recorded for those counties. The one in *Jasper*, near Asbury remained from early Jan through the end of the period (LH, JC); others were in *Chariton* 28 Feb (SK) and BKLCA 14-15 Jan (PL, JU). Long-eared Owl seemed scarcer than usual. Reports included 2 at SSCA and 3 at Sever North CA *Knox* on 17 Dec (PK); 2 were in a *Linn* willow thicket 7 Jan, 3 in a *Daviess* pine grove and 1 in *Livingston* 20 Feb (SK). Another was a surprising find at CBCA on 18 Feb (David Becher). Short-eared Owl was widely reported with the highest concentrations in southwestern Missouri, as usual. There was 1 at RMBS 1 Dec (PL), 3 near Puxico *Stoddard* 9 Dec (CBa) and 4 at Poosey CA *Livingston* 27 Feb (SK). Higher counts were reported from southwestern Missouri with peaks of 23 at WP 18 Jan (JC), 15 at STCA 24 Jan (LH) and 8 in *Dade* 28 Jan (LB, GOAS). A Northern Saw-whet Owl found at Panther Valley Area *Webster* was a first for GOAS in the county (AK, Bo Brown, JG). A Rufous Hummingbird spent virtually the entire season at a *Christian* feeder, being discovered on 15 Nov and continuing until 23 Feb while another lingered at a *Franklin* feeder until 29 Jan** (Dan Burke).

WOODPECKERS THROUGH WAXWINGS

The most notable Red-headed Woodpecker sighting, other than reports of finding very few, was of 10 at Walter Woods CA *Newton* 6 Dec (LH). An unusual visual provided by Jeff Cantrell places 14 Northern Flickers foraging on the ground under a post oak with an Armadillo at Bethel Prairie *Barton* on 11 Feb. I guess the ants weren't spoiling that picnic! The SCNWR CBC produced a healthy tally of 6 Pileated Woodpeckers on 21 Dec (MR). Eastern Phoebe was reported as singles in *McDonald* 6 Jan and *Jasper* 13 Jan (LH). A few were seen here and there in *Cape Girardeau* in Dec and Jan but a count of 9 at DCCA *Stoddard* 18 Feb was the result of returning migrants (MH). **Say's Phoebe** was recorded twice! The first was on the Aldrich Arm of Stockton L *Polk* 1 Dec (MR-acc.) and the other 26 Dec and 1 Jan at SLNWR (SK-acc.). An imm male Vermilion Flycatcher was an exciting find and the avian highlight of the season in *Perry* 19 Dec-11 Jan (Nancy Thompson-acc.; m.ob.). *Dade* and *Lawrence* yielded several Loggerhead Shrike sightings in December and Jan, with high counts of 4 on 7 Jan and 6 on 28 Jan (LB, GSw, m.ob.); 5 were at TMPCA 8 Jan, 1 was in *Stoddard* early Jan and early Feb and 1 was observed at OSCA intermittently from late Dec-late Jan (CBa). Northern Shrike was widely reported, 1 first found by Franklin Cuculich on November 19 was seen again at SSCA 17 Dec (PK); another was near Skidmore *Nodaway* 2 Dec (Kirby Goslee, fide JH), a brown imm was found on the Grand River CBC *Daviess* 18 Dec (Myrna Carlton, Doris Fitchett, June Newman) and a long-staying individual was in *McDonald* from 6 Jan to 18 Feb** (LH). Four ad were seen in *Harrison* and *Daviess* on a single day, 29 Dec (JB, MR). Another ad was seen at Paint Brush Prairie *Pettis* 28 Jan (JB, JK, MR) and 1 was in *St. Charles* 27-28 Feb (PL, JU). A nice seasonal high count for American Crow was of 710 in *Clark* 19 Dec (KJM, JC) and 140 were noted at CBCA 27 Dec (JU). Fish Crow returns were marked by 4 over the MSSU Joplin campus 21 Feb (Brian Davis) and 2 in *Cape Girardeau* 27 Feb (MH). Two tardy Tree Swallows lingered at LW until 18 Dec and 22 had returned to DCCA by 22 Feb (CBa). Red-breasted Nuthatch was almost unreported, but single male and female birds took turns at *Cape Girardeau* backyard feeders 21 Dec-19 Feb (MH) and a single female was located in pines at BCA 15 Jan (JU). Brown Creeper earned its place in this report with 16 at Horton Bottoms on the FRCA CBC 15 Dec. This is the largest number of this species ever recorded in a single day by this observer (PM). A Ruby-crowned Kinglet was at BCA 15 Jan (JU) and another was at Bluffwoods CA *Buchanan* 23 Feb (JH). An unusual "winter" record of **Bewick's Wren** at WGCA on 21 Feb (JC, CC) is probably best interpreted as an early migrant. A Marsh Wren was identified on the MNWR CBC *Stoddard* 17 Dec* (CBa), 7 were found on the SCNWR CBC *Holt* 21 Dec (MR) and there were 3 at SLNWR *Chariton* 7 Feb (SK). A very unusual winter record for Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was of 1 at MNWR *Wayne* 5 and 26 Feb (CBa). **Sprague's Pipit** doesn't usually show up in our winter report; however, 2* were reported at a prairie northeast of the MSSU Joplin campus 2 Dec (LH). There were very few reports of Cedar Waxwing, 22 were seen at WGCA

(JC, CC) on 9 Dec and modest groups of 10-45 were seen on and off throughout the season in *Cape Girardeau* and *Perry* (MH).

LONGSPURS THROUGH SPARROWS

Lapland Longspurs were not widely reported, 32 were in *Clark* 19 Dec (KJM, JC). The highest number reported was 300 in *Dade* on 21 Dec (CBa, GW, SM, DM) while another 150 were found in *Lawrence* 7 Jan (GS, LS, ES, CB). They were primarily notable for their absence in east-central Missouri, but 24 were found in *Perry* 10 Jan and 225 were seen in *St. Charles* 14 Jan (JU). **Smith's Longspur** was reported twice; with 3 on 17 Dec at Osage Prairie *Vernon* (MR) and 7 were at Pennsylvania Prairie *Dade* 21 Dec (CBu, GSw, SM, DM). Three Snow Buntings were at LBL 4 Dec (RD) and 1 was seen there 8 Dec, 31 Dec (JU), 7 Jan (PK) and 30 Jan (SK). A single Snow Bunting was seen 19 Dec in *Clark* (KJM, JC). Common Yellowthroat is tough to find in mid-winter so 2 at SLNWR 7 Feb were noteworthy (SK). An Orange-crowned Warbler was at OSCA 19 Feb (CBa), a Palm Warbler* was at OSCA 7 Feb, and 3 Palm Warblers were reported at TMPCA 8 Feb (CBa). Pine Warbler **was an infrequent visitor to Mark Haas' Cape Girardeau** backyard feeders throughout the season, whereas it was very **regular during the previous winter's frigid temperatures. A few were seen in Stoddard and Wayne** pines in mid Dec and early Feb (CBa); returning migrants were well detailed: 7 were in *McDonald* pines 17 Feb (LH), another 7



Snow Bunting at Long Branch Lake, Macon County, on January 7. Photo by Peter Kondrashov.

were at Huckleberry Ridge CA *Newton* on 18 Feb (JC), 12 were counted at Red Ridge Loop *Christian* 23 Feb (CBu, RG, GSw) and 1 had arrived at BCA by 28 Feb (PL). Eastern Towhee was rather widely reported from the southern half of the state, perhaps being more common and evident due to the extremely mild weather. Spotted Towhee was reported at MNWR 17 Dec (CBa), one was at CBCA 1 Jan (BR) and another at FL *Greene* 3 Feb (GSw, CB, Gsa). An Eastern x Spotted Towhee hybrid, which is apparently seldom reported from our state, was at FL 3 Feb (GW). Counts of 58 American Tree Sparrows at STCA 30 Dec (JC, AK) and 45 at BLCA 20 Jan (LH) were submitted as local seasonal highs. A few Chipping Sparrows visited backyard feeders throughout the season and 3 were observed at Seventy-Six CA, *Perry* on 23 Feb (MH). Another was seen in Columbia *Boone* on 13 Feb** (RD). A Field Sparrow was at WSCA 11 Dec (JC, PK). Others were at BCA 15 Jan and 3 at Route 66 SP *St. Louis* 21 Jan (JU). They were singing like spring in *Cape Girardeau* by 23 Feb (MH). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was recorded on Christmas Day, appropriately in *Christian* (GSw, NSw), another was found 25 Feb in *Webster* and 1 or 2 visited feeders at WGCA all season (JC); other singles were located 15 Dec at TMP-CA (Bill Eddleman), 8 Jan at TMPCA, and at DCCA *Bollinger* on 26 Feb (CBa). Eighteen **Harris's Sparrows** on 26 Dec in *Lawrence* (GSw, NSw) and 19 at BLCA on 20 Jan (LH) were high counts from the southwestern part of the state; 20 on 22 Feb was a nice total for southwest *Livingston* (SK) and 12 came to feeders all winter in rural *Daviess* (Terry McNeely). Savannah Sparrow was widely reported as more common than usual, 26 on the SLNWR CBC 1 Jan was the highest ever for that count. Four were seen throughout the winter at Thompson River Wetlands *Livingston* (SK) and 65 on 25 Jan was a seasonal high count for winter at High Prairie *Webster* (Gsa). A very nice winter count for **LeConte's Sparrow** in mid-Missouri was of 8 at EBCA on 4 Feb (RD), 3 were recorded 12 Dec at Pennsylvania Prairie *Dade* (CBu, GSw, SM, DM). The species is rather infrequently encountered in mid-winter in the St. Louis area, so 3 on 15 Jan and 2 on 26 Feb at WSCA were noteworthy (JU). A good count of 14 Fox Sparrows was made on 16 Dec at WSCA (PK).

GROSBEAKS THROUGH FINCHES

A Rose-breasted Grosbeak* was a very surprising find on the Grand River CBC 18 Dec (Mark McNeely). A Dickcissel* visited an *Andrew* feeder 1 - 16 Dec (Dean Rush, fide JH) and 2 were seen and photographed at TMPCA 8 Jan (CBa). Several flocks of Rusty Blackbirds were found in southwestern Missouri, with 35 on 12 Dec at Niawathe Prairie *Dade* (CBu, GSw, SM, DM), 30 in *Jasper* 13 Dec (LH), 14 in *Jasper* 26 Dec (JC), 85 in *Lawrence* 26 Dec (GSw, NSw) and 5 in *Barton* 16 Jan (CBu). A group of 9 were at WD 14 Jan, 40 were in *St. Charles* 12 Feb (JU) and a flock of 130 visited a backyard in *Cape Girardeau* on 28 Feb (MH). A flock of 400 **Brewer's Blackbirds** was observed 1 Dec at Sylvania Prairie *Dade* (MR), 6 were recorded on the FRCA CBC (PM), 35 were found 21 Dec (GSw) and another 7 were encountered 26 Dec in *Dade* (GSw, NSw). A flock of 50 was observed in *Dade* on 7 Jan (CBu) and another flock of 50 was encountered 26 Jan in *Webster* (Gsa,



Male Red Crossbill that frequented a Wentzville, St. Charles County feeder from January 11 Jan through the end of the season.

ESa). An amazing roost at EBCA during the Columbia CBC on 17 Dec was estimated at 1.5 million Red-winged Blackbirds, 3.5 million Common Grackles and 250,000 European Starlings (PM). Great-tailed Grackle was recorded on the SLNWR CBC, with 3 on 1 Jan, and 40 were at a feedlot south of SCNWR 10 Jan (SK, LL); 28 were at Bryan Island Stables *St. Louis* 4 Jan (JU) and 100 were seen in *Greene* 9 Jan (CBu, GSa). A male Baltimore Oriole** visited a Columbia *Boone* backyard on 18 Dec (Julie Fisher). Purple Finch was apparently scarce as the reports were sparse, with 10 in *Clark* 19 Dec (KJM, JC) and 50 coming to feeders in rural *Daviess* 24 Feb (SK). A male Red Crossbill made regular appearances at a Wentzville *St. Charles* sunflower feeder (fide Patrick Harrison). Common Redpoll put in



Common Redpoll and American Goldfinches behind the Audubon Center, Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, St. Charles County, on January 30. Photo by Al Smith.

a surprise and long-running show with 2 at RMBS feeders 29-30 Jan (PL, JU) and 1 remaining through 18 Feb (BR). Pine Siskin was almost unreported. The only reports were of 2 in *Clark* 19 Dec (KJM, JC) and 2 “yardbirds” on 27 Dec at Jackson, *Cape Girardeau* (MH). Finally, A Lesser Goldfinch** graced the yard of Calvin Borntrager in *Polk* 18 Jan-20 Feb.

Observers

Chris Barrigar (CBa), Lisa Berger (LB), J. Bollin (JB), Charley Burwick (CBu), Jeff Cantrell (JC), Cyndi Cogbill (CC), Ryan Douglass (RD), David Easterla (DE), Janice Greene (JG), Jack Hilsabeck (JH), Brad Jacobs (BJ), Steve Kinder (SK), John King, (JK), Andrew Kinslow (AK), Peter Kondrashov (PK), Larry Lade (LL), Pat Lueders (PL), Mark Haas (MH), Charlene Malone (CM), Debbie Martin (DM), Steve Martin (SM), Kelly J. McKay (KJM), Paul McKenzie (PM), Lawrence Herbert (LH), Bill Rowe (BR), Greg Samuel (GSa), Laura Samuel (LSa), Emily Samuel (ESa), Myra Scroggs (MS), Greg Swick (GSw), Nate Swick (NSw), Josh Uffman (JU).

Key

- * Documentation needed for MBRC review but not yet submitted
- ** Documentation received by MBRC
- acc. Documentation received and record accepted by MBRC

Abbreviations

ad-Adult
CA-Conservation Area
GOAS-Greater Ozarks Audubon Society
imm-Immature
juv-Juvenile
L-Lake
MBRC-Missouri Bird Records Committee
MO-Missouri
m. ob.-Multiple observers
SP-State Park

Location Abbreviations (counties are in italics)

BCA	Busch CA <i>St. Charles</i>
BKLCA	B. K. Leach CA <i>Lincoln</i>
BL	Big Lake <i>Holt</i>
BLCA	Bushwacker Lake CA <i>Vernon</i>
CBCA	Columbia Bottom CA <i>St. Louis</i>
CCNWR	Clarence Cannon National Wildlife Refuge <i>Pike</i>
CECL	Center Creek Lagoon <i>Jasper</i>
CJL	Carl Junction Lagoon <i>Jasper</i>
DCCA	Duck Creek CA <i>Bollinger/Stoddard</i>
EBCA	Eagle Bluffs CA <i>Boone</i>

EBP	East Battlefield Pond <i>Greene</i>
FL	Fellows Lake <i>Greene</i>
FRCA	Four Rivers CA <i>Vernon</i>
LBL	Long Branch Lake <i>Macon</i>
LS	Lake Springfield <i>Greene</i>
LW	Lake Wapappello <i>Wayne</i>
MCA	Montrose CA <i>Henry</i>
MCL	Macon City Lake <i>Macon</i>
MNWR	Mingo National Wildlife Refuge <i>Stoddard/Wayne</i>
MSL	Maryville Sewage Lagoons <i>Nodaway</i>
OSCA	Otter Slough CA <i>Stoddard</i>
RMBS	Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary <i>St. Charles</i>
SCNWR	Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge <i>Holt</i>
SLNWR	Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge <i>Chariton</i>
SSCA	Sever South CA <i>Knox</i>
STCA	Shawnee Trail CA <i>Barton</i>
TD	Truman Dam <i>Benton</i>
THR	Thomas Hill Reservoir <i>Randolph</i>
TMPCA	Ten Mile Pond CA <i>Mississippi</i>
TRL	Table Rock Lake <i>Taney</i>
WD	Winfield Dam <i>Lincoln</i>
WGCA	Wildcat Glades CA <i>Newton</i>
WP	Wah-Sha-She Prairie <i>Jasper</i>
WSCA	Weldon Spring CA <i>St. Charles</i>

CORRIGENDA FOR FALL 2012 SEASONAL REPORT

[Editor's Note: Gremlins apparently got in the file during editing the Fall 2012 Seasonal Report, because several observers were inadvertently omitted. The correct list of observers is given below.]

Observers

Chris Barrigar (CBa), John Bolin (JB), Charley Burwick (CBu), Jeff Cantrell (JCa), Frankie Cuculich (FC), Ryan Douglas (RD), David Easterla (DAE), Susan Hazelwood (SH), Mark Haas (MH), Don Hays (DH), Lawrence Herbert (LH), Jack Hilsabeck (JH), Steve Kinder (SK), Jon King (JK), Andrew Kinslow (AK), Peter Kondrashov (PK), Larry Lade (LL), Pat Lueders (PL), Jim and Charlene Malone (J&CM), Kristi Mayo (KM), Dana Ripper (DR), Mark Robbins (MBR), Bill Rowe (BR), Greg Samuel (GSa), Scott Schuette (SS), Gregory Swick (GSw), Mike Thelen (MT), Joshua Uffman (JU), Edge Wade (EW), Doug Willis (DW).

A BIRDERS' GUIDE TO MISSOURI PUBLIC LANDS

Edge Wade & Others

PERRY COUNTY COMMUNITY LAKE Mark Haas, March, 2012

310 acres Perry Co. DeLorme 58, A-1; MDC owned; for more information call 573-290-5730.

Directions: The lake is at the west city limit of Perryville. To enter at the north end, near the dam, take Rt. T to CR 700. The upper end is reached from CR 702 off the I-55 West Outer Road.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: As of March, 2012, there are 127 species on the checklist. Waterfowl are well represented, with 14 species of ducks seen on the lake during this past fall through early spring. Canvasback and Ruddy Duck were among those most frequently observed. **Double-crested Cormorant, Horned Grebe, and Bonaparte's Gull were also observed during this period.**

Resident woodland birds have been joined over winter by Yellow-rumped Warbler, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Brown Creeper, Hermit Thrush, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Winter Wren. Eastern Phoebe and Belted Kingfisher are among the summer residents likely to linger through the winter. Eight sparrow species, including Fox, Savannah, and Chipping Sparrows, were seen near the lake during the fall through early spring.

An American Woodcock was displaying on January 30, 2012, and was joined by several others in courtship displays through February and March. Late last summer, a few small mudflats were exposed in the upper end of the lake, and attracted migrating shorebirds. A nice mix of raptors has been **seen around the lake. There's a good chance to see Osprey in fall and spring** and Bald Eagle fall through spring. The potential of finding migrating warblers, vireos and other passerines has only been lightly tapped.

Features of interest to birders: The 103-acre lake can be viewed from the 4 parking lots, the fishing dock at the north end, the 2 boat ramps (north end and east side), and the four fishing jetties on the east side. The parking lot between the dam and north boat ramp is, by far, the best birding spot. **Besides a great view of the lake, it's adjacent to the grassy field attractive to American Woodcock, raptors, and most sparrows.** The pine trees lining the lot attract warblers, Red-breasted nuthatch, and a host of other species. This lot is also most popular with non-birders, so come early in the morning or on a day the weather discourages anglers.

The south fishing jetty (near the east boat ramp) has the best view of the upper end of the lake for Wood Duck, other dabblers, and shorebirds. The short entrance road, from CR 700, is definitely worth a walk. It passes between brushy or grassy fields with scattered pines, shrubs, and hardwoods—a diversity of habitats that means good birding.

Another great way to view the lake, and also see woodland birds, is the 4-mile-long loop shoreline trail. The trail goes through mature hardwoods, cedar groves, brushy areas, and (on the west side) past a small pond/marshy area. There are five lake-side benches along the trail, which is easy walking, and it passes through all four parking lots.

A good way to walk the trail, especially when viewing waterfowl, is to cross the dam, follow the trail around the two major coves on the west side, and then retrace your steps back to the dam parking lot. This tactic often results in new sightings for the day—coming and going.

Toilets: One privy near each of the two boat ramps

Camping: None; 2 small picnic areas. A private campground is nearby on the I-55 Outer Road.

Hazards/Limitations: Fishing and sightseeing activity can be heavy. A small archery range is at the south end. Housing developments adjoin the area boundary at several locations.

Nearby Birding Sites: Ball Mill Resurgence, Red Rock Landing CA, Tower Rock CA, Seventy-Six CA, Maintz Wildlife Preserve, Apple Creek CA, Hawn SP, St. Joe SP.

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CAPPS CREEK CONSERVATION AREA
Jeff Cantrell, March 2012

724 acres in eastern Newton County, DeLorme 60, D-5; MDC owned and managed. For area information, contact the MDC Neosho Office at 417-451-4158.

Directions from Monett, Missouri: – drive 7 miles west of Monett on Highway 60 to Wallaby Road. Turn left (south) and drive south 1 ½ miles to the center of Capps Creek Conservation Area.

Directions from Neosho: Drive east on 59 Highway to Highway 86. Turn right (east) on 86 Highway, and drive to Newtonia, staying onto Highway EE. Turn left (north) onto Wallaby Road and cross Capps Creek, to enter the area from the south.

When to visit and what to expect: Capps Creek is an allure to birders, wild-life photographers and families in general. Because it borders Jolly Mill and the surrounding roads, the timeworn iron bridge and parking lots makes wildlife viewing an ease.

Anytime is a good time to bird the Capps Creek area. The local region is well known for wintering bald eagles and Capps Creek holds its share. A winter visit between early December and late February will easily bring 5 – 20 eagles into view. Historically the Sarcoux Prairie lay to the north and Oliver Prairie to the west so occasionally a rough legged hawk cruises by with the terrain looking like the land of the past.

The ample shrub cover on the north side of the area holds a good variety of **sparrows including: Harris's, white-crowned** sparrows, white-throated, Lincoln, and fox sparrows and towhees. An occasional spotted towhee may be seen in the winter. Late winter (late February to mid-March) bring timberdoodle displays. Woodcock can be plentiful in the twilight hours over the creek valleys and shrubby rolling hills.

There is a decent barn owl population in the vicinity and they have nested on the area and nearby. When you are driving through, spotting woodcock, or owling the area you may see one perched on a corner post or feeding on the side of the road.

Although there are no nature trails; it is an easy walk for migration birding along the riparian edge of Capps and Shoal Creek. Mid-April through mid-May will bring transient warblers such as orange crowned, **American redstart, Wilson's, Nashville, and palm. The variety of shrub, forest and grassland** habitat brings a full house of flycatchers. Olive-sided flycatchers seem to stay on for a week early in May and scissor-tailed, eastern kingbirds, peewee, great crested, phoebes and a willow are all confirmed nesters.

In a part of the state where shorebird habitat is rare a newly developed marsh has been a boon for pectoral, solitary, least sandpipers, greater yellowlegs and lesser yellowlegs. Dabblers and especially blue-winged teal utilize the marsh in the spring.

Features of interest to birders: Jolly Mill borders Capps Creek Conservation Area on the NE corner. This charming park is free to the public and offers a slice of history, relaxation and facilities. The area has a wealth of fascinating history of civil war, pioneer, bluff dweller, woodland, Osage culture. A functional mill still runs on certain weekends and there are plenty of picnic tables to suit a birding group taking in a meal by the millpond, spring or creek. Most red-eyed vireos, **yellow-throated warblers, summer tanagers ...** go undetected by the picnickers in this quiet little park. Birders with a hankering to wet a hook enjoy a half mile of Capps and quarter mile of Shoal Creek for bass, sunfish and trout fishing.

Toilets: none on the area, but neighboring Jolly Mill Park has nice, clean facilities. Open daylight hours.

Camping: None

Hazards/Limitations: None noted. Avoid trespass on the inholding.

Nearby birding sites: Jolly Mill Park, Roaring River State Park, Roaring River Conservation Area, Chute Ridge Glades (adjacent to Roaring River SP), Diamond Grove Prairie, Morse Park (Neosho).

REFORM CONSERVATION AREA Edge Wade March, 2012

6,759 acres Callaway Co. DeLorme 38, D/E-5; Leased by MDC from Ameren Missouri; for information call 573-254-3330.

Directions: >From Fulton, go east on Rt. O about 9 miles. A right turn onto Rt. CC provides access to the west, central and south parts of the area. Staying on Rt. O presents two options: entering the area on CR 448 to bird the northeast portion, or stopping at a parking area further along Rt. O.

From Jefferson City, go north on US 63/54 across the Missouri River, then east on MO 94 to CR 458 to enter the area from the south end.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: This is an area that is still being explored for niches that may support many species. It has proven to be good birding for sparrows, woodpeckers, and raptors. The checklist will grow as adventurous birders make discoveries here.

Features of interest to birders: The central section surrounding the Callaway Nuclear Power Plant is fenced and strictly off limits. The off limits area includes a large area outside the fence. [see Hazards/Limitations section].

Fifteen parking lots provide easy stopping points. Several have paths or old two tracks leading from them that, with a short walk, will take birders through grassland, into woods or to ponds. Four lots are on the west side of Rt. CC or a short distance west off of it. Explore the areas with brush rows created in 2011 and 2012 for sparrows.

CR 428 going east is open to the public, but the land it traverses is not. Stay on the road. It skirts the fenced area (east off Rt. CC) and connects with CR 448. **A large sign indicates “Entrance D” at the intersection of CR 428 and Rt. CC, and a similar sign, “Entrance E” is where CR 428 meets CR 448.** Along CR 428 is a large pine plantation to check for Pine Warblers, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and other pine-loving in proper season, and a pond to the north that can be viewed from the road.

CR 448, running south from Rt. O, then east leads past 5 parking areas. This is mostly old fields, grassland habitat, but woods can be reached with short to moderate-length walks. One good-sized pond can be checked from a lot, and a short walk leads along trees and into old fields.

CR 459 going east from Rt. CC, about a half-mile south of 428, is signed **“Main Entrance”**. **This road goes past a 7-acre lake on the south**, then the plant entrance on the north, and the road becomes gravel shortly after. Seven parking areas, a microwave tower, and Riverview Cemetery are along this road as it runs southerly, mostly along a ridge line for the length of the area to the junction with MO 94 and toward the Missouri River floodplain.

CR 468 runs east along Logan Creek, beginning near the south end of CR 459. A walk along this 3/4 mile stretch of riparian/floodplain habitat can be especially birdy in spring migration.

An old railroad bed, now a well-maintained “closed to vehicles” gravel road cuts up from CR 468 roughly parallel with CR 459 through glade and woods toward the center of the area. Carolina Chickadees may be found near its south end.

The Katy Trail transects the southernmost portion and provides easy access to the limited bottomland area, roughly paralleling MO 94.

In 2011 and 2012, feathering work by MDC to provide habitat for quail and small mammals, and extensive power transmission line and road woody growth trimming have provided material for brush and slash piles many species of birds have found attractive.

There are several ponds, most visible from a road or parking area, but a couple hidden from view within the off limits area. Do not enter off limits areas to bird them.

Toilets: None

Camping: None

Hazards/Limitations: Approximately 1,000 acres are off limits, including and surrounding the fenced core area of the nuclear power facility and a mining area in the northeast corner. Additional portions of the area, including CR 428 may be closed during elevated threat alerts issued by the Division of Homeland Security. Warning sirens are tested about noon, the first Tuesday of each month.

Several fenced one-hectare ecology study plots with additional 100 yard perimeter buffers are scattered throughout the area. These were established by the power company, are strictly off limits to the public, and no habitat management is conducted on them by MDC.

Hunting activity can be heavy. In deer, turkey, rabbit, quail and dove seasons, birders may wish to stay near the roads or in open areas.

Nearby Birding Sites: Whetstone Creek CA, Daniel Boone CA, Danville CA, **Ham’s Prairie Access, Mokane Access, Little Dixie Lake CA.**

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WELDON SPRING CONSERVATION AREA
Edge Wade, March 2012

8,359 acres St Charles Co. DeLorme 40, F-4; Owned by MDC; for additional information call 636-441-4554.

Directions: From I-64 westbound, exit at MO 94 and go south, from I-64 eastbound there is no exit at MO 94. Exit at the sign for August A. Busch CA and follow the south side outer road to MO 94. Stay on MO 94 for Weldon Spring sites.

Prairie Lake is reached from Missouri Research Park Dr., off MO 94, between I-64 and the outer road intersection. Take Research Park Dr. to just past the commuter parking lot. A gravel road on the right leads to a lot and the lake. The remainder of the area is reached from lots along MO 94.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: Any time is good here. The habitat variety is about as great as can be expected in Missouri. The 201 species checklist includes 17 species of sparrows, 13 raptors, and 33 warblers (the Lost Valley Trail is one of the best places in the state to find nesting Cerulean Warblers). If the chickadees at Weldon Spring were sorted out, the list would be 202 or 203.

So many rarities have been found here that birders can enter the area with high hopes of finding something special. In December, 2004, a Lark Bunting was found, in August, 2006 Swallow-tailed Kite spent several days around **the sealed hazardous waste mound birders call “Mt. Doom”** [see Hazards/Limitations section]. Recorded in August A. Busch CA, the bird flew over Weldon Spring CA more than once. A Painted Bunting was reported regularly near the Katy Trail parking lot from June 2002 into July 2007, and a Common Ground Dove spent the last six weeks of 2011 hanging around the **“Blue Grosbeak Trail”** [see below].

Features of interest to birders: Several parking lots provide access to trails.

A favorite trail has no “official” name. Dubbed “The Blue Grosbeak Trail” by birders, it is beyond the orange gate at the first part of the parking lot nearest Fire Lake. This is the first parking lot along the south side of MO 94 when coming from I-64. It is east of the intersection with Rt. D, and is east of Francis Howell H.S.

The Blue Grosbeak trail is a birder’s delight for seeking sparrows (including Le Conte’s), Bell’s Vireo, and a host of migrant and breeding passerines. American Woodcocks can be found at dawn and dusk along the trail in late February and early March.

Another excellent trail for birding is the Lost Valley Trail, accessed from the last (westernmost) parking lot on MO 94. The trail goes into the Little Femme Osage Creek valley where towering sycamores provide nesting habitat for Cerulean Warblers. A walk here in spring and early summer for a mile or so of this 11-mile loop is about as idyllic as birding can get. Mountain bikes can be expected along this trail.

The Lewis and Clark Trail loops begin at the first lot on the south side of MO 94 west of Francis Howell H.S. The combined trail (stay to the right from the parking lot) goes along high ground and drops toward the Missouri River just beyond the 1 mile marker. The Clark Trail splits off for a return loop through the 385-acre Weldon Spring Hollow Natural Area with upland and bottomland forest through rugged river breaks topography (total about 5.3 miles). The longer Lewis loop (8.2 miles) is a gentler trek. These trails are for foot travel only.

The Hamburg Trail roughly parallels MO 94 for most of the length of the area and connects into Busch CA. It is a 6-mile non-loop multi-use trail.

A 5.3 mile section of Katy Trail SP runs along the Missouri River through Weldon Spring CA.

There are several ponds near trails. The road off MO 94 to the Katy Trail parking lot continues through Femme Osage Slough to a boat ramp on the Missouri River, giving access to habitat different from trail areas.

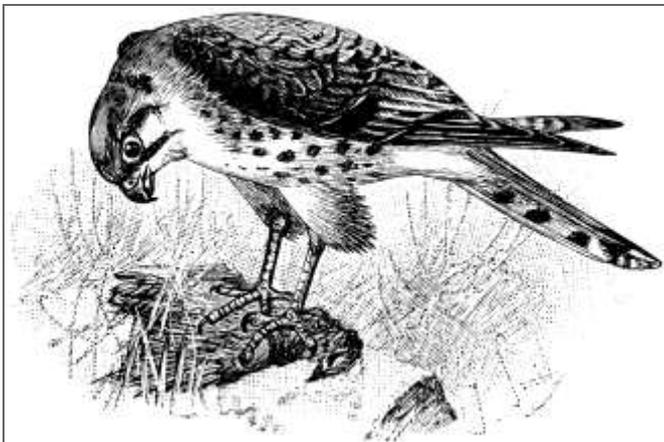
Toilets: One vault toilet at the Katy Trail SP parking lot off road leading to boat ramp.

Camping: Missouri River boaters may camp within 100 yards of the river between April 1 and September 30.

Hazards/Limitations: The MDC area description includes these statements, **“Portions of the Weldon Spring Conservation Area were used by the Department of Army in the 1940’s for TNT and DNT production and by the Atomic Energy Commission in the 1960’s for uranium ore processing. The affected portions were all part of a federal environmental cleanup project and required to meet certain environmental health and safety standards. The area is now considered safe for all recreational pursuits allowed on the area, as well as the wildlife found within the area. To find out more about the history of these activities on the area, you can visit the Weldon Spring Site Interpretive Center located at 7295 Highway 94 South, St. Charles, MO, 63304.”**

Hunting activity can be heavy. Extreme caution should be taken and orange clothing worn, even on trails, during hunting seasons, especially dove and quail seasons.

Nearby Birding Sites: August A. Busch Memorial CA, Katy Trail SP; Weldon Spring CA Darst Bottom Tract 1,008 acres is accessible only by river.



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