



THE BLUEBIRD

The voice of MBS since 1934

**June 2021
Volume 88, No. 2**



***The Missouri Birding Society
Missouri's Ornithological Society Since 1901***

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Aug. 1 for Sept. issue; Nov. 1 for Dec. issue

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Winter (Dec. 1-Feb. 28)—to Pete Monacell by Mar. 10

Spring (Mar. 1-May 31)—to Lisa Berger by June 10

Summer (June 1-July. 31)—to Allen Gathman by Aug 10

Fall (Aug. 1-Nov. 30)—to Mary Nemecek by Dec. 10

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Front Cover— Prairie Warbler, Rocky Fork Lakes CA *Boone*, 20 June 2020.
Photo Paul McKenzie

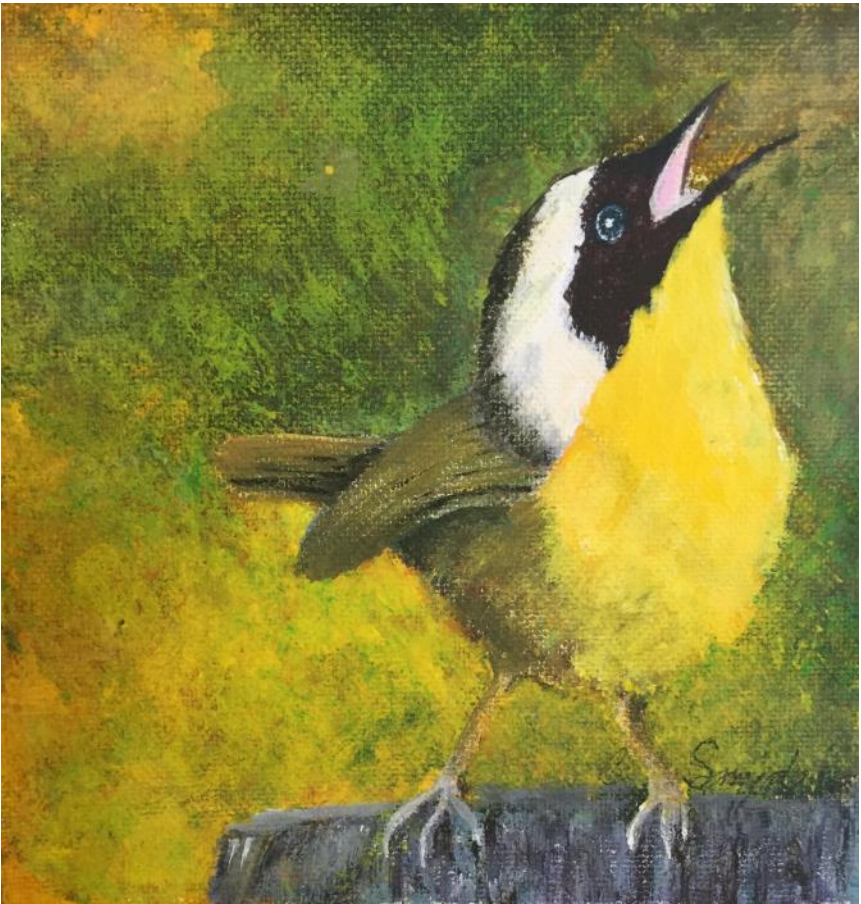
Peer-reviewed articles in *The Bluebird* are noted by a header.
Species mentioned in articles not so designated may not have been subject to review.

THE BLUEBIRD is published quarterly by The Missouri Birding Society. 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 Missouri Birding Society or its officers, Board of Directors, or editors. Send address corrections to MBS, 2101 W. Broadway, PMB 122, Columbia, MO 65203-1261.

Official Name Change

The name of the organization formerly known as the Audubon Society of Missouri has been legally changed to MISSOURI BIRDING SOCIETY. The Articles of Association for the organization were amended to reflect this change, and the change was certified by the Missouri Secretary of State on May 5, 2021.

Documents relating to this change may be found at the web site of the Missouri Secretary of State, <https://bsd.sos.mo.gov/e-commerce/company/543323>.



Common Yellowthroat, acrylic on canvas
Carol Snyder, carolsnyderart.com

PRESIDENT'S CORNER—DANA RIPPER



Dear Missouri birders,

For this issue's President's Note, I wanted to draw your attention to a recent guest editorial in *Bird Watcher's Digest* by Bob Ford and Paul Baicich. We have reprinted it below in its entirety with permission from the authors and *Bird Watcher's Digest*.

Most of the birds we love are in peril. I know some of you get tired of hearing this, and others may find it overwhelming to the point of downheartedness. However, whether in big ways or small, we can all do something about the population declines of our native birds and other wildlife.

Recently I saw State Ornithologist Sarah Kendrick give a presentation on the Seven Simple Actions to help birds (3BillionBirds.org). These are small but mighty actions we can take every day that, collectively, can genuinely make a difference. These are:

- stop birds from striking your windows at home and work
- keep cats indoors
- plant *native* grasses, flowers, shrubs, and trees
- avoid pesticides
- drink bird-friendly coffee
- reduce single-use plastic
- engage in community science programs, such as eBird or the Breeding Bird Survey

Some of these take a little effort, some of them are just fun and aesthetically pleasing, but all of these actions empower YOU to make a real difference for birds.

I hope you got the chance to see the MBS co-sponsored keynote address by Doug Tallamy that was part of the Spring Meeting offerings. If you missed it, you can watch it here:

<https://bit.ly/3fsjFVY>

Dr. Tallamy lays out a clear connection between native plants and their contribution to caterpillar populations – a.k.a. bird food! More than 95% of our nesting birds need insect prey, so we need to make sure we're conserving insects. Best way to do that? Plant natives and curb use of pesticides.

Bob Ford and Paul Baicich also write of several of these actions in their article below. They also highlight the need to grow our ranks and recruit new people that care about birds and their fate. There's a reason the conservation community is united in its message about the actions we need to take to help birds. The connections are clear and most of the actions are relatively simple. Sometimes it's easy to get overwhelmed and have our momentum slowed by real-world obstacles, as well as feel like we individually are too small to make a difference. This is simply not so. I would leave you with two quotes that help keep me inspired in the face of conservation challenges:

You are what hope looks like to a bird.

-National Audubon Society

Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.

-Theodore Roosevelt

Post-pandemic Prognostications: What do we want to be?

Bob Ford and Paul J. Baicich

“There is nothing permanent except change.”
— Heraclitus of Ephesus (c. 535-473 BC)

The events of the last year and a half make clear that when we look back, the experience will be seen as marking a turning point in our history and our behavior. The year 2020 was particularly remarkable, with the start of a global pandemic, severe economic distress, calls for social justice, and deepening political divisions. Another simultaneous shock to us as bird enthusiasts was the documentation of three billion birds lost from our birdlife over the last 50 years. And that loss seemed to be only the tip of the biodiversity iceberg; independent studies from around the world are documenting insect population declines and the degradation of ecosystem integrity. From the Arctic to the Amazon, in whatever ecosystem you visit in our hemisphere, the signs are everywhere. While these trials have already exhausted many observers, we realize that conversation, combined with action, must continue. Indeed, we actually see new opportunities opening before us here at home.

These upheavals may actually serve to shift us from a familiar “business as usual,” into a long-lasting “new normal.” Pundits and scholars alike are predicting more stay-at-home telework hours, less business travel, more virtual meetings, changes to educational practice, and more. However, exactly what the new normal will look like and the extent to which we change our “way of doing business” is as yet unknown. The relevancy of wildlife engagement and bird conservation in the new normal is also just starting to be revealed. Again, there is a foundation for hope and potential.

Since the crises of 2020 challenged our nation’s social fabric, it’s important that we recognize the foundational thread of bird concerns that exist within that fabric. In these unique times, people quickly responded by spending more time in the local outdoors, and, for many, this has sparked a renewed interest in birds and wildlife, from their backyards to expansive public lands.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant disruption in our lives, yet even in a situation of near-forced isolation, people have turned to their immediate and nearby outdoors. Local garden stores, plant nurseries, and national chains could not keep up with the demand for plants as people landscaped their yards for birds and other wildlife. When our fellow citizens were not leaving their homes to “find nature,” they attempted to draw nature to themselves and their yards with all-season bird feeding, bird-baths, and more. The backyard feeding-station has filled a role as new entertainment – for adults and youth alike – during hours when they might have otherwise been at work or in their classrooms. A new “discovery” began.

What we actually *do* with that “discovery” is the issue at hand. Fortunately, and beyond that initial curiosity, many people turned in large numbers to record-keeping and citizen science. The number of backyard contributions to eBird skyrocketed during the first spring and summer of the pandemic. Other online data tools, such as iNaturalist, grew. Meanwhile, many people were heartened by the lowest air pollution rates in decades in many large urban areas, thanks to decreased air and vehicle travel. Optimism grew for revival in beach-nesting bird populations as many beaches closed to the public.

By default, the pandemic has introduced a swath of the American public to our birdlife. And if we wish to grow the appreciation and conservation of birds among more of them, it will have to begin with “where they are at” as a people. And right now, they are still at their homes, and, figuratively, just crawling out. If they reside in urban areas, or where the cities blend into the suburbs, they will first be attracted to the local birdlife: backyard, waterfronts, rooftops, and local parks. There is so much to learn, with the issues of local habitats, window-glass, insect “plankton” (nighthawks and swifts), and predators (feline and otherwise). A new curious bird-constituency will have to start “someplace,” and a small army of bird educator/conservationists will need to be ready to supply the information. (Online involvement will help, but will never be enough.) Depending on location and opportunity, these will simply have to include people of color – often and regrettably absent from our ranks.

The issues can broaden into bird-safe building standards, bird-city designation, nest box projects, and bird-friendly food-sourcing.

Eventually, and if done right, this can lead to serious and wholistic bird engagement. Rural Americans may be more drawn to a unique birdlife outside their door – at “edges” and farmfields – even appreciating aspects of such bird-conservation policy as those in the Farm Bill. And everyone – eventually – could adopt a bird-oriented approach to use of wasteful plastics. In this last case, local conservation even connects with our ocean-and-island birds. Moreover, the cause of bird study and bird conservation can easily be addressed as we Americans continue to ask questions while we shop – questions about bird-compatible coffee, rice, cork, olive oil, seafood, and bread, for starters, and our plastic packaging, for sure! As a new cohort of bird watchers appears – and it surely will after the pandemic – we will have the opportunity to check our competence in identifying the field marks of ducks, hawks, shorebirds, flycatchers, and thrushes, but also our ability to identify the hallmarks of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, the Duck Stamp, and the aforementioned Farm Bill. Not only should we know the fundamentals separating cranes and herons, but we should also be able to differentiate state and federal bird-management responsibilities.

While deep divisions across the country may appear to obstruct a common view on some environmental concerns, from the use of public lands to pesticides, from fisheries management to livestock grazing, and on different interpretation for the hope - or the illusion - of “green energy,” the birds might still connect us all: rural, suburban, urban, Black, White, Latino, Asian, male, female. Some of this involves a constructive exchange between bird watchers and hunters, potentially resolving different approaches to wildlife management and conservation. But what is missing right now is the readiness – and the dedicated people - to take on the broadened bird-oriented messaging across those preconceived “divides.” And, as social justice concerns present an opportunity for serious change, we bird watchers and bird conservationists have yet to decide exactly how to fit in. At least we are realizing that these pressing issues of the moment are not independent of bird study and bird conservation. Already, state and federal conservation agencies, a field traditionally dominated by white males, having made initial advances on gender issues, are becoming increasingly aware of racial inequities within the work force. Nevertheless, many people of color still have reason to be nervous and uneasy while outdoors. A welcoming and aware bird-watching community has only begun to understand and change those circumstances.

We will have to think hard about making new appeals and reaching new audiences in ways we have not pursued before. We will have to think about transitioning people from a new interest in the backyard bird-garden and feeding station to local projects that will lead to broader bird appreciation and conservation. We will have to consider making “volunteering for our birds and people” as a standard expectation for everyone carrying binoculars. In the process, we should adopt our own bird-version of the mission of our colleagues at the Trust for Public Land: to ensure that wherever you live, you have safe and easy access “to a quality park within a 10-minute walk of home.”

As the pandemic subsides and the economy slowly recovers, as more of us can travel and visit parks, refuges, forests, and bird festivals, there will be a new social “normal,” but it will only be better in the arena of bird watching, bird study, and bird conservation if we plan now and if we are deliberate in recrafting that coming new normal.

Bob Ford is the Coordinator for Partners in Flight, an international network dedicated to supporting bird populations by promoting habitat conservation and policy initiatives based on science and on large landscape conservation planning

Paul J. Baicich is the regular “Quick Takes” columnist in Bird Watcher’s Digest and a co-author of three books on nesting birds, bird-feeding history, and waterfowl.

Originally published as a “Guest Editorial” in the May/June 2021 issue of Bird Watcher’s Digest (birdwatchersdigest.com). Reproduced by permission.

WE WELCOME OUR NEW MBS MEMBERS!

Kevin Wehner

Remember, new members are our future. If a new member lives near you, say, "Howdy and welcome to MBS." In addition, recruit another new member. Welcome to these 40 new MBS members in the 2nd quarter of 2021!

Loy Barber	St. Louis, MO
Patty & Steve Berry	St. Peters, MO
Grace Brockway	Kansas City, MO
Scott Campbell	St. Louis, MO
Greg & Meri Cartee	St. Peters, MO
Katherine Cary	Lee's Summit, MO
Cody & Brianna Chaffin	Joplin, MO
Michelle Dalbey	Blackwater , MO
Jennifer Escher	Ballwin, MO
Teresa Etheridge	Jackson, MO
Julie Fisher	Columbia, MO
Cherri & Robert Gretter	Chadwick, MO
Norma Harding	Owensville, MO
Jeanne Harrison	Imperial, MO
David Haenni	Des Peres, MO
Heather Isherwood	Columbia, MO
Holly Ites	Kansas City, MO
Steve Johnson	Kansas City, MO
Kim Klaproth	Columbia, MO
Dennis Martin	Wildwood, MO
Maria Moore	Millersville, MO
Eileen Mcinerney	St. Louis, MO
Kristie Nelson	Eunice, MO
Vickie O'Neil	Chesterfield, MO
Cheryl Rosenfeld	Columbia, MO
Bill Salsgiver	Manchester, MO
Sara Scheil	Independence, MO
Debbie Trowbridge	Chesterfield, MO
Kate Walker	Ashland, MO

Amera & Darrel Wild
Karen Wienberg
Nathan Wittmaier
Zeb & Samantha Yoko
Victor Villano

Joplin, MO
Cole Camp, MO
Warrensburg, MO
Chillicothe, MO
Vandalia, MO

Subscribe to the MOBIRDS Listserv!

If you are curious about what birds are being seen around Missouri, have a question about a bird, enjoy sharing your birding experiences, want to know what field trips are coming up, want to meet other birders online, the MBS sponsored MOBIRDS listserv is for you.

Join the active Missouri birding community by subscribing.

Subscribe here: [https://po.missouri.edu/cgi-bin/wa?](https://po.missouri.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=MOBIRDS-L&A=1)
SUBED1=MOBIRDS-L&A=1

Please note that MBS members are NOT automatically subscribed to the listserv. You must subscribe yourself by going to the link above.

Also, all listserv posts are retained in a searchable archive:
<https://po.missouri.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A0=MOBIRDS-L>

When Did Common Grackles Begin Picking Acorns?

David A. Easterla, Ph.D.

At 5:20 PM on 17 September 2020, I was in my front yard at Maryville, Nodaway County, Missouri, and noticed a number of acorns falling to the ground under a large and tall Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*) tree. I assumed Blue Jays were the culprits, since this oak species has very small acorns that are easily harvested and eaten by the Blue Jay. Looking upward, I was surprised to see at the treetop numerous Common Grackles flying in and out among the branches, grabbing acorns, breaking them off, and apparently swallowing them. This action involved at least 25-30 birds. They were difficult to count since they were constantly flying in, and after a successful acorn plucking, flying away, either to a roost or to continue their migration. It was comical to watch some grackles hanging upside down on a branch, like a titmouse or goldfinch, attempting to break off an acorn. Common Grackles feeding on acorns on the ground seems possible, but plucking them



Common Grackle *Cape Girardeau* 24 Mar 2012
Photo Dustin Siegel

from tree branches? As mysteriously as this activity began, within 10 minutes it stopped and the birds flew away.

This time of year flocks of Common Grackles and other blackbirds often fly over my yard, but I had never observed them to land in a Pin Oak and pluck acorns! Some of our non-native avian species have become very successful in a new land because of their great adaptability to a new environment; the House Sparrow, Rock Pigeon, and European Starling immediately come to mind. Although a native species, the Common Grackle today is certainly more common today than when Christopher Columbus arrived in the New World in 1492. With the numerous grain crops today, the species has become opportunistic and adapted to an additional food source; unfortunately, the Common Grackle sometimes becomes a pest with other blackbird species, especially during the winter when gigantic roosts sometimes form.

In the Maryville area, crops had not yet begun to be harvested when the acorn picking occurred, yet blackbirds were already flocking. Is this the Common Grackle's method of adding an additional food source? Regardless, this unusual activity seems to be a new method of obtaining food for the Common Grackle during early autumn in northwest Missouri. Have any of our readers observed this strange food-gathering for the species?



Common Grackle 6 Apr 2017
Photo Andy Reago and Chrissy McClarren

Rusty Blackbird Preys on American Goldfinch

Margy Terpstra

A dip in the polar vortex caused incredibly frigid conditions that served up an unexpected sighting here in our Shady Oaks Sanctuary on February 15, 2021. The temperature had dropped to -0.2 degrees F that morning and only rose to 4.5 degrees F that day. In fact, it had not gotten above 23 degrees in over a week. It was snowing heavily all day, gradually accumulating to eight inches.

Since 2012, Rusty Blackbirds have shown up here, and ten were present that day for the thirtieth day this year. Typically, these birds spend their time peaceably foraging in the woodland, garden areas and swampy thicket where the leaves are intentionally left as a layer of native habitat. However, the heavy snow and extreme cold made foraging impossible. The birds had to satisfy their hunger with scattered seed found under the feeders and a Christmas tree, staked nearby for cover.



About 3:00 p.m. we were getting ready to go out and refill feeders. Since we have a 'minimal disturbance' policy, I went to the window first to check the activity level. That's when I saw a Rusty Blackbird dive and grab a bird in flight and pin it down in the snow! Dan watched and I photographed the Rusty as it killed the American Goldfinch, then tumbled down the little bank of snow with it into the bubbler basin. It decapitated the goldfinch, lifted the head and carried it around before feeding some more. The first Rusty left as another came in to partake of the meal. Some minutes later, the first bird returned or possibly a third came in. We let the scene play out for 28 minutes before going out to finish our tasks. Awestruck, we had just witnessed an act of desperation, skillfully executed out of that primal need to survive.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S81679007>

Bubbler cam video clip of capture:

<https://hummerhavenunltd.com/p322516633/hf6188a51#hf62df704>



The Brown Creeper Lament

(To the tune of “On Top of Old Smokey”)

Kathleen Anderson

Where is the Brown Creeper, I'd really like to know,
If I could just see one, It would make my heart glow!

I've searched and I've searched on lots of tree trunks,
But my conclusion is: that I have been skunked!

So if you want to see one, Don't go birding with me.
For it will never happen for all eternity!

I've tried really hard, but I'm all out of luck.
Maybe I could see one if it was as large as a duck!



I have to remind myself that ,
"Birding is Fun!"
But without a Brown Creeper, I'm
feeling rather glum.

One little Brown Creeper is all that I
ask,
I never expected it would be such a
task.

Today I thought I saw one going up a
tree,
But on closer inspection it was only a
Dow-ney!

Upon reading these verses, Edge
took pity on me,
She offered to bird together, at
Columbia Audubon Sanctuary.

Now I am happy, Edge is the best.
Without her assistance, I would still
be Creeper - less!

Photo Andy Reago/Chrissy McClarren

The Story of the Bluebird: How it came to be chosen as Missouri's State Bird and the amazing developments that followed.

Sterling P. Jones

[The following is reprinted with permission from a 1947 publication of the St. Louis Bird Club, now the St. Louis Audubon Society.

— Ed.]

The seed of an idea sprouted.

In 1926 Jane Wynne, news writer in St. Louis, sent a letter to Alfred F. Satterthwait, found of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, mentioning that Kentucky had recently selected a State Bird, other states had their favorite bird representatives, so why not start a movement for Missouri to adopt one – or words to that effect.

That letter was the indirect cause of the bluebird alighting on the perch of honor as Missouri's Official Bird. When Mr. Satterthwait read the letter at a meeting of the Society, the members promptly accepted the challenge, and went into action.

In order to arrive at a tangible point of beginning, a poll of the members was taken for the selection of a bird to recommend as a fitting candidate, and the unanimous verdict was "Bluebird."

Reasons given: its popularity, beauty, pleasing song; its fame as a symbol of happiness and the harbinger of spring; its reflection of the sky on its blue-coated back and Mother Earth on its ruddy breast, as well as its economic value as a destroyer of insect pests. Although most of the bluebirds migrate in winter, many of them remain in the state as permanent residents.

Mr. Satterthwait and Mrs. H. C. Irish were delegated to contact the St. Louis Bird Club, and the Audubon Society of Missouri, teachers and other groups interested in birds and bird protection, tentatively suggesting the bluebird.

The bluebird was heartily endorsed and, with the exception of one call for the cardinal, no other bird was mentioned. Then followed newspaper publicity, radio broadcasting, lobbying at Jefferson City,

letters, talks and buttonholing of friends. The president of the St. Louis Bird Club, Luther Ely Smith, prepared a petition. Senator Kinney introduced the bill. As a result, "Native bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) was designated in 1927 as the official bird of the State of Missouri, by the 54th Assembly."

More Honors for the Bluebird.

In 1935 the Audubon Society of Missouri voted to drop its original emblem and use a bluebird emblem instead. Later on, the title of the organization's monthly bulletin was changed to "The Bluebird," and the bluebird appears on all of its stationery.

Even before Missouri adopted the bluebird, Dr. T. E. Musselman, the well-known "bird man" of Quincy, Ill., had pioneered the bluebird movement by designing practical, inexpensive, and easy-to-make bluebird boxes, numbers of which he put up on fence posts in Illinois and in Missouri. Dr. Bolen, treasurer of the Missouri Audubon Society, had a number of them made for the statewide use of members and he also placed them on farms near Cape Girardeau. Mrs. Oscar Findley, Regional Director of the Society, living in Cape Girardeau, started a school group known as a Junior Audubon Club, out of which developed a bluebird chapter of high school students who, in 1938, under her guidance, worked out an ambitious project to put up a chain of bluebird houses around Cape Girardeau on the picturesque Cape Rock Drive. They then banded the bluebird tenants and kept records of all nesting activities. They wanted to expand further on the highway but the war call stopped them.

The Long, Long Trail of the Garden Clubs.

Mrs. Erle R. Jackson, of Kirkwood, Mo., President of the Better Gardens Club, had visions of extending a Bluebird Trail through Missouri. She secured permission from the Missouri Highway Department to place bluebird houses along the highways. State Naturalist George E. Moore, editor of the Audubon Bluebird, furnished working plans for the houses. From these, copies were made and sent to other garden clubs.

In February, 1942, she broached the idea to the members of the Better Gardens Club, who decided to adopt the Bluebird Trail as their project, each member pledging two or more houses for the first trail, which was to be along Highway 50.

On March 2, 1942, the first house on the first leg of the trail leading

to route 50 was put up. A photograph was made three days later – after a pair of bluebirds had already moved in!

Twenty-five bird homes were put up on that memorable day, and on March 9th the trail was extended to Gray Summit and through Rockwoods Reservation.

On March 17, 1942, the project was taken over by the State Board of Federated Garden Clubs of Missouri.

Meanwhile the following groups had been working on the project: Rockwoods Reservation, Farmington Garden Club, Gray Summit Garden Club, Clayton Garden Clubs, Washington Garden Club, Cape Girardeau Garden Club, Wright District Garden Club, Jefferson City Garden Club, Maplewood Garden Club, Sullivan Garden Club, Monett Garden Club, Kirkwood Garden Clubs, Columbia Garden Club.

The Illinois clubs had started a trail from East St. Louis to Springfield, Ill., which completed the connection between Columbia, Mo., and Springfield, Ill. On May 6th, 1942, at the state convention of the Federated Garden Clubs of Missouri, held at Columbia, the Missouri Bluebird Trail was officially dedicated. Speakers on this occasion included: Hon. Sidney Stephens of the Conservation Commission, Dr. Rudolf Bennitt of the University of Missouri, Hilliard Brewster of the Missouri Highway Department, State Naturalist George E. Moore, Mrs. T. G. Harris, State Historian, Mrs. C. K. Weber and other notables. 2,680 bird houses had been placed and ready for bird tenants. Mrs. J.P. Larson, past president, in her address dedicated the trail “not only to bluebirds, but to Nature lovers and the people of our state...”

The success of the project brought visions of extending the trail from coast to coast.

In quick response to the coast-to-coast call, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Arkansas, Wisconsin, Iowa, Louisiana and Texas came in during 1942; and the record at the close of the year jumped to 4,600. Kansas, Tennessee, Alabama, Colorado, Pennsylvania and Georgia joined during 1943.

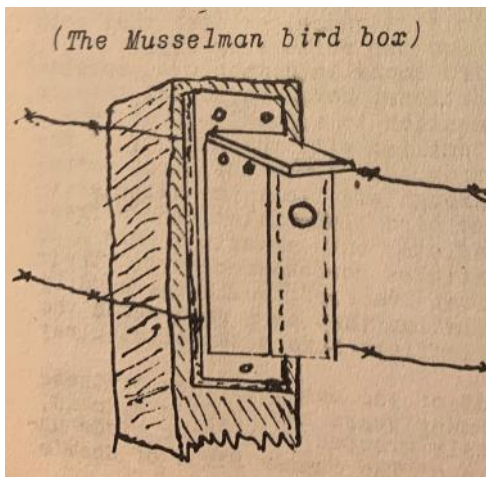
The last gaps in the National Bluebird Trail were closed in 1944, when Utah, Nevada, California, Washington, North Dakota, North

Carolina and Florida fell in line – and the vision of a coast-to-coast Bluebird Trail became transformed from a dream to a reality. Manual training classes in the St. Louis Public Schools have cooperated in the project by making bluebird houses.

By 1946, 6,728 bird houses had been put up, with more to be accounted for. The precise number erected by garden clubs in the other states is not known, but federated garden clubs, once started on a project, do things in a big way, and the grand total is sure to be high.

On May 9th, 1945, the National Bluebird Trail, at a meeting in Springfield, Missouri, was formally dedicated. All who took part in this big enterprise are to be congratulated. Our patriotic bluebirds show their appreciation of a National Bluebird Trail by flying the National Colors of Red, White, and Blue.

Competition from House (English) sparrows for possession of bluebird homes is not a serious menace, for these birds are more of the rowdy type that flock through the crowded streets of cities and towns, or near farm houses, poultry and livestock quarters, preferring any kind of shack with a roof over it near their favorite haunts, to a nice bluebird house that is located too far away from their feeding grounds. The bluebird is more of the Country Gentleman type, with a preference for wide open spaces, the parks, the gardens and suburban lawns. As to the stray cat problem; cats have a way of plundering bird nests, no matter where located, but the hazards of dodging highway traffic make the bluebirds safer in their enclosed boxes than birds living in open unprotected nests on the ground.



Great Rivers Trumpeter Swan Watch 2020-2021

Pat Lueders, Volunteer Coordinator



Roosting Swans at Heron Pond 1 Dec 2020

Introduction: The 2020-2021 Great Rivers Trumpeter Swan Watch was the ninth conducted by community science volunteers at Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary (RMBS) under a partnership formed by the following local agencies: Audubon Center at Riverlands, Missouri Birding Society (MBS), St. Louis Audu-

bun Society (SLAS), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, River Project Office (SLACE).

History: Since 1991, Trumpeter Swans have been arriving around the first of November to their wintering grounds at RMBS and the surrounding nature areas, including Columbia Bottom Conservation Area and Jones-Confluence Point State Park. The Great Rivers Trumpeter Swan Watch was created in 2012 by the partnership above to collect and share information regarding the numbers and behavior of this introduced species with the Trumpeter Swan Society and the general public.

Procedure: One half hour before dawn, trained and experienced community science volunteers arrive to their assigned locations at known roosting areas in the RMBS area. Using the Trumpeter Swan Watch reporting form, they count the number of swans, recording adults and cygnets, the waterfowl roosting with the swans, and the number of Tundra Swans with the Trumpeters. Watches begin with the arrival of swans in November and are conducted every two weeks until the swans have departed. The results are compiled after each watch by the volunteer coordinator.

Swan Collars: As part of the reintroduction of the Trumpeter Swan

species, cygnets were collared on the nesting grounds by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources with yellow neckbands and black codes. During the last nine years, volunteers have reported 93 collars to the Federal Banding Lab.

The following dates were chosen to conduct the 2020-2021 Trumpeter Swan watch: November 17, 2020 December 29, 2020 December 1, 2020 January 12, 2021 December 15, 2020 January 26, 2021.

Covid Protocol: Following local Covid-19 protocols, observers were assigned to locations and asked to wear a mask if were working with a recorder. The group did not meet at the Audubon Center at the end of each session to submit reports, but were met to turn in the report or submitted it electronically.

Results:

Date	Temp	Trumpeter Swans	Adults	Cygnets	Tundras
11/17/2020	38°	413	332	81	
12/1/2020	23°	337	261	76	
12/15/2020	21°	163	128	35	
12/29/2020	25°	633	555	78	49
1/12/2021	26°	7			20
1/26/2021	30°	19	11	8	
2/9/2021*	14°	870	756	114	20
2/23/2021*	41°	429	350	79	40

* Dates added because swans remained on the refuge

Summary: The 2019-2020 Winter Trumpeter Swan season was unique because the entire area had experienced extensive flooding from April, 2019 for 100 days. All of the land including the marshes and agricultural areas was underwater, so plant growth did not occur that summer. As a result, that season had the lowest population of wintering swans since the 2012-2013 season, the high count being 361 on 12/18/2019. There was no flooding during 2020, so the marshes and agricultural areas returned to normal. The question: Would the number of swans wintering at RMBS during the 2020-2021 season return to normal, or would they have found a new roosting area during 2019-2020?

In previous seasons, the Trumpeter Swans have departed for the north by February 1, and a formal count has not been conducted past that date. With counts of 7 on 1/12/2021, and 19 on 1/26/2021, no formal count was scheduled. However, drastic below freezing temperatures hit the area on 2/7, and above freezing temperatures did not occur at RMBS until 2/20/2021, with the lowest temperature being -3° on 2/26/2021. All the water except for a small area in the middle of Ellis Bay and the shipping channel in the river was frozen. By 2/9/2021, 870 swans were roosting on the ice or in the small amount of open water.

By February 20, 2021, over 2,000 swans were counted in the shipping river channel, where they have never roosted since the watch began in 2011. It can be assumed that all of the swans in the surrounding area and south knew to come to the Mississippi River, where there would be some unfrozen water. This unprecedented dip in the polar vortex, especially so late in the winter, appears to have changed the migrating behavior of the swans and waterfowl, producing the latest counts ever in the history of the Great Rivers Trumpeter Swan Watch.

After 2/21/2021, temperatures rose and thawing began, with a temperature of 41° by 2/23/21, and there were 429 swans remaining with thousands of Greater White-fronted Geese in Ellis Bay. Reports of hundreds of swans in open areas north of RMBS showed that a gradual migration was underway.

It is difficult to answer our question, but with the hundreds of swans using the river on 2/20/2021, many swans were obviously wintering in other parts of the general area and were not returning to RMBS to roost until they had no other option. The estimate of over 2,000 swans on 2/20/2021 would surpass any past high count of swans on the refuge, the previous high count being 1,377 on 1/2/2018. It can be assumed that the number of swans in the RMBS area has continued to increase yearly; however, the swans have spread out over the



Swans roosting on Ellis Bay ice

area and now use many roosting locations.

Collars: Seven collars were sighted on the 2020-2021 Swan Watch: 04F, 06A, 11U, 12Y, 13F, 48P, and 68J. None of these swans was new to our watch, all of them collared in Wisconsin from 2003-2012, the last year of the collaring project. We do have some exciting statistics regarding these swans. 12Y, collared in 2010, has been counted every year of the watch and is usually in the first group of arrivals, signaling possibly a leader. 68J, collared in 2005, is 16 years old and also has been counted every year, usually being in the second group to arrive. Both were sighted often during those years at RMBS.

However, the MOST exciting news is the history of 06A. 06A was collared 9/8/2003 in Sawyer Co., Wisconsin, so this swan is 17½ years old, the oldest swan ever recorded on the watch! Interestingly, 06A has only been counted on the watch twice before, in 2014 and 2017.

Conclusion: Trumpeter Swans appear to have returned to winter at RMBS in normal numbers during the 2020-2021 season after the disastrous 2019-2020 season. In addition, a larger number of



Hundreds of swans roosting in Mississippi River channel

swans appear to be using the entire Great Rivers area with good habitat and marshes for roosting and locally large agricultural areas available for feeding. The Trumpeter Swan population is also reported to be exploding throughout the state of Missouri, with over a thousand wintering at Loess Bluffs NWR on the western border.

Thank you to the loyal community science volunteers that continue to devote their time and efforts to the annual Great Rivers Trumpeter Swan Watch!



Swan 06A, photo Doug Hommert

Two Essential Resources for Your Missouri Birding Toolbox

Edge Wade

There are two publications every Missouri birder, beginner or long time experienced, should keep close at hand, one in the house for study sessions, and one in the car for quick reference after a study session at home.

The former is Brad Jacobs' magnum opus, *Birds in Missouri*, 2001, a 375-page large format (8.5x11") reference work with detailed descriptions and discussion of 354 species, richly enhanced with carefully crafted illustrations, published by the Missouri Department of Conservation.

If you have doubts as to the value of a book in print for two decades as a useful, currently relevant source, the recent accolades by Lisa Saffell, a relatively newcomer to the joys and challenges of Missouri birding had this to say,

"The pages on habitat are worth the price of this book! I've never found a birding book that incorporated this type of information so perfectly and it is what I've been missing all along. It's like someone just plugged the cord into the socket. It is my all-time favorite for MO birds! I use others, but I always refer back to Brad Jacobs' book."

Even after decades of birding Missouri, enjoying birds in every county and sharing the joys (and occasional trials) of those experiences with birders statewide, I can attest that Lisa's assessment is not limited to a beginner's perspective. Brad's book comes off the shelf now and then for a refresher course. Opened to just about any page, the text or illustration brings about mental phrases like, "Oh, yes, I'd forgotten that," or, "I should have thought of this yesterday in the field," or "So this is where I learned that."

If you have a copy on the shelf, remember to take it down and review now and then. And if you don't own a copy, fill that gap as soon as you can (see below for where to get a copy).

The second “must have” for all Missouri birders is *Enjoying Missouri’s Birds*, a 42-page 6.5x9” booklet first published by MDC in 1997, written and illustrated by state ornithologist James D. Wilson, with James P. Jackson as co-author, and photos by long-term MDC photographer Jim Rathert.

Enjoying Missouri’s Birds has just been released (March 2021) in its fourth version. This is a major updating from the 2011 edition overseen by then state ornithologist Brad Jacobs, with photos by Noppadol Paothong and illustrations by Richard Ferguson and Kristin Williams, the two major illustrators of *Birds in Missouri*.

State ornithologist Sarah Kendrick’s careful, page-by-page analysis and revision has brought us some major changes, starting with a new sub-title: *A Beginner’s Guide to Birding*. For sure, it should be on the top of every Missouri beginner’s birding “toolbox,” but it is not just for beginners.

Experienced birders know well the value of the bar charts specific to Missouri (color-coded for habitat and augmented with region designation). Missouri Bird Records Committee secretary Bill Rowe’s contribution of his intimate knowledge of species’ occurrence in dates, region, habitat and abundance make this edition’s charts the most accurate source available.

Want to know which dowitcher to expect in late March, what godwit is most likely in August, when Cape May Warblers are most abundant, or the habitat favored by Cerulean Warblers and Northern Parula, just check the bar charts—often a quicker, more comprehensive approach than using an app.

But if you skip to the bar charts and the brief explanations of bird relationships, names, status and distribution on p. 12, you’ve missed some information critical to appreciating and understanding birds, distribution, and the ability to find them.

“Why We Should Care About Birds” on p.3 provides an overview and context for Missouri birding.

“Tools for Birding” pp.4-5, is a primer for basic understanding of characteristics of binoculars and spotting scopes, for evaluating bird field guides, and for online resources for a full gamut of bird information.

“What to Notice About Birds,” “Features to Note,” and “Other Clues to Identification” pp.7-9 feature detailed illustrations to guide birders beginning to focus on studying birds with the purpose of understanding relationships, anatomy “jargon” used by birders, and increasing likelihood of seeing a great variety in Missouri.

Pages 10 and 11, “Habitats,” discuss the features of five general habitat categories and birds to be expected in each. Illustrations of these habitats with associated bird species from *Birds in Missouri* add to the visualization and understanding of the role of habitat in the lives of birds and our ability to seek a successful peek into those lives.

“Unusual Birds,” pp.28-29, is a quick reference to rarities, a list of extinct and extirpated species, and precise instructions of what to do if you find an unusual bird.

Ten places to bird, some familiar at least by name to nearly all experienced Missouri birders, and other sites rarely visited, but worth the experience of exploration are named and described in “Favorite Missouri Birding Areas,” pp. 30-31. Page 32 explains using eBird, Great Missouri Birding Trail, and Missouri Birding Society site guides to find birding locales and gives the online links to them.

“Attracting Birds to Homes and Gardens,” pp. 33-34, is a primer for backyard birders with specific information and suggestions.

There are so many sub-topics critical to understanding birds and being successful in finding and observing them that even one of the most important—behavior—comes late in the booklet. “The basics of Bird Behavior,” relegated to pp.35-36, is not to be overlooked. This brief section is a door-opener for simple enjoyment, fuller understanding, or a lifelong pursuit in natural history studies.

“Top 10 Frequently Asked Bird Questions,” pp. 37-38, is a quick way to answer questions you’ve had, or perhaps to prepare to be “the person in the know” when one of these comes up in a conversation.

The concluding two sections, “Birding Organizations” and “MDC Publications” provide contact information for statewide and local organizations, and the titles and brief descriptions of birding resources.

Birds in Missouri is available from MDC's Nature Shop, either by toll-free phone at 877-521-8632 or online at mdcnatureshop.com, or at regional MDC offices, MDC nature centers and some bird supply stores around the state at \$42.00 plus tax. Shipping from MDC is an additional \$6.95.

Enjoying Missouri's Birds is free. For single and bulk requests email publications.staff@mdc.mo.gov. Consider getting two for yourself-one for the house, one for the car, and while you're at it, order a few more copies to distributed to birders you meet in the field. Single copies (no bulk orders) may be ordered via MDC's automated phone system: 573-522-0108.

Now, that's bodacious, informed, rewarding birding!



Bay-breasted Warbler, Carondelet Park *St Louis City*,
15 May 2020. Photo Andy Reago and Chrissy McClarren

The status of the Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) in the northern Glaciated Plains of Missouri (Peer-reviewed Paper)

Mark B. Robbins

Historically, the status of Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) in northern Missouri was not well documented. The earliest information for the state comes from Widmann's (1907) indispensable treatise. During Widmann's time, this wren apparently was much more local and uncommon along the upper Missouri and Mississippi rivers in the state than it is today. In 1906, Widmann found the species common in the Missouri River floodplain at East Leavenworth, Platte County, but he remarked that S. Wilson considered it an accidental visitor just to the north at St. Joseph. At Widmann's encouragement, because of the lack of information, Johnson (1908) published that the species bred in 1904 in the Mississippi River floodplain at LaGrange, Lewis County. To the north of LaGrange, in the vicinity of Keokuk, Iowa, S. Currier noted that it was of "very irregular occurrence, generally very rare", but more frequent there in 1902 (Widmann 1907). During that period, observations were lacking for the Missouri Glaciated Plains away from those rivers.

To better understand this species' status and distribution both historically as well as more recently in the northern Glaciated Plains of Missouri (see Fig. 1 in Robbins 2020), I perused the *Bluebird* from 1938 (the earliest I had access to) through the early 1970s for all records of the species north of Kansas City as well as Christmas Bird Count data on the National Audubon Society's website, <https://netapp.audubon.org/cbcobservation/>. In addition, I examined several sources, e.g., Missouri Climate Center (<http://climate.missouri.edu/sigwxmo.php>), for past weather events that may have affected this wren's status in northern Missouri.

Results and Discussion:

Within the northern Glaciated Plains, away from the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, the oldest set of observations comes from Nodaway County on the Iowa border. At the time of European settlement that county was primarily covered in tallgrass prairie (Schroeder 1981). Thus, in addition to being near the northern extremity of the Carolina Wren's distribution, there was far less appropriate habitat

because of the preponderance of tallgrass prairie coupled with the lack of large rivers with riparian woodland.

Although information is fragmentary and observer mobility was much more limited, W.T. Garrett, who apparently resided in Nodaway County beginning in 1932, and others failed to mention Carolina Wren in summer surveys and Christmas Bird Counts (hereafter CBC; published in the *Bluebird*) from 1945 through 1956 in Maryville and the surrounding vicinity.

More precise information on the species' status in that county began when David Easterla moved to Maryville in the early fall of 1965. In addition to his fieldwork at multiple sites in the county, he and five others conducted a Christmas Bird Count on 2 January 1966 and failed to record the species. Although that count has been conducted annually from 1969 to present, the first Carolina Wren, a singleton, was not recorded until 30 December 1973. Thus, the first definite record for the county apparently was obtained when I had a single singing bird to the southeast of Maryville (outside the Maryville CBC circle) at Dobbins Woodland (40.237, -94.810) on 29 April 1972. This woodland and adjacent area had been covered intensively, primarily during May, by Easterla, the author, and others for at least the previous four years. Presumably, the One Hundred and Two River was the corridor through which the species moved north into that part of Nodaway County, thus it is likely that the species was present in the southern part of the county at least a few years prior to 1972 (see below). Data are lacking from the other likely corridor, the Nodaway River, which connects with the Missouri River floodplain, ca. 22 river miles south of the county border.

To provide better context for the Nodaway County observations, I examined CBC data in counties that abut Nodaway, but are not in the Missouri River floodplain. Unfortunately, none existed for Missouri; however, two counts across the state line in Iowa were pertinent: the Shenandoah, Page County, and the Taylor County CBCs. Although the Shenandoah CBC has been conducted annually since December 1955, Carolina Wren was not recorded until the 1998 count. The Taylor County CBC was not initiated until 1996, with the first wren detection, a singleton, on the 2006 count.

Given the lack of detection of the species prior to 1972 in Nodaway County and much later in adjacent Iowa, it seems unlikely that Carolina Wren was present historically in Nodaway County, as there had been a number of severe ice/snow/cold winters prior to

observers being present. Winters such as 1873-74, 1882-1883, 1887-1888, 1904-1905 (e.g., Mercer County had 54.5" of snow from mid-December to mid-February), 1924-25 (e.g., a storm left a sheet of ice that covered three-fourths of the state for half of December); 1939-40, 1951-52, and 1960-61 (e.g., parts of northern Missouri had three feet of snow cover) were particularly noteworthy for being severe. This scenario is also consistent with what was known in Iowa (Dinsmore et al. 1984) and Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001), where if the species was present, it was restricted to the Missouri and Mississippi rivers area.

Finally, to illustrate how long recovery can take at the northern extremity of the species' distribution, three consecutive harsh winters occurred beginning in the winter of 1976-1977. This wren almost certainly vanished not only in Nodaway County, but also from a large portion of its northern distribution in the Midwest (CBC; eBird data). Recovery from those and other severe winters in the mid- to late 1980s took years, even in areas along the Missouri River drainage. For example, it was not recorded again on the following CBCs; years of reappearance in parentheses: Maryville (1992), Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge (1986), St. Joseph (1990), Trimble (1986), and Swan Lake N.W.R. (1988).

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Missouri Christmas Bird Counts

2020-2021

Kendell Loyd

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) season of 2020-2021 marked the 121st year since the CBC was established. In that time, Missouri has held at least one active count every year, except for 3 times (1902, 1905, 1931). With this long standing tradition in mind, the CBC is something many birders look forward to—and this was particularly true in 2020. The past year was one of many disappointments, with countless birding events being postponed or canceled due to the pandemic, and the hope for a bit of normalcy come December was felt throughout the community.

Through the efforts of our dedicated compilers and party leaders, Missouri was able to host 25 active counts (Table 1, Figure 1). Five counts were canceled due to inclement weather or safety concerns brought on by the ongoing pandemic. While 25 active counts is 4 fewer than we hosted last year (our highest year to date), it is just below the 20-year average of 26 counts per year. There is cause for celebration, however, because despite the troubles of 2020, we did see the birth of a new count circle: Mark Twain Lake (compiled by George Wisdom). The northeast, as many of you know, has been devoid of CBC circles for a long time—but no longer!

Compared to past years, the 2020 count totals were slightly reduced. A total of 417 participants recorded 138 species with a total of 493,720 birds counted: an average of 1 species for every 3 people and 1,184 birds counted per person. Looking at the 2019 season, our largest to date, 599 participants recorded 155 species (1 sp. per 4 people) and 1,248,963 individuals (2,085 birds counted per person). A loss of waterfowl from the canceled Loess Bluffs NWR, (Horton) Four Rivers, and Swan Lake NWR counts likely led to the large decrease in individual birds. Though numbers were down, a few compilers noted they felt, due to distancing, more area was effectively covered than in past years.

Participants logged a total effort of 1,276 hours and 6,824 miles, 2.5 miles of which was recorded via golf cart. There were 42 bird feeders being watched for an observation time of nearly 95 hours. Nocturnal birders logged a total of 36 hours.

Table 1: Missouri Christmas Bird Counts, 2020 season

Abbr.	Count Name	Compiler
BO	Big Oak Tree SP	Bill Eddleman
BS	Big Spring	Steve Paes
CC	Clarence Cannon NWR	Bruce Schuette
CP	Cole Camp Prairies IBA	Ryan Steffens
CO	Columbia	Laura Hillman
CF	Confluence	Randy Korotev
DC	Dallas County	David Blevins
DT	Dent-Texas County	Daniel Hatch
GR	Grand River	Terry McNeely
JC	Jefferson City	Barbara Brueggeman
JS	Johnson's Shut-Ins SP	Mary Crowell
JO	Joplin	Dave Henness
KC	Kansas City	Michael Stoakes
KI	Kirksville	Sarah Kendrick
KN	Knob Noster	Vernon Elsberry
LI	Liberal	Dana Hoisington
MA	Maryville	David Easterla
MI	Mingo NWR	Bill Eddleman
ML	Montrose Lake WA	Rhonda Edmunds
MS	Maramec Spring	Louise Wilkinson
MT	Mark Twain Lake	George Wisdom
PB	Poplar Bluff	Bruce Beck
SP	Springfield	Greg Samuel
TC	Taney County	Charles Burwick
WS	Weldon Spring	Anne McCormack

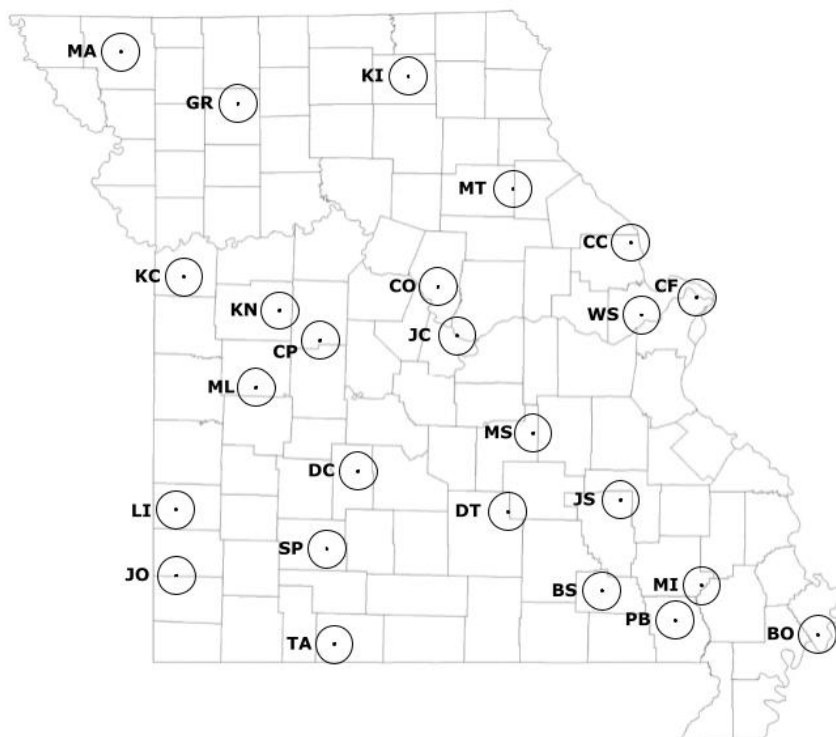


Fig. 1, Missouri CBC circles

Weather for the season was fairly mild, with an average high of 43°F (coldest: Maryville, 18°F; warmest: Springfield, 60°F). Almost no snow was reported, but Maryville reported some lingering accumulation of less than half an inch. However, Dallas County received 2-4 inches from a heavy snowfall the night of January 2. This was the only count held on January 3, so it was the only count affected by this accumulation. Most bodies of still water were reported to be open to partly frozen.

As for total species counted, Clarence Cannon had the highest total with 105 species: a personal best for the circle too. Big Oak Tree and Kirksville also had their highest years, with the former setting personal high counts for 11 species. Johnson's Shut-Ins, while only 2 years old, located 11 species that they did not report last year. The rarest birds reported in the state were Great Egret, Long-billed Dowitcher, Least Sandpiper, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Indigo Bunting, a *Selasphorus* hummingbird, and Common Redpoll. A more in-depth description of notable sightings follows:

Greater White-fronted Goose was reported on 12 counts, including a second record on the Liberal count. Ross's Goose was seen on 6 counts, including a first record in Springfield where a lone bird was photographed in a flyover flock of Snow Goose. Big Spring, due its habitat of mostly forest, received its second record of Canada Goose. Cackling Goose was reported on 8 counts, including a first record for Big Oak Tree. Though there was a count-week bird in 2004, it is good to get it officially added to the list.

Swans were decently abundant with Mute Swan on 6 counts, and Jefferson City setting the state high count with 18 birds. Trumpeter Swan was seen on 7 counts. Confluence, one of two counts recording the species, set the high count for Tundra Swan at 55 birds.

American Wigeon was recorded for the second time on the Joplin count. Mingo recorded a new high count for the state of 5,600 Northern Shoveler. Greater Scaup was reported on 2 counts, and both Big Spring and Liberal reported their second record of Lesser Scaup. Big Oak Tree added Red-breasted Merganser to their checklist.

Taney County set the high count at 26 Common Loon, all of which were seen on Table Rock Lake. The third record of Horned Grebe was found on the Jefferson City count. Maramec Spring had its second record of Double-crested Cormorant.

While we are discussing cormorants, a group led by Ricky Hostetler conducted their second practice run of a future count circle on the west side of Stockton Lake. Ricky reported a potential Neotropical Cormorant. While this would represent a first winter record for the state of Missouri, with the increasing expansion of this species' range, a record like this may be inevitable. I recommend that when encountering a flock of cormorants in any season, observers should verify the identification of each bird.

Columbia received its first record of American White Pelican.

Great Egret was present on 2 counts: 2 at Clarence Cannon (first record) and 3 at Mingo (second record).

Black Vultures were present *en masse*, being located on a record-setting 12 counts. This species has been steadily expanding its distribution northward, and surprisingly has been able to overwinter successfully. Jefferson City recorded its first record, which is a bit

odd as Columbia, to the north, recorded its third. Maramec Spring added its second record. Big Oak Tree, Joplin, and Weldon Spring all added their fourth records. Big Oak Tree is within the expected range of Black Vulture, but due to lack of adequate roost sites, vultures are unusual on the count. In fact, this year was only the sixth record of Turkey Vulture in that count.

Red-tailed Hawk was seen on every count, but the Harlan's variety was recorded on only 4, including Maramec Spring's third record of the subspecies.

Virginia Rail had only been recorded on 2 counts before this year. The first was Columbia, where they have been recorded annually since 2000, overwintering in the pools at a water treatment facility; the other being a lone record from Four Rivers. However, this year Taney County added their first record of a single heard Virginia Rail at the small marsh at Shepherd of the Hills Hatchery. The bird(s) at this location have been reported throughout the late winter and into the spring, most notably both before and after the bitter cold weather the area received in February 2021, with temperatures just above zero for several days. It is my personal opinion that this species is much more likely to overwinter in the state than previously thought, as long as the habitat is present and some open water is maintained. I recommend that CBC participants in the future make an extra effort to listen for the grunts and rattles of rails when birding near thick marsh.

Shorebirds still lingered into the count season with Least Sandpiper (second record) and Long-billed Dowitcher (first record) being recorded at Clarence Cannon. This count also recorded the only Sandhill Cranes in the state.

Unusual gulls were scarce, but Confluence did manage to pick out 2 Lesser Black-backed Gull: a welcomed, if not unexpected, find for the area.

Kansas City recorded only its second record of Eurasian Collared-Dove. Though this invasive species has been present in the state for 20 years, they remain sporadic and uncommon in the count area. In years past, the Springfield count has had an affinity for finding hummingbirds, and this year was no exception.

A female-type *Selasphorus* hummingbird (likely Rufous) had been visiting a private feeder for a few days, and made an appearance on

count day. This circle has 7 records of *Selasphorus* hummingbirds, 4 of which have been in the last 5 years. Springfield also has Anna's Hummingbird on its list, with an adult male in 2015.

A Merlin was recorded on the Dallas County count for only the third time.

Eastern Phoebe was recorded on 8 counts, with Cole Camp Prairies adding their first record.

Columbia (third-count record) and Grand River both reported Northern Shrike.

On the Big Oak Tree count, 4 Fish Crows were found, representing the highest number for that count (eleventh count record), while a single bird was also detected at Mingo, representing the third record for that count.

Wrens were plentiful on many counts. Sedge Wren was found on 3 counts: Montrose Lake added the bird to their list with a first record, Kansas City recorded its third record, and Liberal set the state high count at 7 birds. A new high count record was also set at Columbia, where 307 Carolina Wrens were reported. Individual Marsh Wrens were also found on 3 counts: Columbia, Taney County (second record), and Clarence Cannon (fifth record).

American Pipits were only recorded at Liberal.

Though not uncommon in circles with crop land habitat, Kansas City reported a single Lapland Longspur. While never annual, this species was recorded on the KC count every few years prior to 1980. Presumably due to human development, the bird found this year along the shore at Longview Lake represented the first count record since 1986.

Orange-crowned Warbler was found on two counts: Big Oak Tree (2 birds, fourth record) and Springfield (third record). Common Yellowthroat was a new addition to the Montrose Lake count. Pine Warbler was found at Big Spring (3 birds), Dent-Texas Co (1 bird), and Mingo (4 birds).

Big Oak Tree had a single Vesper Sparrow (third count record) and set their personal record of Lincoln's Sparrow at 5 birds. While not quite the state record, Columbia reported an astonishing 1,233 White-throated Sparrows, a count record. A Harris's Sparrow and a

Spotted Towhee within the Confluence circle—two birds that were seen by many at the Columbia Bottoms Conservation Area—both showed on the count day, representing second records for both species. Spotted Towhee was also reported at Kansas City.

Indigo Bunting was reported at Confluence also, with another bird being located at Clarence Cannon: second records for both counts.

Brewer's Blackbird was present at Liberal and Cole Camp Prairies, in addition to a single bird at Big Oak Tree.

A Common Redpoll was a new addition to the Jefferson City count circle.

Pine Siskins were very plentiful across the state. Collectively, Missouri had its second-highest CBC total of this species with 815 birds being counted (record high: 829 in 1969). This “invasion” allowed several circles to receive personal high counts. Big Oak Tree and Big Spring gained their third records. These accomplishments were overshadowed, however, by Columbia setting the high count for this species with 490 birds (previous 450; Maryville 1969).

Eurasian Tree Sparrow was found on the expected counts around the St. Louis area (Confluence, Clarence Cannon, Weldon Spring), but 11 birds were also found at Kirksville, representing a first count record and an interestingly high count for that far west of the Mississippi.

In the past, tables of raw data from each CBC were included in this publication. While this is the clearest way to make these data available to the public, it results in many pages being taken up by data that lack interpretation. The raw data have been left out of this report with the intent that future publications will include access to an online database that is currently being developed. If you would like a copy of the 2020 CBC raw data, please contact me at KLoyd892@gmail.com.

Seasonal Report Fall 2020

(August-November 2020)

Mary Nemecek

The fall season started off with below normal averages in both temperatures and rainfall- a trend that would continue through October. August ended 1.9 degrees and 0.81 inches of rainfall below long-term averages. September followed close behind, with 1.2 degrees and 0.80 inches of rainfall below the long-term averages. Several areas stayed mostly dry, including the NW corner and an area in the SW that ran parallel to I-44. October continued cool with temperatures averaging 3.5 degrees below long-term averages and bringing morning frost during the first week of the month to parts of the northern and eastern Ozarks. Excluding the bootheel, most of the state experienced a freeze by October 16th. Mid-October also brought a change in weather to a wetter, cooler pattern. David Easterla noted a “tremendous movement of birds last night. Lagoons covered with birds...” on 24 Oct with “birds still pouring in” the following day at the sewage lagoons in Maryville, *Nodaway*. Final rainfall came in at 0.51 inches above long-term averages. November bounced back with warmer temperatures and became the 9th warmest on record. Rainfall came in just above average.

In a year with enviable, chaseable rarities, fall delivered several mega-rarities, starting off the season with an unexpected and very cooperative first state record, Brown Booby. Hurricane Laura brought second state records for Magnificent Frigatebird, Band-rumped Storm Petrel, and Sooty Tern, as well as the 6th state record of Parasitic Jaeger in modern times. Chaseable Chestnut-collared Longspurs created excitement on the eastern side of the state. Other notable species were Ferruginous Hawk, Anna’s Hummingbird, and a second for the season and third for the state Magnificent Frigatebird. All of this against the backdrop of a finch super-flight, perhaps best summed up by an Audubon headline “Pine Siskins Have Taken Over the Country.” Observations of 100 or more Pine Siskins were coming in from backyard feeders, Red-Breasted Nuthatches had their best year in recent memory, and feeders were being stocked around the state in the hopes of luring Evening Grosbeaks that had started moving into the state.

eBird data and seasonal reports submitted from observers around the state remain a primary source for this report. Missouri bird

watchers are encouraged to submit their observations through eBird and are equally encouraged to submit notes to the seasonal editors, as these can often provide more information and perspective than an eBird list.

Please note that this winter report spans August 1- November 30. The Missouri Bird Records Committee defines fall as August 1 – December 13. The author is grateful to Joshua Uffman, Pete Monacell, Bill Rowe and Allen Gathman for reviewing this document. Their comments and suggestions greatly enhanced the quality of the report.

Note: Records marked with an asterisk (*) require documentation, but no documentation has yet been received by the Missouri Bird Records Committee (MBRC). Observers involved with such sightings are encouraged to submit documentation. The MBRC has received documentation of those records marked with a dagger (†), and those marked (acc.) have been accepted by the MBRC.

WATERFOWL

Black-bellied Whistling Ducks continued around St. Louis and the bootheel. The only records away from those areas were 2, SOB Ranch, Lawrence, 7 Aug (Patrick Sullivan) and 1, Webb City Water Treatment



Red-necked Grebe Smithville Lake *Clay* 10 Nov 2020. Photo Marky Mutchler

Plant, *Jasper*, 10 Sep (Jeff Cantrell). A lone **Trumpeter Swan** continued from the summer at Marais Temps Clair Conservation Area, *St. Charles*, until 10 Oct (m.obs). The 10th fall record of a **Cinnamon Teal** (acc.) was ph. 12 Sep, Horseshoe Lake, *Buchanan* (†,ph.Tom Nagel). Scoters had a good season, starting with **Surf Scoters** reported in 14 counties, including 7, Riverview Park *Marion*, 28 Oct (CG) and 5 female type, Rocky Forks CA *Boone*, 4-14 Nov (Edge Wade, m.obs). Ten counties hosted **White-winged Scoters** with a peak of 4, Brenda Kay Sand Pit, *Scott*, 29-30 Oct (TK). David Easterla noted a large number of **Hooded Mergansers** outside of large lakes and reservoirs, with 220 in the NW pool at the Maryville Sewage Lagoons, *Nodaway*, 8 Nov. **Black Scoters** were also present in 9 counties, including 3, LvL, 28 Oct (Sherry Leonardo). The only **Long-tailed Duck** report of the season was 2, LBL 17-21 Oct (Danion Doman, ph. DH, m.obs). Two first year juvenile **Ruddy Ducks** were early arrivals at Maryville Sewage Lagoons, *Nodaway*, 18 Sep (DE).

GREBES THROUGH TERNS

Single **Red-necked Grebe** reports came from: Winfield Lock & Dam *Lincoln*, 25 Oct (Henry & Oliver Gorski); SL, 26 Oct- 12 Nov (ph. DW, ph. MM, m.obs); RMBS, 28-29 Oct (ph. TG, m.obs); Blue Springs Lake, *Jackson*, 30 Oct (Dan Cowell, Varick Cowell); Fellows Lake, *Greene*, 1-2 Nov (ph. KL, m.obs); Blue River Golf Course, *Jackson*, 9 Nov (Steve Rinne); RMBS, 16 Nov (BR, John Nash, Tom Parmeter); Delaney Lake CA *Mississippi*, 24-25 Nov (AG, MH, RF). One **Eared Grebe**, rare in the east, made an appearance at BK Leach CA *Lincoln*, 5-7 Sep (ph. Tommy Goodwin, Jessie Goodwin, David Becher, m.obs) and 26 Sep, OSCA (ph. MH, Bill Eddleman). **Western Grebe** reports came from six counties: 1-4 at SL 26 Oct-27 Nov (ph. DW, m.obs); 1-2 at Blue Springs Lake *Jackson* 28 Oct-11 Nov (ph. Raymond Drake, m.obs); 1-2 at Thomas Hill Reservoir *Macon/Randolph* (Joshua Uffman, ph. PL, m.obs); 1-2 at Clearwater Lake *Reynolds*, 14-24 Nov (ph. Kalen Brady, m.obs); 1 RMBS, 2-27 Nov (ph. DH). Kent Freeman's home, *Dunklin*, continued to host a single **White-winged Dove** throughout the season. An additional 1-2 birds were seen at Hayti Bar Pits, *Pemiscot*, 5-17 Oct (ph. TJ, m.obs). A whopping 23 **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were recorded 23 Aug, Donaldson Point CA, *New Madrid* (MH, Kathy Haas). A late **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was ph. in Parkville, *Platte*, 11 Nov (Phillip Wassmer). One **Anna's Hummingbird** (acc.) was ph. at her feeders by †Sarah Driver, *Stone*, 22 Nov to end of season (†ph. SM, †ph.Dillon Freiburger, †ph.Conway Hawn, †ph.Kearby Bridges, †ph.GSw, m.obs). A single **Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird** was seen in two locations in *Greene*: Equestrian riparian greenways, 18 Oct (KL) and 10 Nov, residence (Jay McEntee).

A new third highest fall total of 53 **American Avocets** were reported 30 Aug, Maryville Sewage Lagoons, *Nodaway* (DE). A surprising **Hudsonian Godwit**, which normally migrate along the east coast in the fall, was at South Dunklin Rice Field *Dunklin*, 10 Sep (TJ). Three **Marbled Godwits** were at both Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park- Little Creve Coeur, *St. Louis*, 1 Sep (Jonah Eckels) and Muskrat Lake, *Buchanan*, 3 Sep (ph. Tom

Nagel). A stunning number 2,250 **Least Sandpipers** were present 7 Sep, Old 13 Hwy, *Henry* (PMc, PM). The latest MO confirmed date of a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** (acc.) was a juvenile ph. at Horseshoe Lake *Buchanan*, 24 Oct (ph. †Micky Louis, †Jennifer Hammett). Single **Red Phalaropes** were reported 23 Sep on Old Hwy 13 *Henry*, (Mark Robbins, m.obs) and 29 Oct, *Polk* (ph. Christian Hawn, m.obs). One of the mega-rarities following hurricane Laura was a **Parasitic Jaeger** (acc.), Lovers Leap *Marion*, 2 Sep (†CG), the state's 6th record.

Lone **Sabine's Gull** were reported in four counties: 22 Sep, LvL (ph. KD); SL, 20 Sep (ph. DW) and 12-15 Oct (ph. DW, m.obs); 29 Sep- 9 Oct, Hwy 13, *Henry* (Tony Elliott, m.obs); LBL, 15 Oct (ph. PMc, PM). Single **Laughing Gulls** were also present in four counties: LvL, 26 Aug (ph. KD); SL, 29 Aug – 3 Sep (ph. MN, DM, SM, Steve Bingham); Thomas Hill Reservoir, *Macon*, 1 Oct (Alex Marine); *Henry*, Truman Reservoir (Dan Cowell, Varick Cowell, ph. PMc, PM). The only report of a **California Gull** was 1, 28 Sep, LvL (ph. KD). LBL held one **Iceland Gull** 5 Nov (ph. PK) and 2 on 19 Nov (PMc). **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were reported in five counties: 2 at Lovers Leap, *Marion*, 7 Sep (CG); 1, LBL, 19 & 21 Sep (David Haenni); 1, LvL, 5 Oct (ph. KD); 1, Mark Twain Lake, *Ralls* (Ashley Casey); RMBS, 2 on 12 Oct (Doug Hommert) and 1 on 22 Oct (David Haenni). Another Hurricane Laura bird was a **Sooty Tern** (acc.) on the Mississippi River, *New Madrid*, 28 Aug (†Mark Greene).



Lesser Black-backed Gull , Longview Lake
Jackson 5 Oct 2020. Photo Karen Davis

LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

One **Red-throated Loon** was reliable at SL, 5-13 Nov (ph. DW, m.obs). A lone **Pacific Loon** stayed at SL, 26 Oct- 26 Nov (ph. DW, m.obs). Additional observations of one bird came from Fellows Lake, *Greene*, 27 Oct – 15 Nov (GSW, ph. m.obs) and Truman Reservoir, *Benton*, 2 & 21 Nov (Jackob Decker). A **Band-rumped Storm Petrel** (acc.), courtesy of Hurricane Laura, was the second record for the state, 28 Aug, OSCA (ph. †JE, ph. †KL, m.obs). Hurricane Laura is also credited for the second state record **Magnificent Frigatebird** (acc.) on the Mississippi R. *Marion*, 31 Aug (ph. †CG). The third record (acc.) for the state was a female, 4 Nov, *St Charles* (ph. †Bobby Wilcox). Hurricane birds kept coming with a first state record of a very cooperative **Brown Booby** (acc.) initially reported on social media by boaters on the Current R., *Ripley*, 8-13 Aug (ph. †Debbie & Tom Orosz, ph. †PMc, ph. †PM, ph. †KL, †Edge Wade, m.obs). **Anhingas** were con-

sistent in the bootheel with 1-7, Grand Tower Island *Perry*, 30 Aug-29 Sep (Don Mullison, ph. m.obs) and 2-4 Ten Mile Pond CA *Mississippi*, 13-27 Sep (TK). **Neotropic Cormorants** (acc.), accidental in the east, had two reports after Hurricane Laura: *Stoddard*, 29 Aug-1 Sep (ph. †Tommy & Jessie Goodwin, ph. †Mark Hahn, ph. †Leon Book, TK) and one flying over the Mississippi R. *Marion*, 2 Sept (ph. †CG). One at Grand Tower Island *Perry*, had an extended stay from 15 Jul - 31 Aug (MH, ph. AG, m.obs).

A new late date for **Mississippi Kite** (acc.) was set 3 Oct, Little Creve Coeur Marsh *St. Louis* (ph. †Pat Lueders, †Jonah Eckles). A surprise **Ferruginous Hawk** (acc.) delighted chasers at Prairie State Park *Barton*, 23 Nov to the end of the season (ph. †Vivek Govind Kumar, ph. †Alex Marine, ph. †GSw, ph. †PM, m.obs). Single **Prairie Falcons** were reported in five counties: *Dade*, 3 Nov (SM, DM), 13 Nov (Conway Hawn, Christian Hawn), and 20 Nov, Penn-Sylvania Prairie (Lee Jordan, Grace Jordan); *Jasper*, 20 & 28 Nov (David Ackiss); RMBS, 20 Nov (ph. CMc, AR); *Buchanan*, 26-27 Nov (Tom Nagel, Tom Jones); *Prairie SP, Barton*, 27-28 Nov through the end of the season (ph. Lisa Owens, m.obs).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH BUNTING

A **Least Flycatcher** (acc.) set the new record for a late date, 30 Oct, Tower Grove Park, *St. Louis* (ph. †CMc, AR). Three individual one-day-wonder **Say's Phoebes** were reported: 15 Sep, *Texas* (ph. Christian & Conway Hawn); 11 Nov, *Dade* (GSw); window strike victim, 27 Nov, *Phelps* (ph. Scott Alfred). It was one of the most impressive seasons in recent memory for **Red-breasted Nuthatches** with reports from 79 counties and the most reported for this year's season, 15, at Hawn SP, *St. Genevieve* (AG). The first observation of this species in the east was 30 Aug, *Marion* (CG) and in the west was 2 Sep, *Jackson* (Jon Hill). A notably late **House Wren** appeared at LBNWR, 27 Nov (Mark Robbins). **Sedge Wrens** also made later than typical appearances with 1, Bradford Farm, *Boone*, 22 Nov (Joseph Bieksza); 2, Blue Springs Lake, *Jackson*, 26 Nov (Eric Wilhoit); 5, *Prairie SP, Barton*, 28 Nov (BBl, DBl). Casual away from the Mississippi R., a **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** (acc.) was documented 15 Oct, Platte Landing Park, *Platte* (ph. † Brian Vorhees, Mark McKellar, m.obs.).

An **Evening Grosbeak** irruption caused many social media requests for ID and had many backyard birders keeping their feeders stocked for this species. Sightings in four counties were recorded in eBird; 5, Ozark National Scenic Riverways - Alley Springs, *Shannon*, 2 Nov (Steve Dillinger); 1, Rocky Ridge, *Franklin*, 4 Nov (ph. Shirley Foreman); 7, Lovers Leap, *Marion*, 11 Nov (CG); 1, Innsbrook Resort and Conference Center, *Warren*, 12 Nov (Jim Blasberg). A new early date record was set when a **Purple Finch** (acc.) appeared at Lovers Leap Lookout, *Marion*, 1 Sept (†CG). Single **Common Redpolls** were seen in two counties: *Platte*, 15 Nov (Ed McCullough); *Boone*, 17-26 Nov (ph. PMc, m.obs); *Jackson*, 27 Nov (Deb Crouse). At least one **Red Crossbill** flew over SL, 12 Nov (Marky Mutchler) and up to 10 were seen 23-24 Nov, Busch CA, *St. Charles* (MT, ph. David Becher, m.obs.). A lone **White-winged Crossbill** was in *Stoddard*, 5-9 Nov

(ph. Martha Fine, MH, m.obs) and 1-2 attracted several viewers, The Birdhouse-Missouri River Bird Observatory Office, *Saline*, 27-30 Nov (Erik Ost, Paige Witek, ph. m.obs).

The superflight of **Pine Siskins** came in strong with 178 invading the Eureka feeders *St Louis* 21 Oct (ph. Joshua Uffman). New all-time high count for early in the season came with 256 at BK Leach *Lincoln* 7 Oct (David Haenni), soon followed by 300 Wah'Kon-Tah *Cedar* 19 Oct (Matt Longabaugh). Only the second record for e. MO **Chestnut-collared Longspurs** (acc.), accidental were a crowd pleaser 17-19 Oct, *St. Charles* (audio recording, †Tommy & Jessie Goodwin, ph. †BR, Diane Brimont, Joshua Uffman, m.obs). Lone **Snow Buntings** were reported 6 Nov, RMBS (Kathy Stewart); SL, 10 & 16 Nov (MM, DW); *Caldwell*, 17 & 20 Nov (MM, Mark Mutchler). The second record of the sub-species **Pink-sided Dark-eyed Junco** (acc.) was ph. 24-25 Oct, *St. Louis*, (†Tom Brewer). A new early arrival date **White-crowned Sparrow** (acc.) was reported 20 Sep, *Pike* (†Jerry Hemmersmeyer). Allen Gathman observed a late **Worm-eating Warbler** 24 Sept, Red Rock Landing, *Perry*. A female **Baltimore Oriole** settled in for an extended stay at Lisa Owen's feeders, *Platte*, 23 Nov to the end of the season. A late **Black-and-White Warbler** was reported 6 Nov, Big Oak Tree SP, *Mississippi* (MH). An **Indigo Bunting** was still in the state 7 Nov, Red Rock Landing, *Perry* (AG).

Observers:

Barbara Blevins (BBI), David Blevins (DBI), Karen Davis (KD), David Easterla (DE), Cory Gregory (CG), Mark Haas (MH), Doug Hommert (DH), Tim Jones (TJ), Tim Kavan (TK), Peter Kondrashov (PK), Kendell Loyd (KL), Pat Lueders (PL), Chrissy McClarren (CMc), Debbie Martin (DM), Steve Martin (SM), Paul McKenzie (PMc), Pete Monacell (PM), Marky Mutchler (MM), Mary Nemecek (MN), Mark Robbins (MR), Andy Reago (AR), Bill Rowe (BR), Greg Swick (GSw), Mike Thelen (MT), Doug Willis (DW).

Key:

* = Documentation needed for MBRC review but not yet received

† = Documentation received by MBRC

acc. = Record accepted by MBRC

Abbreviations:

CA-Conservation Area

CBC-Christmas Bird Count Co-County

DNR- Department of Natural Resources.

m.obs- Multiple observations

NF- National Forest

NWR- National Wildlife Refuge

MBRC-Missouri Bird Records Committee

ph.- Photographed

R.- River

SP-State Park

Location Abbreviations (counties are in *italics*):

CBCA-Columbia Bottom Conservation Area, St. Louis County

CCNWR-Clarence Cannon National Wildlife Refuge, Pike County

CSP-Confluence State Park, St. Charles County

DCCA-Duck Creek Conservation Area, Bollinger/Stoddard County

EBCA-Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, Boone County

HFRCA-Horton-Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon County

LBNWR- Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge, Holt- formerly SCNWR-
Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Holt County

LBL-Long Branch Lake, Macon

LvL- Longview Lake, Jackson

MLCA- Montrose Lake Conservation Area, Henry County

MNWR-Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, Stoddard/Wayne County

MPD-Melvin Price Lock and Dam #26 (IL), on the Illinois side of the
Riverlands area and contiguous with the "Riverlands Migratory
Bird Sanctuary" (MO) eBird hotspot

OSCA-Otter Slough Conservation Area, Stoddard County

RMBS-Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, St. Charles County

SLNWR-Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Chariton County

SL-Smithville Lake, Clay County

STJ- St. Joseph

TR- Truman Reservoir, Benton County

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Brown Booby *Ripley* 13 Aug 2020

Photo Peter Kondrashov

Birders' Guide: Willmore Park

Levi Mattingly

105.61 acres, St. Louis City, DeLorme 41, G-8

GPS: 38.5733648,-90.3214362

Owned by City of St. Louis, maintained by Parks Division

[www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/parks/parks/
#orgContact](http://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/parks/parks/#orgContact)

Site History: Willmore Park was created in 1947 as the last of the major city parks to be developed. Seventy acres were donated by Cyrus Crane Willmore, a prominent suburban developer.

The park has trails, picnic pavilions, tennis courts, fishing lakes, a roller hockey rink, softball fields and large playground, as well as a fenced dog park.

Directions: (From Downtown) Go east on Spruce Street. Continue for about 1500 feet, then merge onto Interstate 44. Keep to the left to continue down I-55. Take Exit 202B to continue on Germania Avenue. Go straight into Hampton Avenue. Turn left at the Willmore Park sign. If this entrance is missed, there is another entrance further down Jamieson Ave.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: As of spring 2021, 148 species had been reported in 123 eBird checklists.

Migration Season: All of our common warblers, vireos, flycatchers, sparrows, and shorebirds frequent Willmore Park. The rare Black-Bellied Whistling-Duck has been spotted at this park. Herons and egrets are prolific breeders in the River Des Peres.

Summer: Orioles, Bell's Vireos, feeder birds, breeding mergansers, grebes, ducks, and geese, warblers, sparrows, and several flycatchers are all abundant breeders in the wetter areas of the parks. Large concentrations of woodpeckers and hawks are found

throughout the park, especially on the cottonwoods.

Winter: Winter boasts the occasional Trumpeter Swan, many species of ducks and geese, and the possible harrier. Large flocks of blackbirds are found in the creek.

Features of interest to birders: In the middle of the park, there is a wetland area called John Pond. John Pond has multitudes of shorebirds and breeding birds. Boots are recommended as the mud off the sidewalk can get you trapped. It is also recommended to wear a hat as the screech owls will swoop you without hesitation.

Both the North and South Lakes have waterfowl in large numbers. South Lake also has a creek where many cypress trees house a colony of Cedar Waxwings, and roosting grounds for sparrows and blackbirds. A thicket next to the playground may be productive. Walking all of the trails will add many species to your list.

Toilets: There are toilets on the north and south end of the park.

Camping: Camping is prohibited.

Hazards/Limitations: There is a homeless camp in the honeysuckle along the road. There are many hornets' nests around the cypress trees. The lake can be toxic to fish. Note the caution above of possible mud in the John Pond wetland.

Nearby Birding Sites: Jefferson Barracks County Park and the River des Peres.

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