



THE BLUEBIRD

The voice of ASM since 1934

**September 2013
Volume 80, No. 3**



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

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

Feb. 1 for March issue; May 1 for June issue;

Jul. 15 for Sept. issue; Nov. 1 for Dec. issue

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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SPECIAL INSERT: ASM Fall Meeting, Camp Clover Point, Lake of the Ozarks State Park, Osage Beach, Missouri, September 27-29, 2013.

Front Cover—This Loggerhead Shrike was found and photographed by Al Smith near Winfield Lock and Dam, Lincoln County, on April 9, 2013.

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—JUNE NEWMAN



Dear Fellow Birders,

ASM's agreements with MDC and DNR provide funds which we may apply to carefully considered efforts in the state that further our mission:

“The society is dedicated to the preservation and protection of birds and other wildlife; to education and appreciation of the natural world; and to effective wildlife and habitat conservation practices.”

One organization in Missouri which manages to do all those things is the Green

Leadership Academy for Diverse Ecosystems. GLADE is a **“conservation leadership project developed by the Greater Ozarks Audubon Society and the Missouri State University Biology Department.** Each summer, sixteen outstanding, conservation-oriented young people are selected to participate in a variety of hands-on ecology activities that include bird banding, water quality monitoring, habitat restoration, leadership development, and community improvement.” www.greenleadershipacademy.org/ From that page, click on **“2013 GLADE Newsletter”** to read some descriptions of the week in the participants' own words. You will wish you were eligible to attend!

ASM provided \$1000 for the 2012 session, and \$1200 for the 2013 session. We are able to participate in such efforts only because of the funds we earn maintaining the checklist database for MDC and DNR in the CACHE and SPARKS agreements.

If you contribute your lists from trips to State Parks, or to Conservation Areas, you can feel a personal pride in this exciting opportunity for young people.

This letter of thanks from Greg Swick, the director of GLADE, details the reasons I believe this investment in young people is an eminently sound one.

Dear June and the entire ASM Board,

Wow! What an honor it is to partner with ASM to bring high quality environmental education to Ozark youth! Your continued support and generosity is greatly appreciated!

This year we trained our best group of young leaders ever. We banded 27 birds, many of them neotropicals nesting in the Ozarks, and submitted the data to MAPS database and CACHE.

Again, we transplanted 2 acres of Giant Cane. Currently the cane on Bee Creek is benefitting from the regular rains this year. There is now more cane there than there was when the last Swainson's Warblers nested there. We are hopeful that our efforts will result in the return of the species to the area.

So, here's to our shared hope that our investment in the land and today's youth will ensure the beauty, health, and well-being of both biological and human communities.

Thanks so much!

Sincerely,

Greg Swick and all the GLADE Staff

A special little joy for me is to discover I've added a new species to the checklist for one of our State Parks or Conservation Areas. It's hard to do at a much-birded site, but if you bird at one of our many under-birded areas, especially at a time of year with few reports, your odds are very good. Find checklists on mobirds.org in the drop down menu under CACHE/SPARKS. Find under-birded areas from the CACHE/SPARKS menu > reports > effort summary. While you're on the website, browse around. Fascinating, useful information lurks there.

Register for Fall Meeting NOW, before this issue gets buried in the mail pile. The simplest way for you and for our treasurer is to do it online at mobirds.org. But if you prefer paper and snail mail, that still works.

Where else can you get a weekend's lodging, excellent meals and entertainment—all in a beautiful location with exceptional people and birds—for only \$65.00? I want to see YOU at Camp Clover Point, Lake of the Ozarks State Park on the last weekend in September!

June Newman,
President

Real-life Roadrunner Cartoon

(and Other Bird Encounters Around Roaring River State Park, late June 2013).

Ronda Sherrill

When I was able to go to Roaring River area in late June, I determined to visit a site where I had had a tip that roadrunners could be seen. A couple of birders from Kansas going west as we went east on a road south of Roaring River State Park had told a friend and me as we birded in spring that roadrunners were running around and vocalizing at the two abandoned houses at the intersection where we **were heading. We didn't see them that day, but maybe I would on another try.** At the intersection I walked around and listened and looked and after some time I thought it was time to move on, but I heard a cooing. My first thought was: Mourning Doves, but no, it was a different coo. I remembered that roadrunners coo, so after a quick confirming check in my bird ID book for description of their coo, I knew I had a roadrunner somewhere about. I kept an eagle eye on the place in the back yard between the garage and one abandoned house where it seemed the sound was originating. I cooed and **the bird cooed, back and forth. I concluded he was "conversing" with me.** He would pause, then coo some more, I would pause, then coo some more, he would coo, I would coo as nearly like his coo as I **could. This went on for quite a while, but he didn't appear.** After some time of this routine, I figured it was time to call it a draw with **my loss. I hadn't seen a roadrunner in several years and hoped for one this year. But he wasn't appearing.**

As we were driving away, I happened to notice out of the corner of my eye a large bird up about 30 feet in a tree behind the garage. I lifted the binoculars to my eyes and what to my wondering eye should appear but a roadrunner. A roadrunner!! Up in a tree!!! I said **affectionately to him, "You dork! No wonder you have been made into a cartoon."** He cooed some more and with each coo he thrust himself forward, much like a concert pianist who is really into his music, using his whole body to make his song. He stopped to preen. He hopped a bit along a branch, behind some leaves. We pulled the van forward so I could still see him. All this time I saw the underside of his tail and realized it is like the underside of the tail of a cuckoo, his relative. Suddenly he flew, or rather glided, down into the yard and ran like a roadrunner!

Then for several minutes he did short thrusting runs after insects, eating one every few inches all around the yard. Each time he stopped to eat an insect he raised his tail at a right angle to his body. His tail was longer than the combined length of his body and bill. After raising it in a pause, he would lower it until he was running again after the next insect. He ran around feeding like this until he went behind a bush out of sight. I sighed with satisfaction at this neat encounter with a truly funny bird. He had given me some very good views and lots of action, including some action that was very un-roadrunner-like, and all sorts of characteristic action—except for bill-clacking, which I had seen and heard once near Neosho where roadrunners nested one year.

I've heard it said that the favorite bird is the one in the binoculars at any given moment. I guess I have many favorites; the roadrunner is certainly one of them.

The night before along Pibern Trail I had heard the long song of the Wood Thrush. I have heard several famous birders say that the Wood Thrush and the Hermit Thrush have the most beautiful of all bird songs. I listened to the Wood Thrush song on the iPad before I **went on the trail, and couldn't imagine how that could be the most beautiful bird song.** But that was only 3 or 4 of his 3-5 note phrases, whereas when he sang, it was one phrase after another, each one **ending in what has been described as a "complex trill," but many of them sounded to me like a string snapping on a stringed instrument.** Each phrase differed from the phrase preceding, and maybe even from every other phrase in the entire long episode of singing on and on, phrase after phrase in the oncoming dusk. Altogether the song was truly captivating, entrancing beyond description. It seemed as if a poetic soul had been improvising on a pan flute. The woods came to life with his song. He also appeared now and then as he moved around in the woods—not too often, but enough for a good view along with the wondrous singing.

The other two highlights of this trip to the Roaring River State Park area were the three Prairie Warblers flitting on Chute Glade, although they did not sing; and the singing and fussing—and appearing—of a Worm-eating Warbler on Pibern Trail the night after the Wood Thrush serenade.

I love Roaring River, and have many years of memories of all sorts there with children and grandchildren!. We are blessed to have great state parks. Each time in one is different and all are good!

The Great Bird “Fall-Out” In Northwest Missouri During the First Weekend of May 2013

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Bird migration “fall-outs” in North America usually occur on the Louisiana Coast during the spring after the birds’ 500-mile flight northward from the tip of Mexico’s Yucatan Peninsula to Louisiana. If their flight becomes interrupted by severe storms they often become exhausted and are forced down to land upon Louisiana’s coast line. Such birds are often weakened to the extent of being literally grounded, too tired to be in the various shrubs and trees. Under such conditions, feeding is limited to the ground, where the birds are exposed to a variety of predators and other dangers involving vehicles, etc. Often these birds are exhausted and hungry to the point where they are unafraid of humans or any other potential danger and can easily be picked up and handled. During such “fall-outs”, stories abound of the trees, streets, sidewalks, etc. being “alive” with hundreds or thousands of crowded birds that may hop or land on humans, or any other non-natural object. Such is a sight to behold! Sometimes Gulf of Mexico storms blow migrating song birds westward, as recorded by my former Wildlife Ecology and Conservation student Curtis Twellmann (2013. The Great Texas Birding Classic 2013. Bluebird 80:36-38).

Evidently Global Warming and the Greenhouse Effect resulted in a unique 2013 spring for northwest Missouri. Weather extremes during April and early May of 80°F one day, and freezing temperatures the next, certainly threw off the normal phenology of biota, which was very evident in the timing of the flowering plants and bird migration. The year 2013 was the coldest, most erratic spring the writer has ever seen in northwest Missouri during some 51 years!

Shockingly, on Thursday, May 2, 2013, northwest Missouri received a snow storm involving 3”-6” of accumulation along with strong, unseasonably cold westerly and northwesterly winds of 20-35 m.p.h., plus a low temperature of 36°F for the high. An extremely cold front stalled across northwest Missouri, and under such unusual and miserable weather conditions, the migrating birds were forced to the

ground and literally “piled-up,” not only before the snow storm, but during the storm and several days after.

The day after the snow storm (Friday, May 3), my son Todd and I decided to scout the Squaw Creek area, Holt County, Missouri, before the next day when we would be leading the Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge field trips for The Audubon Society of Missouri’s annual spring meeting in northwest Missouri hosted by the St. Joseph Midland Empire Audubon Society. On Friday (May 3) our scouting began at 3:00 P.M. at Forest City, Holt County, Missouri, located some 7 miles southeast of Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge. In first checking the numerous bird feeders in town, we were shocked to see numerous (up to 5-10 individuals per species) Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Indigo Buntings, Baltimore Orioles, and **Pine Siskins (100’s) plus the expected but very numerous House Finches, American Goldfinches, and House Sparrows** at each feeder! Wow, not only a first for us for some species, their numbers, and habitat, but what a sight! One of the strangest sights was a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak feeding on suet at a suet feeder!—certainly a first for both of us. We also noted with interest that no birds were in trees, but were hopping about on the ground. By this time we left our car and investigated, we found all the birds feeding on the ground beside the main street running through Forest City, but also in the shrubby, wooded slopes on the eastern side of the street. We were again surprised by all the songbirds on the ground, or in low shrubs—none in the trees. These birds were not only exhausted and hungry, but also out of the strong, cold northwest wind of 25-35 m.p.h. and of temperatures 34°-36°F (wind chill?), plus the overall cold, rainy conditions.

Our attention was immediately drawn to the numerous Orange-crowned, Tennessee, Yellow, Nashville, Palm, Common Yellowthroat, and Yellow-rumped Warblers feeding on the ground or **low bushes. Also Lincoln’s, Clay-colored, and Chipping sparrows** were all over the ground, plus Eastern Kingbirds and Least Flycatchers. One of the biggest surprises was Warbling Vireos feeding only on the ground, a first for us. By now it was obvious that we were observing a once-in-a-lifetime phenomenon.

From Forest City, we drove to Bob Brown Conservation Area, where we observed a similar situation, then on to Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge. At Squaw Creek we were astounded by all the water birds present. Even more impressive were all the migratory song

birds—again on the ground along the water’s edge and on old smartweed stalks over the water. Impressive too, were the numerous Yellow and Yellow-rumped Warblers beside or over the water—a most unusual sight. When driving the northern, wooded loop at Squaw Creek, we were overwhelmed by the number of Solitary Sandpipers, **Lincoln’s Sparrows**, and **Northern Waterthrushes**—dozens and dozens. Normally in early May during bird counts one struggles to observe just one or two individuals of these species—but not today. At dark we quit birding. From 3:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m., we recorded 120 species.

The next day from St. Joseph, Todd Easterla, Peter Kondrashov and I led the field trip to Squaw Creek N.W.R. Since the weather had not changed and was still extremely cold (36°F) and windy (N.W.), we again counted all individuals for each recorded species. In following Robbins and Easterla (1992. Birds of Missouri-Their Distribution and Abundance, University of Missouri Press, Columbia, 399 pp.), high daily spring counts were established for eight species during one of the two days. These were: Northern Waterthrush 49 (May 3), **Chipping Sparrow 155 (May 3)**, **Lincoln’s Sparrow 53 (May 4)**, Indigo Bunting 49 (May 3), White-faced Ibis 41 (May 4), Peregrine Falcon 6 (May 4), Solitary Sandpiper 21 (May 4), and Clay-colored Sparrow 137 (May 4).

Probably one of the most impressive high count numbers was for the Clay-colored Sparrow. Normally one has to look through large migrating flocks of Chipping Sparrows to find a Clay-colored Sparrow—not on May 4 when several times we observed pure flocks of them without any Chipping Sparrows—a first for all three of us. It would be interesting to know the actual numbers for these high count species, as we were very conservative in our counting. Often we allowed many individuals to pass by and not count, even though we felt confident of their identification, and many times there were simply too many birds to count and identify at a given time.

In summary, this was the first such Missouri migratory bird “fall-out” we had ever experienced (or heard of). Will it be the last one? Other field trips that week-end in northwest Missouri in the St. Joseph area, also recorded similar bird “fall-outs”.

Progress Report: “Health and its Relation to Patterns of Abundance and Distribution of North American Birds”

Vincenzo A. Ellis

Last year I received a grant from the Audubon Society of Missouri to support my graduate research on avian disease ecology. The funding supported lab work on the blood samples I had obtained from mist-netted birds in the Ozarks of southern Missouri and in forests of the St. Louis region and in other parts of eastern North America. Here I will outline my research goals and report on the progress I have made as a direct result of the generous funding from the Missouri Audubon Society.

I started my graduate studies in Bob Ricklefs’ lab at the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) in August of 2010. My research project began to take shape when Bob focused my attention on an important ecological observation: in any given community, most species are rare and few are abundant. Birders know this as well as anyone—how many Red-eyed Vireos do you normally hear on a walk through the woods before you find a Scarlet Tanager, or Northern Parula, or a Black-and-white Warbler? Many ecologists have argued that resource competition between species can explain this pattern (MacArthur 1972, Cody 1974). However, recent analyses of bird communities in eastern North America have failed to support this conclusion (Ricklefs 2011). Given the lack of satisfactory explanations Bob suggested I focus my research on determining the importance of parasites in regulating the commonness and rarity of birds. There are many reasons to suspect that parasites might control the relative abundance of birds in a community. Like predators, parasites have been shown to cycle in abundance with their hosts, most well-documented in a Scottish Red Grouse (host) nematode (parasite) system (Hudson et al. 1998), and parasites have recently been shown to represent a significant portion of the overall biomass of an entire community (Kuris et al. 2008). Moreover, plant ecologists have recently shown experimentally that soil pathogens can influence the abundance of tropical tree species in a community (Mangan et al. 2010).

Some of the most common parasites of birds are blood parasites in the order Haemosporida (genera *Plasmodium*, *Haemoproteus*, *Leucocytozoon*), commonly referred to as avian malaria. Bob and other

members of the Ricklefs Lab in collaboration with the Missouri Ozark Forest Ecosystem Project previously found substantial diversity of avian malaria parasites in the local bird community of the Missouri Ozarks (Ricklefs et al. 2005). For the first part of my dissertation I teamed up with (now graduated) University of Missouri-Columbia graduate student and expert ornithologist Alicia Burke and several undergraduates from UMSL, including Melanie Kunkel and Elyse Coffey, to further sample birds in the Missouri Ozarks for avian malaria. Avian malaria can be detected by drawing a small **sample of blood from the bird's wing, extracting total DNA and using molecular methods to screen for parasite DNA.** Besides molecular screening, we made blood smears on glass slides to quantify white blood cell concentrations, an important component of the immune response. One of our first results demonstrated that white blood cell profiles can be used as general indicators of malaria infection. Multivariate analysis indicated that individuals with malaria were shifted into a portion of the overall white blood cell multivariate space that was also occupied by uninfected individuals, suggesting that these latter individuals might have harbored other pathogens. This is useful because little is known about the natural history of other parasites in these birds.

We also looked into the relationship between local avian abundance in the Ozarks and the prevalence of avian malaria (i.e., the proportion of individuals infected per species). I used abundance data interpolated from the North American Breeding Bird Survey. This analysis showed a strong positive relationship between parasite prevalence and local abundance, with the most abundant species having higher parasite prevalence than rarer species (Figure 1). This result suggests a contagion hypothesis wherein the most abundant species have the highest chance of getting infected simply because they are abundant. It also suggests that malaria parasite prevalence may be a consequence of avian abundance patterns, rather than a cause.

An important next step to testing the parasite hypothesis is to look at parasites across several communities. What if an individual species' abundance were negatively related to parasite prevalence? Such a result might suggest that parasites are important in controlling abundance patterns at a bigger scale. I have begun sampling more localities to investigate this possibility, including forested areas of St. Louis in collaboration with Matthew Medeiros, a fellow graduate student in the Ricklefs Lab. I have also been able to sam-

ple in many other sites across eastern North America and am in the process of analyzing the samples in the lab.

The research I have outlined makes up a large part of my dissertation and I hope will be relevant to the fields of ecology and conservation biology. I am grateful to the Audubon Society of Missouri for recognizing and supporting my research.

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SPRING 2013 SEASONAL REPORT *JOSHUA P. UFFMAN & RYAN N. DOUGLAS*

In stark contrast to the record high temperatures and drought of 2012, the spring of 2013 was wet and cool. Averaging 6 degrees below normal, it was the coldest March in 17 years. An inch or two of rainfall March 9-10 resulted in recovery to surface water supplies, particularly when combined with snowmelt across the northern and central parts. Two noteworthy snow systems impacted the region: 4-10 inches from Springfield to Lebanon March 21 and 4-12 inches across the northern and central parts March 24-25, with the heaviest totals reported around St. Louis. By the end of March, the biggest drought concern was in the northwest, where winter precipitation totals were much lower.

During April, many observers commented that vegetative growth was delayed in their respective parts of the state. Temperatures across the state averaged 5 degrees below normal in the northwest and only about a degree or two in the southeast. Multiple periods of showers and thunderstorms impacted the region. One of the more notable systems moved through during middle of the month, with several inches of rain falling April 17-18. This caused flooding along many streams and rivers across the north-central parts and the Upper Mississippi River watershed. It was the worst spring flooding along the Mississippi River, north of St. Louis, since 1973. **Interestingly, the season's most remarkable records arrived with the passage of this system – a second-state record Garganey and an unthinkable first-state record Golden-cheeked Warbler.** Many observers noted a few species arriving ahead of schedule; particularly Yellow-billed Cuckoos, Blue Grosbeaks, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. An unusual snow event affected northwestern and west-central Missouri the morning of April 24, with several locations reporting up to 2 inches of snow. By the end of the month most of the drought was erased across Missouri, with only the northwestern corner remaining questionable, but having improved greatly.

Above normal precipitation and below normal temperatures continued into May. All-time monthly records were set May 3 in several **locations, with high temperatures never climbing out of the 30's and 2-7 inches of snow in a north-south band across western Missouri.** According to the Missouri Climate Center, the last time a May snowfall of this magnitude occurred was May 2, 1929. These extreme weather conditions resulted in the greatest bird fallout Dave Easter-

la has observed in his 48 years in the northwest. Easterla found Forest City bird feeders in Holt County covered with Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Baltimore Orioles, Indigo Buntings and Pine Siskins. Other species were hesitant to fly, such as the Warbling Vireos he observed feeding on the ground. In central Missouri, Paul McKenzie found Scarlet and Summer Tanagers, Northern Parulas, and flycatchers feeding on the ground as he hunted for morel mushrooms in his long johns. May continued with a roller-coaster of temperature swings and above normal precipitation totals. Interestingly, the drought concerns at the start of this season turned to those of excessive water issues by the end of May, with major flooding along the Mississippi River.

In addition to the highlight species already mentioned, this spring had a few other surprises: Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, Fulvous Whistling-Ducks and Anhingas in the southeast; Ruffs (two locations), a **Say's Phoebe**, and a Lazuli Bunting in the northwest; another Lazuli Bunting in the northeast; a Vermilion Flycatcher and Lesser Goldfinch in west-central; and a Purple Gallinule in the southwest. Finally, the spectacular winter finch invasion of 2012-13 continued through the end of the season.

WHISTLING-DUCKS THROUGH GREBES

Both whistling-duck species made appearances at MNWR: a single Black-bellied Whistling-Duck 14 May (Peter Rae *vide* CBa), 5 more 20 May (Brad Pendley *vide* CBa), and 3 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks 30 Apr (SD). Greater White-fronted Geese peaked the first two weeks of Mar: 5000 at High Prairie *Webster* 1 Mar (GSa), 3000 along DRD 2 Mar (CM, JM), and 1000 at SLNWR 12 Mar, where 800 remained 3 Apr (SK). May birds included 1-3 at OSCA 8-18 May (SD), and 1 at LCSP 19 May (KM). Extensive snow cover in early Mar in the north and west contributed to above average Snow Goose counts for cen. and e. Missouri. In the St. Louis area, an estimated 30,000 were at two *St. Charles* sites 2 Mar (JM, CM, BR), with an additional 10,000 just south of WLD the same day (BR). In cen. Missouri 15 Mar, approximately 50,000 were at EBCA (VB) and at least 500,000 were at FGCA (PMc, BJ). Injured birds lingered through May: at least 29 were at OSCA (CBa, m. obs.), up to 15 were at SCNWR (MT, m. obs.), and at least 1 was at CBCA 18-23 May (BR, MP, m. obs.) and EBCA 22 May (NM). Peak **Ross's Goose** counts included 10 in the east near RMBS 4 Mar (PL, Jean Seisener) and 33 in the west at SCNWR 7 Apr (JB). A Mute Swan of unknown origin was at RMBS 6-13 Apr (David Marjamaa, MT, m. obs.). The highest spring Trumpeter Swan counts included 80 at SLNWR 4 Mar (SK) and 31 at SCNWR 1 Apr (DW). The latest was a single at EBCA 17 May (BW), where 2 were present 31 Mar-11 May (EW, PMc, RD, m. obs.), and another at SCNWR 1 May (DW). The only Tundra Swans remaining were singles: RMBS 23-24 Mar (MT, CM, JM, JU) and SCNWR 1 Apr (ph. DW).

Two-thousand Gadwalls along DRD was a peak count 2 Mar (JM, CM). However, in the west they were late to leave, with 900 still at SCNWR 5 May (DE, TE, m. obs.), and 110 remaining on the late date of 23 May (MR). A Gadwall × Mallard hybrid was observed by many at SCNWR 1-13 May (ph. DW). DRD held 325 American Wigeons 2 Mar (CM, JM) and 8 at SCNWR 25 May was the last report (JH). Blue-winged Teal peaked on each side of the state 28 Apr, with an estimated 3000 at SCNWR (JB) and another 2000 along Fishers Road *Lincoln* (CM, JM). However, the 1700 still at SCNWR 23 May indicates this species was lagging behind (MR). Cinnamon Teal, all drakes, were noted in w. MO: Webb City Lagoon *Jasper* 21 Mar (LH), 1-2 at SCNWR 27 Apr through at least 5 May (KD, SD), and another at LC 4 May (JP). As expected, a few Blue-winged × Cinnamon Teal hybrids were also found: 1 at BIM 21 Apr (MR, CH, SA), up to 3 at SCNWR 28 Apr-12 May (ph. DW, m. obs.), and another at SL 6 May (ph. DW). Peak Northern Shoveler counts included 1100-1500 in *Nodaway* 3-15 Apr (DE, m. obs.) and 490 at RMBS 7 Apr (BR, JU). Like many of the dabblers this spring, 225 were late at SCNWR 23 May (MR). High Northern Pintail counts all came from St. Louis 2 Mar: at least 300 at BCA (PL, Yvonne Homeyer), 500 at BKLCA (JM, CM), and about 3200 at WLD (JM, CM). **Missouri's 2nd Garganey** (acc.), an ad. male, was a fantastic find by 10-year old Amara Weiss 19 Apr west of Sumner *Chariton*, where it remained through 21 Apr (ph. AS†, PMc† ph. FC, m. obs.). Seven-hundred Green-winged Teal were counted at WLD the morning of 2 Mar (BR), but by the afternoon numbers had grown to an estimated 3600 (JM, CM). The only other high count was of 1500 in *Dunklin* 19 Mar (TJ). Two Canvasbacks at FL 10 Mar (GSa, CBu) and another at *England's Farm Pond Dade*



This male Garganey was initially located by 10-year old Amara Weiss and April 19 near Sumner, Chariton County, and photographed by Al Smith, on April 20, 2013.

27 Mar (CBu) were uncommon sightings in sw. Missouri, while 1-2 at RMBS 10-20 May were late (JM, CM, JU). Redheads lingered into May at three sites: 8 at the Carl Junction Lagoons *Jasper* 2 May (LH), 3 in flooded sod fields along KR 21 May (JM, CM), and 2-8 at SCNWR 20-28 May (DW, m. obs.). The only Ring-necked Ducks mentioned were tardy: 2 at SCNWR 28 Apr-25 May (SN, Steve Martin), 12 at RMBS 10 May (JU), and a single at KR 17 May (CM, JM). David Easterla writes, "The spring of the Greater Scaup – Unbelievable" in regards to seeing the most he has seen in in the northwestern part of the state. He recorded 95 at MSL 13 Mar, 53 across various *Nodaway* sites 18 Mar, and at least 2 remained at MSL 5 May. Counts were quite less outside the northwest, with 4 at FL 11 Mar (GSw), another 4 at FGCA 15 Mar (PMc, BJ), and 8 at RMBS 8 Mar (BR) where at least 3 remained 7 Apr (BR). Peak Lesser Scaup counts included 200 at PCCL 28 Mar (MH) and 1500 at RMBS 6-7 Apr (CM, JM, BR, JU), where 650 remained 13 Apr (MT). Like many of the waterfowl this spring, 1-2 were found across the state during May. Two Surf Scoters visited: an ad. male at RMBS 11-13 May (ph. JM, CM, DSh), and an imm. at FL 23 May established a new record-late date (ph. GSw). Two White-winged Scoters continued from the winter season at RMBS through at least 19 Mar (David and Mary Anne Marjamaa, m. obs.). Buffleheads numbered 86 at RMBS 13 Mar (CM, JM) and 82 at SCNWR 20 Apr (JB), where 4 were still present 12 May (ph. DW). The only other May report was of 15 at MSL 5 May (DE, TE). At RMBS 29 Mar, a Bufflehead × Hooded Merganser hybrid was an interesting mix (JM, CM). Single Common Goldeneyes were at MSL 5 May (DE, TE), RMBS 10 May (JU), and Manito Lake CA *Moniteau* 22 May (EW). Forty-eight Hooded Mergansers at SLNWR 12 Mar was the only peak report (SK), while 13 at SCNWR 4 May might have been breeding birds (DE, TE, PK). Two-hundred Common Mergansers at SLNWR 12 Mar was the only high count (SK). Late birds included 2 at Long Branch Lake SP *Macon* 3 May (NM), 2 fem. at LW 8 May (SD), and an ad. male at Pape Lake *Lafayette* 22 May (EW). Twenty-four Red-breasted Mergansers were at FL 10 Mar (Dorothy Thurman, GSa, CBu), 121 were at RMBS 16 Mar (CM, JM), and at least 40 were at LW 24 Mar (PL, m. obs.). Late Red-breasted included 3 at RMBS 11 May (CM, JM), a single in s. *Boone* 11 May (RD, NM, GC), and another single at Lake Jacomo *Jackson* 24 May (Thomas Gaines Jr.). PCCL held 115 Ruddy Ducks 28 Mar (MH); numbers at RMBS climbed from 280 on 8 Mar to 520 on 7 Apr (BR, JU, CM, JM). Farther west, 500 were at SCNWR 7 Apr (JB) and 260 were at SLNWR 24 Apr (SK). Two remained at both RMBS (CM, JM) and OSCA 26 May (CBa). Data from eBird indicate Ring-necked Pheasants were found at their expected northern locations, with 1-2 entered on numerous checklists, and highs of 4-5 at SCNWR beginning in late Apr. More Greater Prairie-Chicken reports were received compared to the last couple of years, possibly a result of ongoing reintroduction efforts: 1-2 males at three *Barton* prairies 21 Apr-18 May (JC) and another 1-2 at Shelton Prairie CA *Dade* 30 Mar-6 Apr (LB, m. obs.). The highest counts were 10 at DR 29 Apr (SK) and up to 7 at Taberville Prairie CA *St. Clair* 3 Apr-6 May (KB, LO, m. obs.). Twelve Common Loons at Table Rock Lake *Stone* 18 Mar was the only high count (JU). May singles were at BCA 4 May (CM) and SCNWR 23 May

(MR). Twenty-eight Pied-billed Grebes at RMBS 7 Apr was a peak migration count (BR, JU), while at least 15 calling and displaying at SCNWR beginning 8 May were breeding birds (MT, MR). Farther south, an adult with 5 young was at LW 5 May (SD). Horned Grebes lingered into May at no fewer than 6 sites, with the highest being 3 at FL 2 May (Dorothy Thurman), 6 at SCNWR through 12 May (KD, m. obs.), and 13 at MSL 5 May (DE, TE). The first 2 Eared Grebes in the south were at FL 10 Mar (GSa, CBU, m. obs.) and in the north a single was at SCNWR 1 Apr (DW). The only e. MO reports were at RMBS: 3 on 29 Mar (EW) and a single 20 Apr (BW, m. obs.). One to 3 were found throughout Apr at various w. MO sites, with a peak count of 9 at SCNWR 20 Apr (JB, JK). Many remained into May: 3 at SCNWR 5 May (DE, TE, m. obs.), where at least 1 remained 12 May (KD); 3 at MSL 5 May (DE, TE); and 1 at SLNWR 7 May (Dan Cowell). A Western Grebe, likely the same bird first found during the winter season, was at RMBS 13 Mar-13 Apr (CM, JM, MT, PL, m. obs.). In w. MO, 2 were at SL 13 May (ph. DW) and then 3 on 23 May (ph. DW).

CORMORANTS THROUGH CRANES

A Neotropic Cormorant was record early at SL 10 Apr where it remained through 25 Apr (ph. DW). Seventeen Double-crested Cormorants at Tower Rock NA *Perry* 28 May might be part of a nearby breeding colony (MH). Chad Doolen photographed 2 Anhingas at MNWR 17 Apr and 1 was there 30 Apr (ph. SD). High counts of American White Pelicans included 600 at WLD 2 Mar (BR) and a high of 1500 at RMBS 15 Mar (CM, JM) of which 500 remained 21 Apr (BR). Farther north and west at least a 1000 were at SLNWR 17 Apr (SK) and another 800 at FGCA 21 Apr (SK). An American Bittern in *Dunklin* 13 Mar established a new early arrival record (ph. TJ). The next individual was not seen until 13 Apr at Schell-Osage CA *Vernon* (JH, GSa, m. obs.). Then, 1-2 were at six other sites through 18 May, with a high of 3-4 near Sumner *Chariton* (PMc, m. obs.) and 7 at the McBaine wetland cells *Boone* (BR, BJ, TE). Only 2 Least Bitterns were mentioned; 1 at CBCA 14 & 18 May (JU, BR) and another at EBCA 20 May (EW). Sixty Great Blue Herons 14 May at SLNWR was the highest count reported (SK). Few Great Egrets reports were received: a combined 50 across two *St. Charles* sites 13 Apr, (MT, PL) and 82 at SLNWR 14 May (SK). Up to 24 Snowy Egrets were at CBCA 14-31 May (JU, BR, Scott Miller) and 3 in the north at SLNWR 17 May (SK). The first Little Blue Heron was in the east at Carondolet Park *St. Louis City* 7-17 Apr (ph. CMc) and in the west 1 was at Jamestown *Greene* 17 Apr (CBu). Counts of at least 15 were regular at CBCA beginning in mid-May, with a high of 39 on 18 May (BR). Away from St. Louis, singles were only mentioned at SCNWR 28 Apr-28 May (DW) and EBCA 9- 26 May (EW, m. obs.). The first Cattle Egret was at Four Rivers CA *Vernon* 3 Apr (ph. GCu). They must have been scarce, because the only others mentioned were 3 at SLNWR 9 Apr (SK) and 12 in *Chariton* 21 May (SK). Green Herons arrived a bit early: the first was at Carondolet Park *St. Louis City* 11 Apr (ph. CMc) and then singles were at three St. Louis area sites and *Boone* 12-13 Apr. Four Black-crowned Night-Herons were at SLNWR 20 Apr (SK, TMc). A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (acc.) in



This remarkable photo shows a White Ibis (right) and Whimbrel found and photographed by Al Smith, near Winfield Lock and Dam, Lincoln County, on May 20, 2013.

Springfield *Greene* established a new record-early date by almost a month **10 Mar (ph. CBU†)**, and **10 active nests were located along Shoal Creek Newton** beginning the first week of May (JC, Cyndi Cogbill). An adult White Ibis in the flooded Mississippi River bottoms near WLD 20 May added to the few n. MO records, and even fewer spring records (ph. AS†). At SCNWR, the first 16 White-faced Ibis were record early by two days 7 Apr (JB), and **41 was the season's high count there 4 May (PE, TE, PK)**. In cen. MO, 1 arrived at EBCA 13 Apr (Richard Stanton), where they peaked 28 Apr-2 May at 22-24 (RD, GC), and 16 were at SLNWR 24 Apr (SK). In the southwest, 16 were at Schell-Osage CA *Vernon* 26 Apr (GSw), and JC found 1 with a wounded leg at Wah-Sha-She Prairie *Jasper* 24 Apr. Eastern reports were scarce: 2 at Little Creve Coeur Lake *St. Louis* 11 May (ph. MP) and 3 at DCCA 8 May (SD). Observers should take careful note of facial features when identifying potential Glossy Ibis; at least 1 Glossy × White-faced Ibis hybrid was found at SCNWR 11 & 15 Apr (ph. DW). Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery *Taney* held at least 76 Black Vultures 18 Mar (ph. JU). Farther east, 9 were at DCCA 23 Mar (PL) and another in Hillsboro *Jefferson* 11 May was a first for Steve Vogel. An Osprey at Phillips Lake *Boone* 11 Apr was the first (EW). Only four others were reported: CBCA 21 Apr (BR), 24 Apr in Nixa *Christian* (Marilyn Owen), SCNWR 4-5 May (JU, MP, DE, m. obs.), and BCA 11 May (JU, MP, CM, JM). The first Mississippi Kite of the season was at **Larry Herbert's yard Jasper** 28 Apr, and by 1 May many had returned to their expected locations in *Greene*, *Cape Girardeau*, and *St. Louis*. The farthest north reports included a single at Weston Bend SP *Platte* 11 & 15 May (Dave Williams, m. obs.), at least 2 at

the University of Missouri *Boone* 13 May (RD), and a group of 8 at BKLCA (JU). The highest count was 21 at Hornersville Swamp *Dunklin* 24 May (TJ). Late Northern Harriers included 3 at DR 29 Apr (SK), a single at WSCA 4 May (CM, JM), 2 at SCNWR 4 May (DE, TE, PK), and the last at CBCA 23 May (JU, MP). Sharp-shinned Hawk singles were last seen at SCNWR 11 May (MT) and Whetstone CA *Callaway* 12 May (MT). The first Broad-winged Hawk in the south was over Red Bridge Road *Christian* 27 Mar (DBI) and in cen. MO 6 Apr in *Boone* (RD). **Swainson's Hawks** made a remarkable flight through w. MO this spring. In the southwest, the first was at Palmetto *Greene* 29-30 Mar (GSa, GSw) and peak counts included 10 **at England's Farm Pond** *Dade* 13 Apr (GSa, m. obs.) and 11 at Silo Farm *Dade* 25 Apr (CB). Farther north, JB recorded 38 at SCNWR 7 Apr, 32 of those sitting in the recently burned Pelican Pool. In the days that followed, counts of 30-50 were regular at SCNWR through 21 Apr (m. obs), with 15 still there 5 May (DE, TE, m. obs.). During this same window, 65 were in *Buchanan* near Horseshoe Lake 20 Apr (JB, JK). The most easterly sightings included: 2 in *Chariton* 22 Apr (Dan Cowell), 1 at DR 29 Apr (SK), and 1-2 in s. *Boone* 4 & 10-11 May (RD, NM, GC). The last was likely a breeding bird in *Webster* 27 May (AK). An imm. dark-morph **"Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk** at SCNWR 21Apr (MR, CH, SA) and 4 May (JU, MP) was the latest. The last **"Kridler's" Red-tailed Hawk** was in s. *Boone* 11 May (RD, NM, GC, JM). Six Rough-legged Hawks at SCNWR 11 Apr. was the peak northbound count (DW). The last reports were both 13 Apr: 1 in *Dade* and another at Stockton Lake-Aldrich Arm *Polk* (GSw, GSa, m. obs.). At least 3 Golden Eagles passed through: an imm. 10-16 Mar at EBCA (KMc, VB, m. obs.), 1 at SCNWR 1 Apr (DW), and the last was late in *Boone* 20 Apr (RD). Sixteen Virginia Rails were tallied at Wetland Cell #2 *Boone* 11 May (PMc). The only other report was of 1-2 at SCNWR 3-5 May (DE, PL, m. obs.) and then 2 late birds calling 26 May (JP). The first Soras arrived along the Mississippi River corridor 30 Mar: 1 at Ted Shanks CA *Pike* (M&WS) and another in *Dunklin* (TJ). A Purple Gallinule* was a surprise for Mark Lohmeyer 14 Apr when he photographed it at Pearson Point subdivision *Greene*. Two Common Gallinules were at the McBaine Wetland Cells *Boone* 11 May (BR, BJ, Tony Elliot). An estimated 6500 American Coots at SCNWR 20 Apr was the highest tally (JB, JK), but 5500 was unusual for the late date 23 May (MR). Two Sandhill Cranes along Firma Road *St. Charles* 2 Mar were the first for the spring and only eastern report (ph. JM, CM). Elsewhere, 1-2 were at EBCA starting 9 Mar through the end of the season (Lottie Bushmann, PMc, RD, m. obs.), a possible breeding pair was at GPCA 15 Mar (PMc, BJ), and 2, with a high of 5, were regularly seen at SCNWR beginning 23 Mar through the end of the season (JB, DE, PL, m. obs.).

PLOVERS THROUGH PHALAROPES

The first Black-bellied Plover was early for the north at BL 27 Apr (JK). Peak counts included 21 at LCSP (SN), up to 26 at EBCA 14-15 May (GC, NM), and 20 at KR 21 May (CM, JM). A single American Golden-Plover at RMBS 10 Mar was the earliest to arrive this spring (ph. JU), an estima-

ted 7000 staging in *Dunklin* 5 Apr was the highest total (TJ), and the last included 23 near OSCA 18 May (SD). Other high counts included 250 at the **England's Farm Pond Dade** 27 Mar (CBu); 200 near SLNWR 4 Apr (SK), which grew to 350 by 20 Apr (SK, TMc); and 200 at Clarence Cannon NWR *Pike* 13 Apr (ph. JU). Semipalmated Plovers were sparingly reported, but the counts received were rather high: 58 at BL 27 Apr (JK), 175 at SCNWR 1 May (DW), and 70 at EBCA 14 May (GC). One to 2 Piping Plovers were at SCNWR 24 Apr-5 May (ph. KB, SD, m. obs.), with a high of 5 there 28 Apr (ph. KB, JB). Four Black-necked Stilts (acc.) in *Dunklin* 12 Mar were **the first (ph. TJ†) and by 25 May a high of 352 were recorded across Dunklin** rice fields (TJ). Farther north: 2 were at RMBS 14-16 Apr and then again 26-31 May (CM, JM, m. obs.), 19 were at BKLCA 18 May (JU), and 2-4 at KR 14-26 May (CM, JM, m. obs.). Away from the Mississippi River 1 was at SCNWR 3 May (DE, TE); at least 1 was at EBCA 12-21 May (NM, RD), with a high of 3 there 21 May (GC); and 2 others at SLNWR 17 May (SK, m. obs.). Thirteen American Avocets at **Wah'kon-tah Prairie St. Clair** 13 April were the first (GSa). The highest counts were at SCNWR where at least 30 were present 4-11 May (DE, MT, m. obs.) and 28 remained 23 May **(MR). Outside of the northwest corner they were scarce: 2 at England's Farm Pond Dade** 27 Apr (Emily Samuel), 9 at EBCA 12 May (NM, GC), and only a single at KR 25 May (JM, CM). The first Spotted Sandpiper was at RMBS 7 Apr (BR, JU) and the highest counts included at least 35 at CBCA 4 May (BR) and 7 at PCCL 20 May. Twelve Willets at RMBS were the first 20 Apr and the highest e. MO total (CM, JM). In cen. MO, they peaked with counts of 60-98 depending on the time of day you visited EBCA 9 May, (EW, PMc, NM). In the northwest, 33 were at SL 25 Apr (DW) and at least 20 were at SCNWR 4-5 May (PL, DE, m. obs.). The last individual reported was **Larry Herbert's first of the season in Joplin Jasper** 20 May. Lesser Yellowlegs numbered 240 at CBCA 4 May (BR, Tom Parmeter). The only eastern Upland Sandpiper was in *Dunklin* 7 May (TJ). In n. cen. MO **where they breed, SK noted that "several" were at DR 29 Apr and 2 others** were at PSP 23 May. Whimbrels put on a good show across the state: the first at BL 15 May (MR, JB, m. obs.); 3 near WLD 20 May (ph. AS, BW); a single at EBCA 20 May (PMc, ph. Andrew Scaboo); 1 at SLNWR 21 May (SK); and 13 in the flooded sod fields at KR on the morning 21 May (PK), but only a single remained there that evening (ph. JM, CM). Twenty-two Hudsonian Godwits at RMBS 14 Apr were the only eastern report (JM, CM). In the west, the first 3 arrived at SCNWR 11 Apr (DW), followed by a single in *Nodaway* 15 Apr (DE, m. obs.). Northwest MO had the highest counts: 68 at LC 20 Apr (JK, JB), 42 at SCNWR 11 May (MT), and 62 at LCSP (SN). Elsewhere, 25 were in *Chariton* 24 Apr (SK, m. obs.), 3 at **England's Farm Pond Dade** 26 Apr (GSw), and 8 at EBCA 14 May (RD). Away from the northwest corner, all Marbled Godwit reports were of singles: RMBS 20 Apr (ph. JM, CM, m. obs.), *Dade* 26 Apr (GSw), SLNWR 26 Apr (SK), and EBCA 12-15 May (ph. RD, GC, Richard Stanton, m. obs.). In the northwest, the first 2 arrived at SCNWR 11 Apr (DW), at least 8 were present 20 Apr (JK, JB), then 6 on 4 May (ph. JU, MP, m. obs.), and 3 on 5 May (JC, CC, BWy). The most surprising was a late flock of 17 at SCNWR 23 May (MR). Elsewhere in the northwest corner, up to 7 were reported at no

fewer than 4 other sites. The first Ruddy Turnstone was at SCNWR 2 May (DW) and also where the last 3 of the season were 25 May (JB). Elsewhere, EW had 3 at Thomas Hill Reservoir *Macon* 15 May, 2 were at SLNWR 17 May (SK), 6 were at EBCA 14 May (GC), and the season high count of 10 was at KR 21 May (JM, CM). The first Sanderling was alone at SCNWR 28 Apr (DW). The only others were 15 at Tipton Ford *Newton* 11 May (CC), 2 at OSCA 18 May (SD), 1 at BL 19 May (KM), and the season high count of 18 at KR 21 May (CM, JM). Five Western Sandpiper reports is a bit above average for a species that is rarely observed during spring migration in MO. The first was at PSP 5 Mar (PMc, m. obs.), 2 were at BL 27 Apr (JK), 1 was at SCNWR 28 Apr (DW), another 14 May at EBCA (RD), and the last 17 May at SLNWR (PMc, BJ, m. obs.). No notable counts of any peeps were received. Similarly, the only peak Dunlin count was of 700 in *Dunklin* on the early date 5 Apr (TJ). Six Buff-breasted Sandpipers 17 May and a single 21 May at KR (CM, ph. JM) added to a very limited number of e. MO spring migration records. Two Ruffs* arrived at separate locations 12 May in nw. MO; a Reeve at SCNWR was a one-day visitor (ph. DW, KD) and a transitioning male at BL was also briefly seen 13 May (ph. JK, Edward Raynor, ph. KB). Few notable reports for either dowitcher species were noted. Forty-five Short-billed Dowitchers were carefully identified at SCNWR 11 May (MT). An estimated 1400 Long-billed Dowitchers along CR 723 *Dunklin* 19 Mar (TJ) was the highest count and 4 still at EBCA 11 May were the latest (BR, BJ, TE). **Wilson's Snipes** numbered 130 at PSP 10 Apr (SK) and a late bird was at SCNWR 4 May (DE, TE, PK). Eighteen American Woodcocks were at Scrivner Road CA *Cole* 15 Mar (CBa). **Wilson's Phalaropes** were seen in good numbers this spring: 300-600 at SCNWR 20 Apr-12 May (DW, KD, MR, CH, m. obs), 300 in *Nodaway* 24 Apr (DE, m. obs.), and many other northwestern sites reported counts up to 100 during this same timeframe (eBird). EBCA hosted counts of 227 on 27 Apr (GC, TL) and 150 the 9-11 May (NM, JMa, BR, BJ, m. obs.); PSP 10 Apr held 130 (SK). Wrapping up the shorebirds, a Red-necked Phalarope in basic plumage at SCNWR established a new record-early arrival date 21 Apr (MR, ph. SA, CH) and 52 there 23 May is the 2nd-highest single day count (MR).

GULLS THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

Eighteen **Bonaparte's Gulls** at Table Rock Lake *Taney* 18 Mar were likely overwintering birds (JU). Few high counts were mentioned other than 41 at RMBS (BR, JU) and a late flock of 140 sitting near the dam at SL 4 May (JU, MP). Single Laughing Gulls, both adults in alternate plumage, were observed at RMBS 18 May (ph. JM, CM) and SL 30 May (ph. DW). Three-hundred **Franklin's Gulls** at SCNWR 5 May was the highest count (DE, TE, m. obs.), where at least 12 remained 11 May (MT), and at least another **100 were late as they moved over DE's house** *Nodaway* during a storm 27 May. In the east, only 1-2 were noted at four other sites. Ring-billed Gulls peaked at 250 at SLNWR 12 Mar (SK), and 1 was still at PCCL 20 May (MH). Two imm. Herring Gulls 3 Mar at Binder Lake *Cole* were the last found away from the Mississippi River (CBa). Few rare gulls were noted this spring. A Lesser-black-backed Gull* at LC was record-late 27 & 30

Apr (ph. JK, JP) and an imm., likely first-cycle, Glaucous Gull was at RMBS 9-19 Mar (ph. DSh, ph. GSh, m. obs.). Four Least Terns returned to RMBS 14 May (PL), where a high of 18 was 26 May (CM, JM). Four Black Terns at SCNWR were record early by about two weeks on 15 Apr (DW). Flocks numbering 200-350 were observed 12-23 May (DW, MR, m. obs). Another large flock of an estimated 300 was at Cooley Lake CA *Clay* 19 May (Jeff Wayman). Observers continued to take note of new locations where Eurasian Collared-Doves are appearing. In n.-cen. MO, SK writes that they have now expanded to rural areas, many miles from towns. A White-winged Dove was at a private residence in Old Monroe *Lincoln* 28 Apr (ph. Jerry Hemmersmeyer). Yellow-billed Cuckoos arrived exceptionally early this spring. The first, 16 Apr in *Dunklin* (ph. TJ†) was six days earlier than the previous early arrival record and then singles were found 27-30 Apr at two *Oregon* sites (BE), *Bollinger* (MH), *Douglas* (BE), and two *St. Louis* sites (CS, CB, JU) – all earlier than expected. The first Black-billed Cuckoo was in *Dunklin* 28 Apr (ph. TJ). Observations this season might have been slightly above average, with at least 4 singles across *St. Louis* sites 8-18 May, another 2-3 singles in *Boone* 12-26 May, 2 singles in the southwest 9&12 May, and 2 more in the Kansas City area 10 & 20 May. In the southwest, where rare permanent residents, 1-2 Greater Roadrunners were seen 3 Mar-12 May in *Greene* (JH), two *Christian* sites (DBI, Klee Bruce, CBu), *Wright* (Travis Lilly) and *Newton* (JC). A high count of 5, that included 3 counter-singing males, was at Eagle Rock *Barry* 9 May (MR, JB, CH). The most northeasterly report was a well-described individual running along I-44 near mile marker 201 *Crawford* 18 May (Suzy Deese). Single Barn Owls were at the World Bird Sanctuary *St. Louis* 8 Mar & 30 Apr (CS), while another was at DCCA 23-25 Mar (PL, EW, m obs.). A high count of 7 Short-eared Owls was in *Dunklin* 3 Mar (TJ), 3-4 were at PSP 5 Mar (PMc, Trisha Crabill, Steve Buback), and the last was at RMBS 29 Mar (EW). The earliest Common Nighthawk was at Con-way Pond *Jasper* 25 Apr (BD). In n. MO, Chuck-**will's**-widows are listed as rare, so 4 in *Macon* 24 May (NM) and singles at two separate *Livingston* sites during May (SK) are worth mentioning. Eastern Whip-poor-wills were scarcely reported, with counts of only 1-2 during April (eBird). The highest count of 15 was not until 25 May on a survey route near Pineville *McDonald*, which also included 2 Chuck-**will's**-widows (Joyce Haynes). Three Chimney Swifts at Southeast MO State University *Cape Girardeau* 7 Apr were the first (Allen Gathman), and the season high of 43 was at RRSP 6 May (CC). Ruby-throated Hummingbirds arrived 8 Apr when 1 was in Jackson *Cape Girardeau* (MH). SNR held 11 Red-headed Woodpeckers and a lingering Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 20 Apr (MT). Counts of multiple Peregrine Falcons were made at SCNWR 5-11 May, an estimated 6 on 4 May (DE, TE, PK, m. obs.). Rare throughout the state, but particularly in e. MO, a Prairie Falcon near RMBS 10 Mar was the only individual reported (ph. JU). An Olive-sided Flycatcher at Busiek S.F. *Christian* 28 Apr (ES, GSw) is the 2nd earliest spring record. The first Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were at Fort Crowder CA *Newton* 10 May (JC) and RBSP 11 May (PMc). A high of 3 at TGP 26 May (JU) were also the last reported. Alder Flycatchers were more abundant than usual in cen. Missouri, starting with a new record-



A rare eastern Missouri Prairie Falcon—found and photographed by Josh Uffman, near Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, St. Charles County, on March 10, 2013.

early date at EBCA 2 May (PMc), then the 2nd earliest record at Katy Trail SP *Boone* 3 May (PMc). In the west, a high count of 32 was made at Weston Bend SP *Platte* 23 May (MR). A single Least Flycatcher at RBSP 24 Apr was slightly early (EW). Eastern Phoebes arrived 7 Mar at MWP (MH) and 9 Mar near Russellville *Cole* (CBa), with a high of 7 at SNR 20 Apr (MT). A **Say's Phoebe***, the potential thirteenth state record, was photographed at SCNWR 21 Apr (Dala Grissom, Christine Kline, Charlotte Ross). An ad. male Vermilion Flycatcher, **MO's 9th** and only the 2nd in the past 41 years, was near Pleasant Hill *Cass* 2 May (ph. **Teresa Crews†**). **The first** Great Crested Flycatcher appears to be the second earliest record 11 Apr in Joplin *Jasper* (ph. CC, BD), a high count of 15 was made at PCCL 8 May (MH) and 11 were at FL 12 May (JC). Western Kingbirds continued to fill in gaps as they spread from the Southwest. The most northern was at Northwest MO State University *Nodaway* 14 May (DE), while the most eastern was 1 returning to Berkeley *St. Louis* 30 Apr (MT). The first Eastern Kingbird was at Dresser Island CA *St. Charles* 13 Apr (MT), and rather high counts of 28 were at PCCL 8 May (MH) and 44 at RRSP 11 May (JC, AK). The first Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was near Joplin *Jasper* 13 Apr (LH). Eastern birds in the southeast were found near Puxico *Stoddard* 30 Apr (SD), near Van Buren *Carter* 17 May (SD), and near Doniphan *Ripley* 18 May (EW). Returning birds, where still rare, included a pair in se. *Livingston* 30 Apr (SK), a pair at the Weldon Spring Remediation Site *St.*



This Vermilion Flycatcher, found and photographed by Teresa Crews on **May 2, 2013, near Pleasant Hill, Cass County, is Missouri's 9th record, and** the second in the last 41 years.

Charles beginning 15 May (PL, MT, m. obs.) and pairs at their usual haunts at EBCA and along Hartsburg River Road *Boone* 10-11 May (RD).

SHRIKES THROUGH LONGSPURS

In the southwest, single Loggerhead Shrikes were noted at five sites 7 Mar-11 May. After not being seen by JHi in the northwest for at least two years, 1 near King City *Gentry* 29 May was a welcome sight. Eastern MO **got into the act with an individual at RMBS 9 Apr (ph. AS) and CBCA's second record** of this species came 4 May (BR). The highest count of 7 came from the southeast in *Dunklin* 19 Mar (TJ). A Northern Shrike at EBCA 3 Mar was a rare record for the area (TL, GC). The last 3 were all 8 Mar: 1 at Hazel Hill Lake *Johnson* was the furthest south (LO) and 2 separate birds in *Daviess* (TMc), including 1 in his yard. The only high count **Bell's Vireo** was of no more than 9 at WSCA 18 May (MT) and 10 at CBCA 19 May (PL). A Blue-headed Vireo at Carondolet Park *St. Louis City* tied the earliest arrival record 9 Apr (ph. CMc) and 4 at SCNWR 11 May was the high count (MT). Outside of St. Louis, Philadelphia Vireos were sparingly reported: 1 near Columbia *Boone* 9 May (NM, RD) and 1 banded in *Buchanan* 17 May (JHi). In Creve Coeur *St. Louis* a single arrived 13 May (CB, JU), they peaked 21 May at 4 (CB, JU), and the last was seen 28 May (CB). An astonishing 172 Red-eyed Vireos were reported along a 7.5-mile stretch of road

in Mark Twain NF *Barry* (JB, CH, MR) and another 109 were tallied at RRSP and adjacent Roaring River CA *Barry* 11 May (JC, AK). Fish Crows continued to march north in MO, with 3 at PSP 5 Mar (PMc, m. obs.) and up to 17 near Sumner *Chariton* 20 Apr (DE, SK, m. obs.). In the southwest, 47 was a high count at HSF 12 Apr, and nesting was confirmed at RRSP 8-17 May (JC, AK, BWy). Five Purple Martins were early at LS 6 Mar (CBu). Forty-three Northern Rough-winged Swallows at RRSP 6 May (CC) is a high more expected for the fall season. A careful count of 3000 Cliff Swallows was made at WSCA 11 May (MP, JU). Three Barn Swallows were early for n. MO 15 Mar at GPCA (PMc, BJ, EW). After an impressive fall irruption, and then a bit of a winter lull, Red-breasted Nuthatches returned in good numbers beginning in Apr, with many staying into May. May reports included 1-2 at eight widespread sites through 11 May and then the latest were 1 in Springfield *Greene* 14 May (LB), and a heard-only bird in Pocahontas *Cape Girardeau* 26 May (AG). Late Brown Creepers were at LS 4 May (GSw) and Creve Coeur *St. Louis* 8 May (CB, MP, JU). A House Wren 14 Apr was early in Jackson *Cape Girardeau* (MH). **Considering Bewick's Wrens have become increasingly scarce in MO, this year's reports are exciting. In cen. MO, CBa located a single Bewick's on his Russellville property Cole 30 Mar and by 29 May, two parents were rearing 5 young, and a male was neighboring nearby. Additionally, CBa located 1-2 birds at three other Cole sites and a singing male at a Miller site. Elsewhere, 2 were in Washington beginning 14 Apr (JU), then 1 at SNR 20 Apr (MT) where breeding was confirmed 18 May (PL, m. obs.). The latest Winter Wrens included singles at HSF (AK) 16 Apr and RBSP 28 Apr (GC). A peak count of 37 Sedge Wrens were at Finley Creek Farm Webster 12 May (GSa) and the highest Marsh Wren count was 4 at SCNWR 5 May (DE, TE). At RRSP and adjacent Roaring River CA Barry, 72 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers appears to be a record single day high count (JC, AK). High counts for the kinglet species consisted of 10 Golden-crowned Kinglets at LW 23 Mar (PL), 35 Ruby-crowned Kinglets at RBSP 6 Apr (GC) and another 25 at Dresser Island CA St. Charles 13 Apr (MT, PL). Then, after being absent in Creve Coeur St. Louis for nine days, a trailing Ruby-crowned arrived 21 May (JU, CB, DBe). Veeries arrived 2 May at Twin Lakes Park Boone (EW) and EBCA (PMc). PMc said, "Largest number this observer has seen in a single day in 25+ years of birding," when he had 4 at Katy Trail SP Boone 5 May. Swainson's Thrush are typically not expected until the last week of Apr, making each of the following significant: 2 at RRSP tied the earliest spring record 14 Apr (GSw), the next in Joplin Jasper 16 Apr (LH) is the second earliest record, and another 21 Apr at CBCA is the third earliest record (BR). A remarkable 108 were reported on a 7.5-mile drive in Mark Twain NF Barry 9 May (JB, CH, MR). The last 2 Hermit Thrushes were hanging out at Forest Park St. Louis City 28 Apr (MT). American Pipits were widely reported in Linn this spring, with a high count of 110 at PSP 19 Mar (SK). The last record in the south this season was a group of 5 at Palmetto Greene 29 Apr (AK) and in the north, 22 were at SCNWR 3 May (DE, TE), where only 3 remained the following day (DE, TE, PK). Finally, a Sprague's Pipit singing from the ground at Rosecrans Airport Buchanan 21 Apr was 1 more of this season's many highlights (SA,**

CH, MR). **Smith's Longspur** sightings included up to 70 at PSP 19 Mar (SK), 8-10 at Pawnee Prairie *Harrison* 31 Mar (SK), and approximately 24 at Taberville Prairie *St. Clair* 20 Apr (SD).

WARBLERS THROUGH OLD WORLD SPARROWS

Forty-nine Northern Waterthrushes at SCNWR 3 May (DE, TE) were slowed by one of the coldest days on record ever for May. This was, perhaps, the best year in recent memory for Golden-winged Warblers in cen. MO, with many individuals seen in *Boone*, *Cole*, and *Miller* 4-23 May (PMc, NM, CBa, m. obs.). Also of note was a netted **Brewster's Warbler** (Blue-winged Warbler × Golden-winged Warbler hybrid) at World Bird Sanctuary *St. Louis* 2 May (ph. Valerie Geile, Linda Tossing). A Black-and-white Warbler at Busiek S.F. *Christian* 16 Mar (DBI) appears to be the second earliest arrival record, and 31 were along a 7.5-mile drive in Mark Twain NF *Barry* 9 May (JB, CH, MR). **Swainson's Warblers** returned to RRSP 2 May (Jerry and Margie Williams), while 2 were located along Blue Spring Trail *Shannon* 17 May (EW). Surprisingly, the later birds were not found near any large cane patches, the typical habitat preference in MO. An astounding 233 Tennessee Warblers were along a 7.5-mile drive in Mark Twain NF *Barry* 9 May (JB, CH, MR), although migration of this species through cen. MO seemed tempered compared to the past few years (RD). Two Connecticut Warblers were reported, 1 at TGP *St. Louis City* 21 May (Tom Bailey), and a singing male at Grindstone NA *Boone* 25 May (PMc). After the passage of a large slow moving storm, the first Hooded Warbler arrived in Creve Coeur *St. Louis* 19 Apr (JU). Being less than annual in the county, 1 at Forum NA *Boone* 30 Apr (RD) was a surprising find. In the state's stronghold for the breeding population, a high count of 17 was recorded at Mark Twain NF *Barry* 9 May (CH, JB, MR). A male American Redstart at Meramec SP *Franklin* 15 Apr (JU) was the second or third earliest record for spring. Cape May Warblers arrived in Creve Coeur *St. Louis* 5 May and peaked at 3 on 8 May (CB, JU). Away from the Mississippi River, a singing male was seen at Wire Road CA *Stone* 6 May (JC) and another was at EBCA 11 May (RD, JMJa). Cerulean Warblers are scarce in n.-cen. MO, so two reports from *Boone* were encouraging: 1 at Baskett Research Area 11 May (GC, RD, JMJa), and another 25 May at Meredith Branch in s. Columbia was only the second of this species PMc has ever seen in *Boone*. A single Bay-breasted Warbler at HSF 6 May (AK) was a good find for sw. MO where they can be very rare, while 3 in Creve Coeur *St. Louis* 10 May highlighted a very good season for the species around St. Louis (CB, JU). Blackburnian Warblers were regular in Creve Coeur *St. Louis* 5-24 May, with 3 being the high 11-12 May (CB, JU). A push of 4 Chestnut-sided Warblers moving through Creve Coeur *St. Louis* were relatively late 21 May (CB, JU, DBe). Blackpoll Warbler counts appeared down in *Boone* compared to the past few Springs (RD), and 29 at Mark Twain NF *Barry* 9 May (JB, CH, MR) was the high count. Fifty-five Yellow Warblers were estimated at SCNWR 5 May (JC, CC, BWy). A fem. Black-throated Blue Warbler was in n. *Washington* 24 Apr (SD), while a male graced TGP beginning 2 May (Bryan Prather), with 2 males there 7 May (BW, m. obs.). Palm Warblers

were easy to find across St. Louis this season, with a high of 12 in Creve Coeur *St. Louis* 2 May (JE) and 7 at TGP 5 May (MT). One of the nominate race tied the latest spring record in Creve Coeur *St. Louis* 20-21 May (DBe, CB, JU, MP). Pine Warblers are quite rare in n. MO, so it was nice to see 2 returned to their usual stand of pines at Thousand Hills SP *Adair* for at least the seventh year in a row 30 Mar (FC) and another was at Fleming Park *Jackson* 2 Apr (Mike Stoakes, Larry Thiess), and 2-3 males were on territory at Baskett Research Area *Boone* 10-15 May (GC, RD, NM). Over 200 Yellow-rumped Warblers were at SCNWR 5 May (JC, CC, BWy), and 1 was still at PCCL 28 May (MH†), setting a new late-date record for MO by a full seven days. At the north edge of its range, PK† photographed an ad. male Prairie Warbler at Thousand Hills SP *Adair* 11 May. Three Black-throated Green Warblers were still at RRSP 22 May (DBI), but the last individual was in Creve Coeur *St. Louis* 24 May (JE). The most unexpected observation was a Golden-cheeked Warbler (acc.) in Creve Coeur *St. Louis* 19-22 Apr (ph. JU†, DBe†, PMc†, ph. MP, JE, m. obs.). The bird, a singing male, was found after intense storms 17-18 Apr that brought heavy rains from the southwest, and departed with a sharp drop in temperatures. Previously, this species had only been recorded three times in the United States outside of its breeding range in Texas. Spotted Towhees spread to cen. and e. MO, with long-staying individuals in Columbia *Boone* 1 Mar-1 Apr (KA), and at CBCA 3 Mar-14 Apr (DBe, CM, JM, MT, m. obs.). The last were in the west; 1 in *Buchanan* 4 May (JP) and another in *Henry* 12 May (JM_o). One Spotted Towhee × Eastern Towhee hybrid was seen at Wat-



Without a doubt the most incredible sighting of this season was this male Golden-cheeked Warbler, located at photographed by Josh Uffman at Creve Coeur, St. Louis County. The bird was present April 19-22, and this photo was taken April 20, 2013.

kins Mill SP *Platte* 4 May (KM). Up to 200 American Tree Sparrows were at WLD 2 Mar (BR) and at High Prairie *Webster* 7 Mar (GSa). Eighteen were still lingering 21 Apr across two *Holt* sites (SA, CH, MR). It was a good year for Clay-colored Sparrows across MO. The first was at **Campbell's Bridge Access** *Crawford* 28 Apr and a first in this eastern county for the observer (JU), while 137 at SCNWR was an incredible new state high count 4 May (DE, TE, PK). Six were reported at MO Southern State University *Jasper* 8 May (BD). Many locations in *Boone* hosted the migrants with 3 at Grindstone Nature Area *Boone* 9-11 May (RD, NM), 1 at EBCA 11 May (BJ, BR), and 2-3 in Columbia 10-13 May where they have been seen consistently for six out of the last seven years (PMc). The species is rather rare around St. Louis, so 2 at WSCA were notable 11 May (MP, JU). Forty-two Field Sparrows at MWP 9 May was the highest count (MH). At least 6 Vesper Sparrows at RMBS was the season high count 7 Apr (BR, JU). Two Savannah Sparrows at DCCA were the last reported 23 May (MH). "Several" Grasshopper Sparrows were present at DR 29 Apr (SK). They returned to South Farm R-1 Lake *Boone* 17 May, about two weeks later than the previous three years (RD). **Henslow's Sparrows** may have nested at RBSP, with 3 noted 28 Apr–23 May (GC). "Many" were at DR 29 Apr (SK), while 2 were reported at MNWR 30 Apr (SD), Marble Hill *Bollinger* 2 May (MH), and WSCA 18 May (MT). Two **LeConte's Sparrows** at Taberville Prairie *St. Clair* 20 Apr were the only report (ph. SD). A **Nelson's Sparrow** at Thompson River Wetlands *Livingston* 24 May tied the latest departure record (SK). Twenty-five **Lincoln's Sparrows** were a result of the fallout at SCNWR 3 May (DE, TE). Data from eBird indicates many Swamp Sparrows lingered through mid-May, but 1 in *Webster* 25 May is record late by four days (GSa). One White-throated Sparrow lingered until 21 May at TGP (Chris Kirmaier, JU) and 2 were at Weston Bend SP *Platte* 23 May (MR). Rare in e. MO, a **Harris's Sparrow** was observed associating with American Tree Sparrows at WLD 2 Mar (BR) and another was last seen at WSCA 11 May (ph. MP, JU). In cen. MO, up to 3 were at EBCA 5-10 May (NM, m. obs.). Two mid-May records of White-crowned Sparrows were the last for the season: 1 near Jackson *Cape Girardeau* 16 May (MH) and another at WSCA 18 May (MT). An ad. male Scarlet Tanager was early 15 Apr in *Washington* (JU), and 2 Summer Tanagers at SNR 20 Apr (MT) were the first of their kind to arrive. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks typically do not arrive in MO until the third or fourth week of Apr, but this year there were several reports beginning the second week of April. This early push saw 1 (acc.) near Stringtown *Butler* 9 Apr (ph. Luann Holst†) and 1-2 in *Jefferson* 11-12 Apr (Jerry Waggoner). After these, singles arrived in *Franklin* 17 Apr (Peter Connolly), *Lincoln* 18 Apr (Laura Montgomery), and *Jefferson* 18 Apr (June Kreyling). A female Black-headed Grosbeak was at HSF 12 May (ph. AK†). **Missouri's second earliest Blue Grosbeak** was in *Washington* 12 Apr (ph. SD). Individuals in *Dunklin* 17 Apr (TJ) and *Greene* 18 Apr (JH) were also on the early side. Two male Lazuli Buntings arrived 2 May: 1 in *Macon* (Gale March, ph. NM†) and another at BL 2-5 May (ph. Linda Williams, KB, PL, m. obs.). The only Painted Bunting reports came from their stronghold in sw. MO, with 1 in Branson *Taney* 3 May (Jo Strange), 1 at Willard Conco Quarry *Greene* 9

May (CBu), and 1 at a different *Barry* site 11 May (AK). Bobolinks were reported from SCNWR 4 May (MP, JU, DE), Binder Lake *Cole* 5 May (CBa), and 150 at Palmetto *Greene* (AK) was the highest count for this season. Western Meadowlarks at High Prairie *Webster* 7 Mar (GSa) and 3 at Jamestown *Greene* 30 Mar (GSa) were a good find for the locations in the southwest, while at least 15 at CBCA 23 Mar (BR) indicates this species population is growing in the St. Louis area. Yellow-headed Blackbirds returned to EBCA in strong numbers with at least 18 reported 28 Apr (BJ, RD). All other reports were from the west this year, with 2 in *Atchison* 21 Apr (Peggy Mabb), 12 at BIM 21 Apr (CH, MR), a single in *Taney* 29 Apr (Brad Willis), and a high of 10 at SCNWR 25 May (JB) where lesser counts were made most of the month (m. obs.). As a rapidly declining species, it's always good to see reports of multiple Rusty Blackbirds. A group of 100 was spotted at Wehner Park *St. Louis* 3 Mar (BR), 70 were in *Christian* 5 Mar (GSw), 100 were in Creve Coeur *St. Louis* beginning 1 Apr (CB, JU, DB), 160 were at Rotary Lake *Cape Girardeau* 10 Mar (MH), and 200 were in *St. Charles* 6 Apr (CM, JM). At least 1 of the Creve Couer individuals remained through 27 Apr (CB), making it the latest departure date for this species in MO. Three-hundred **Brewer's Blackbirds** were at **England's Farm Pond** *Dade* 9 Mar (GSw). Another 8 were at FGCA 29 Mar (M&WS). In the St. Louis area, there was only a single report of 1 near RMBS 21 Apr (BR). Great-tailed Grackles numbered 9 at GPCA 15 Mar (EW), 45-100 were at Palmetto *Greene* 23 Mar-11 Apr (GSw), and up to 14 were at SCNWR 4-11 May (DE, MT, m. obs.). An Orchard Oriole at **Campbell's Bridge Access** *Crawford* 15 Apr (JU) appears to be the second earliest arrival record. Baltimore Orioles arrived early too: 1 at Lake Springfield City Park *Greene* 14 Apr (JH, GSa) and another at **MH's Cape Girardeau** home 17 Apr are, respectively, the new first and second earliest arrival dates. After a historic winter finch invasion beginning last fall, numerous finches were reported through the entire spring season. Purple Finches stayed into mid-May, with as many as 7 present 10 May and 1 singing male staying until 12 May near Columbia *Boone* (RD). Red Crossbills surprised observers by staying through the end of May. Up to 4 were at Lee Elementary School in Columbia *Boone* 6-20 Mar (KA, KMc, m. obs.), 5 others were at a different *Boone* site 12 Apr (ph. Lori Gale), 12-15 were at Jamesport Lake CA *Daviess* 8 Mar (SK), 5 were in *St. Louis* 22 Apr (Christian Hagenlocher), and 3 remained at Fork Lakes CA *Boone* until 4 May (JMa, NM). Up to 9 **"Type 2" birds** were identified in **Marshfield** *Webster* 21-31 May (GSa) and another in *Stanberry Gentry* beginning 25 May (ph. Judy Phillips *fide* JP). Common Redpolls lingered across n. MO through most of March. A high count of 12 were near Kansas City *Jackson* 3 Mar (James Bair *fide* BR), and individual birds were reported in St. Joseph *Buchanan* 6-7 Mar (KB, m. obs.), Bridgeton *St. Louis* 6-27 Mar (ph. AS), Principia School *St. Louis* 5-8 Mar (GSh, BW), Kirksville *Adair* 9-11 Mar (JL), and two locations in *Boone* 17-20 Mar (RD, Carol Weston). A redpoll near Bonne Terre *St. Francois* 26 Mar (Judy Bergmann) was the southernmost record, while 1 in Ashland *Boone* 31 Apr-8 May is the new latest record for Missouri (ph. William **Palmer†**, **Kay Palmer**). Pine Siskins lingered in impressive numbers. Twenty-eight were in Kirksville *Adair* 11 Mar (JL) and another 28 were at the

Springfield Conservation Nature Center *Greene* 2 Mar-28 Apr (Travis Anthony, CBU, JMo). A group of 15-18 was near Russellville *Cole* 10-14 May (CBa), 2 were hanging around Jackson *Cape Girardeau* 14 May (MH), 7 were in Elsberry *Lincoln* 18 May (Linda Lloyd), 8 were in *Clay* 23 May (KM), and the last reported was 1 at Drury-Mincy CA *Taney* 25 May (AK). However, the most notable May count was 148 in *Holt* 3 May (DE, TE). An adult male Lesser Goldfinch (acc.), potential 6th state record, made a **quick stop at GCu's† house** *Cass* 6 Apr. Not to be left out, a pair of Evening Grosbeaks surprised a *Clay* homeowner 13-27 Apr (*fide* JU). Wrapping up the 2013 spring season, a single Eurasian Tree Sparrow was in *Franklin* 1 Mar (JMa), just a little outside their core range along the Mississippi River. Much more surprising was a record of 2* at Walter Farm *Clay* in w. MO 8 Mar (ph. James Gorski).

Observers

Steve Addinall (SA), Kathleen Anderson (KA), Chris Barrigar (CBa), David Becher (DBe), Lisa Berger (LB), David Blevins (DBI), Vic Bogosian (VB), John Bollin (JB), Keith Brink (KB), Charley Burwick (CBu), Jeff Cantrell (JC), Casey Carr (CC), Grant Connette (GC), Frankie Cuculich (FC), Ginny Culver (GCu), Brian Davis (BD), Steve Dilks (SD), Ryan Douglas (RD), Kyle Driggers (KD), Joe Eades (JE), David Easterla (DE), Todd Easterla (TE), Tony Elliott (TE), Becky Estes (BE), Allen Gathman (AG), Mark Haas (MH), Jill Hays (JH), Larry Herbert (LH), Jack Hilsabeck (JHi), Chris Hobbs (CH), Brad Jacobs (BJ), Tim James (TJ), Jon King (JK), Andrew Kinslow (AK), Steve Kinder (SK), Peter Kondrashov (PK), Pat Lueders (PL), Thomas Luhring (TL), Jason Luscier (JL), Charlene Malone (CM), Jim Malone (JM), Nicholas March (NM), Jenna March (JMa), Kristi Mayo (KM), Chrissy McClarren (CMc), Kyle McCommis (KMc), Joseph Mosley (JMo), Terry McNeely (TMc), Paul McKenzie (PMc), Susan Nixon (SN), Larry Olpin (LO), Mark Paradise (MP), Jake Phillips (JP), Mark Robbins (MR), Bill Rowe (BR), Greg Samuel (GSa), Dylan Sheets (DSH), Garrett Sheets (GSh), Allen Smith (AS), Cathy Spahn (CS), Matt and Walt Stephenson (M&WS), Greg Swick (GSw), Mike Thelen (MT), Joshua Uffman (JU), Edge Wade (EW), Brad Warrick (BW), Doug Willis (DW), Becky Wylie (BWY).

Key

- * Documentation needed for MBRC review but not yet submitted
- † Documentation received by MBRC

Abbreviations

- acc. Accepted by MBRC
- CA Conservation Area
- GOAS Greater Ozarks Audubon Society
- imm. Immature
- m. ob. Multiple observers

MO	Missouri
NF	National Forest
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
ph.	Photographed
SP	State Park

Location Abbreviations (counties are in italics)

BKLCA	B. K. Leach Conservation Area <i>Lincoln</i>
BL	Bean Lake <i>Platte</i>
BIM	Bigelow Marsh <i>Holt</i>
BCA	August A. Busch Conservation Area <i>St. Charles</i>
CBCA	Columbia Bottom Conservation Area <i>St. Louis</i>
DCCA	Duck Creek Conservation Area <i>Bollinger, Stoddard</i>
DRD	Dalbow Road <i>St. Charles</i>
DR	Dunn Ranch <i>Harrison</i>
EBCA	Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area <i>Boone</i>
FL	Fellow's Lake <i>Greene</i>
FGCA	Fountain Grove Conservation Area <i>Livingston</i>
GPCA	Grand Pass Conservation Area <i>Saline</i>
HSF	Homestead Springs Farm <i>Webster</i>
KR	Keeteman and Glacial Sand Road Sod Fields <i>Lincoln</i>
LC	Lake Contrary <i>Buchanan</i>
LS	Lake Springfield <i>Greene</i>
LW	Lake Wappapello <i>Wayne</i>
LCSP	Lewis and Clark State Park <i>Buchanan</i>
MWP	Maintz Wildlife Preserve <i>Cape Girardeau</i>
MNWR	Mingo National Wildlife Refuge <i>Stoddard and Wayne</i>
MSL	Maryville Sewage Lagoons <i>Nodaway</i>
OSCA	Otter Slough Conservation Area <i>Stoddard</i>
PCCL	Perry County Community Lake <i>Perry</i>
PSP	Pershing State Park <i>Linn</i>
RMBS	Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary <i>St. Charles</i>
RRSP	Roaring River State Park <i>Barry</i>
RBSP	Rock Bridge State Park <i>Boone</i>
SNR	Shaw Nature Reserve <i>Franklin</i>
SL	Smithville Lake, <i>Clay and Clinton</i>
SCNWR	Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge <i>Holt</i>
SLNWR	Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge <i>Chariton</i>
TGP	Tower Grove Park <i>St. Louis City</i>
WSCA	Weldon Spring Conservation Area <i>St. Charles</i>
WLD	Winfield Lock and Dam and Sandy Slough <i>Lincoln</i>

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A BIRDERS' GUIDE TO MISSOURI PUBLIC LANDS

Edge Wade & Others

ROARING RIVER STATE PARK AND VICINITY
Jeff Cantrell and Jerry Williams (July 2013)

This Birders' Guide covers the state park, the conservation area and sites within the Mark Twain National Forest.

Roaring River State Park (4,093 acres) owned by DNR; Barry Co. DeLorme 61, H-7; For more information: <http://mostateparks.com/park/roaring-river-state-park>; Park Office: (417) 847-2539 ; Lodging/Dining: (417) 847-2330

Roaring River Conservation Area, owned by MDC, consists of two tracts totaling 429 acres. The main tract is two miles east of Roaring River State Park on Rt. F. This is the portion discussed below. For more information call 417-895-6880; <http://mdc4.mdc.mo.gov/applications/moatlas/AreaSummaryPage.aspx?txtAreaID=8623>

Mark Twain National Forest is a U.S. National Forest; <http://www.fs.usda.gov/mtnf>

Directions: From Cassville, go south on MO 112 to the park entrance. Additional directions are noted below.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: This area is arguably the richest in the state for nesting passerines, many of which are difficult or nearly impossible to find elsewhere in Missouri. **This Birders' Guide provides directions to sites for Painted Bunting, Hooded Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Swainson's Warbler, Black Vulture, and several others.**

Features of interest to birders: The areas described below highlight spots or trails that offer the possibility of finding birds that are difficult to find elsewhere, or are found in especially good numbers in this vicinity.

ROARING RIVER STATE PARK SITES

Melton Conference Center

This lodge-like facility has sleeping rooms, a dining room, gift shop, and a good possibility of Black Vultures lounging on the roof. It is on the right (west) of Hwy. 112, just past Campground #1.

Pibern Trail

At the end of Campground #1 (go right near the entrance to the Paradise Valley inholding) is the trailhead to Pibern Trail. The trail starts crossing the dry creek bed. You will probably find Acadian Flycatchers, Black-and-White and Kentucky Warblers immediately behind the restrooms and wherever you park near the trailhead. The whole camping area has Louisiana Waterthrushes. The trail is long and loops around to the first part of Campground #1. You may just want to walk about ¼ mile and come back

the way you went in. Once you cross the dry creek bed, listen for Worm-eating Warblers along the steep hillside on your left [this may be the best place in the area for them]. There are two or three nesting pairs from there to the intersection of the trail and dry creek bed (second crossing). Worm-eating and Kentucky Warblers respond well to spishing here in mid spring. This same trail section in the winter usually holds several brown creepers, Myrtle Yellow-rumped Warblers and Golden-crowned Kinglets. Summer Tanagers, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Red-eyed Vireos and Great-crested Flycatchers should also be plentiful along the valley of buckeyes to the point of the second crossing of the dry creek bed. If you walk the dry creek bed just **past the sharp “left turn” on Pibern Trail proceeding up a steep hill, you** should find Scarlet Tanager, Wood Thrush and hopefully, a Cerulean Warbler. At that point you might want to walk the dry creek bed a little farther, or just head back the trail you came in on. If you stay on Pibern Trail it will go up a very steep slope and then stay to the ridge tops until it gradually drops to the beginning of Campground #1 and Paradise Valley. The steep slope holds Carolina Wrens in the warm months and in cool months the **area becomes a Winter Wren’s residence along the jagged rocks and in the** root wads. The dry upland ridge top should hold Yellow-Throated Vireos and summer tanagers and bring you eye-level to Northern Parulas in the spring and summer. At the other end of this campground, at the private inholding, Paradise Valley, a singing male Painted Bunting has been present for several years. But this is not the best place for Painted Buntings. This is a sure spot for Chipping Sparrows and Indigo Buntings during the spring and summer.

Behind the Trout Hatchery

Another good Cerulean spot is behind the trout hatchery, itself. Birders are welcome to walk this area even though it looks like no one ventures that way. You can park your car below the Roaring River spring pool. You will see the hatchery office on your left. Behind those old rock buildings follow the signs to cabins 1-3, then walk down a road farther back in the valley. **This is FR 1135, “Old Roaring River Road.” You will have a nice canopy of** large trees, and a short walk will take you to water again. Especially in May this is a good spot for a cerulean warbler and you will see/hear wood thrushes. Blackburnian and Golden-Winged Warblers are possible the first couple weeks of May, while Wood Thrush will serenade birders all summer long. The road goes 2.2 miles before coming to FR 2212, where a left turn will take you back to Hwy.112 in 1.6 miles. NOTE: FR 1135 is not well-maintained and is often washed out. A high-clearance vehicle is necessary, or WALK it.

“Warbler Woods”

This area along the river, called “Warbler Woods” was a favorite of some of Missouri’s best and fondly remembered birders. Here you will be following the footsteps of Rebecca Mathews, Betty Dyer and Pat Mahnkey. By the fish cleaning station go across the bridge and turn left onto Rt. F. Rt. F will take you across another bridge (watch for Cliff Swallows) and then you will turn right by the nature center. Stay on that road and go to the end of

Campground #3. There is a large parking area. From this parking area, **Camp Smokey is on the hill on your left. "Warbler Woods" is straight ahead** beyond the left end of the chain link fence in the corner of the lot. There is a one lane paved road that leads to it with a small turn-around, but it is probably better to park here by the chain link fence. [In 2013, Jeff Cantrell documented a Fish Crow nest in a sycamore tree beyond the fence. It may be the first Fish Crow nest documented in southwest Missouri.] In the area near **the sign/gate at the entrance to "Warbler Woods" at the turn around, you** should find Northern Parula, Kentucky, Black-and-White, Yellow-throated and possibly Blue-winged Warbler, and White-eyed Vireo. Birding during March and April this area holds scores of Myrtle Yellow-Rumped Warblers **and both species of kinglets. This trail runs along the "wild" part of the river** and you should get everything expected in similar habitat except **Prothonotary Warbler, which have not been found here. Before you get to the "bluff"** head-on right-angle of the trail, you may find nesting pairs of Hooded and Kentucky Warblers. This small bluff forcing the trail to curve right will hold Gray Catbirds, Eastern Phoebe and White eye-Vireos. During spring migration a birder will have a good chance at a transient **Wilson's, Golden-winged, and Mourning warbler** and scores of American Redstarts. You will **also get Hooded Warbler again along this trail after two "dips" (where small, usually dry creeks cross the trail).** Your best view of Hooded Warbler should be at the end of the second dip, where there is a lot of secondary growth. The river in this section will bring you the best possible viewing of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, Green Herons, Northern Rough-winged Swallows and Spotted Sandpipers. Unfortunately, the trail suffered from a very bad storm in 2012, and several big trees were lost. You may see an old eagle nest that Great Horned Owls have used in the past, and you might find a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron nest.

Camp Smokey

At the top of the hill, left of the parking area for "Warbler Woods" is Camp Smokey. This is a group camp and will be off-limits if a camp is in session. In spring and summer there should be Yellow-throated Vireos, both orioles, Blue Grosbeaks, Eastern Bluebirds and lots of Chipping Sparrows. It offers good winter birding, with Myrtle Yellow-rumped Warblers, Cedar Waxwings, and Pine Siskins in those nice old cedars. Check the sky for Black Vultures all year long.

ROARING RIVER CONSERVATION AREA

From the park nature center, go right (east) on Rt. F. You will go just under 2 miles to the Roaring River CA parking lot, (the conservation area sign will be on Chute Ridge itself on your left, the parking lot on your right). There are two fisherman trails here. The entrance to the long trail to the river is between the two posts at the side of the lot, it starts parallel to the highway. Though longer, this trail is not as difficult as the shorter trail. Follow this trail to the little brook and continue to follow it to the canebrakes at the **river. Swainson's Warbler has nested in this cane. It may be heard about 10-20 yards down river from where you first run into the cane.** Playback vocals are discouraged here to keep from disturbing this rare species and its terri-

torial and possible nesting behavior. The short trail is just off the corner of the parking lot directly toward the river from the only large tree (honey locust) by the lot. This trail has a place with a steep drop down of about 3 feet that may be too treacherous for some. This trail takes you to a great spot for nesting Wood Thrushes. Also present along the trail are Ovenbirds, Eastern Towhees, Kentucky and Blue-winged Warblers and Northern Parulas, but **the real draw is the possibility of finding a Swainson's Warbler.**

MARK TWAIN NATIONAL FOREST ALONG RT. F

Chute Ridge Glade

Step across the highway from the conservation area parking lot and enjoy Chute Ridge Glade. This is one of the showiest wildflower areas in southwest Missouri and the birds are an additional bonus. There are at least six pairs of breeding Prairie Warblers on this side of the knob, Yellow-breasted Chats, Summer Tanagers, Field Sparrows, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and much more are to be found here. Although not the best spot for Painted Bunting, a pair has nested right by the Conservation Area sign in several years. Watch for a singing male on the wire. In June, calamint will fill the air and the glade will be in full bloom. Birders should bring an Ozark Wildflower Field Guide along for their walk, they will be glad they did.

PRIVATE LANDS SOUTHEAST OF THE PARK

Painted Bunting Hot Spot

From the RRCA parking lot turn right, drive along Chute Ridge for a short while and in about 2 ½ miles you will come to the MO 86 junction. If you want a diversion, the first right, CR 1162 takes you to a good birding spot on the river. The road leads past a cemetery; park at it for a nice walk along a Neotropical-filled country road. During migration this is a good spot for lots of species, Eastern Kingbirds will be in high numbers and Olive-sided Flycatchers can be found on dead branches across Roaring River. As of 2013, water washed out the road, and it is not advisable to drive beyond the cemetery. If you take this road, come back to the highway by the way you went in. At the Rt. F and MO 86 junction, turn right toward Eagle Rock. In about a half mile you will see Roaring River Southern Baptist Church. Turn right just past the church, on CR 2260. You will go about 2 ½ miles, going over Roaring River, en route. Watch carefully for a sharp right turn by a house on the left. It is close to the road, with a big garden and Purple Martin house. From now on, this section of road is fantastic, especially during migration. Expect Bobolinks, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers and much more. Before you start to go down the hill, stop. There is a slight pull off on the right. In breeding season, you should find Painted Bunting here. First watch the power line, if one is not there, scan the fence row edge. There are two more Painted Bunting territories at the bottom of the hill. At the intersection you should have one singing male to the left, but the landowner here **may not be "birder friendly", so use discretion. You might see nesting vultures in the barn (from the road).**

MARK TWAIN NATIONAL FOREST LANDS SOUTH OF THE STATE PARK

Pine Warbler Habitat

From the Melton Conference Center, turn right and go south (uphill) on MO 112 for 0.9 miles to Forest Service Road 1050 on the left. This road is not well marked. It is on the left (east) immediately south of a “faux” log cabin home with an RV shed. You may see the road number on a 3-foot high post after you turn. Turn left onto FR 1050 and go 0.2 miles to a parking area on the left. Check the pine trees on the opposite side of the road for Pine and Yellow-throated Warbler.

Butler Hollow

From the Melton Conference Center, turn right and go south (uphill) on Highway 112 for 3.1 miles to Sugar Camp Scenic Drive and turn left. This is Forest Service Road FR 2275. Follow FR 2275 for 1.4 miles to FR 2280. Turn right onto FR 2280 and go 0.6 miles to the cave. Look for Worm-eating and Hooded Warblers. At mile 0.7 there is another cave, at 0.9 the road crosses a creek bed, at 1.0 there is a small turn around spot on the right. After the turn around spot, listen for Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Follow the road another 0.7 mile to the intersection with FR 2285. Turn around here and go back to Sugar Camp Scenic Drive.

Cerulean Warbler Habitat

After returning to Sugar Camp Scenic Drive from Butler Hollow, turn right and go 0.3 mile to a curve at the top of a hill. Listen and watch for Cerulean Warblers here. You can also go around the curve and head further east. When you see a red gate on the left about 3 miles down the road, start listening for Ceruleans. From this point down the hill for the next mile or so is a nesting area for them. Scarlet Tanager may also be in this area.

Toilets: Modern toilets and vault toilets are available throughout the park.

Camping: There are three large campgrounds in the park. Check with the park for details.

Hazards/Limitations: Parts of this area are subject to flooding. Roads may be washed out. Check conditions before driving the forest roads.

Nearby Birding Sites: Cassville City Greenway, Flag Spring CA, Pilot Knob CA

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