



THE BLUEBIRD

The voice of MBS since 1934

**June 2025
Volume 92, No. 2**



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

THE MISSOURI BIRDING SOCIETY

Officers

Michael O'Keefe**, President (2026);
17202 E. 48th Terrace Ct. South, Independence, MO 64055 .(816) 803-2632,
mokeefe478@comcast.net

Mike Grant**, Vice President (2026);
14764 Timberbluff Dr, Chesterfield, MO 63017-5574. (314) 779-8032,
mikecurlw@att.net

Karen Lyman**, Secretary (2026);
3312 Newport Rd, St. Joseph, MO 64505. (816) 351-0889, karen@lymanreporting.com

Ellen Zellmer**, Treasurer (2026);
2001 NE 4th St., Blue Springs, MO 64014. (816) 507-7759, ellen-zellmer380@gmail.com

Honorary Directors

Richard A. Anderson, St. Louis**
Nathan Fay, Ozark**

Leo Galloway, St. Joseph**

Jim Jackson, Marthasville**

Lisle Jeffrey, Columbia**

Floyd Lawhon, St. Joseph**

Patrick Mahnkey, Forsyth**

Rebecca Matthews, Springfield**

Sydney Wade, Jefferson City**

Dave Witten, Columbia**

John Wylie, Jefferson City**

Rudolf Bennett Award Recipients:

Brad Jacobs**, 2016

Jim Jackson**, 2012

Dr. David Easterla, 2006

Paul E. Bauer**, 2004

Regional Directors

Cindy Bridges+ (2026)
Couch (417) 938-4567

Lottie Bushmann+ (2027)
Columbia (573) 445-3942

Tommy Goodwin (2027)
St. Charles (417) 241-9189

Mike Grant+ (2025)
Chesterfield (314) 779-8032

Greg Leonard+ (2025)
Columbia (573) 443-8263

Kendell Loyd+ (2026)
Springfield (573) 776-0901

Terry McNeely+ (2025)
Jameson (660) 828-4215

Kelly Ormesher+ (2027)
Greenfield, kormesher@msn.com

Chairs

Bill Clark, Historian
3906 Grace Ellen Dr.
Columbia, MO 65202
(573) 474-4510

Greg Leonard, Membership
2101 W. Broadway, PMB 122
Columbia, MO 65203-1261
egreg2@yahoo.com

+ Board Position

*** Executive Committee Member**

****Deceased**

THE BLUEBIRD

***The Bluebird* Editor:**

Allen Gathman*+, PO Box 1, Pocahontas, MO 63779, (573)
579-5464, agathman@gmail.com

Christmas Bird Count Compiler:

Kendell Loyd 1730 E Valley Watermill, Apt D 108, Springfield, MO 65803,
(573) 776-0901, kloyd892@gmail.com

Communication Services:

Kevin Wehner, eNews editor

David Scheu, Listserv co-owner mobirds-l-request@po.missouri.edu

Mike Grant, Listserv co-owner

Jack Corrigan, Webmaster

MBS Bauer Graduate Scholarship Committee:

Sarah Kendrick, Chair, 808 Fairway Dr. Columbia, MO 65201,
612-394-8822, sarah_kendrick@fws.gov

MBS Youth Scholarship Committee:

Edge Wade, Chair, 3105 Blackberry Lane., Columbia, MO 65201,
(573)268-3714, edgew@mchsi.com

MO Bird Records Committee:

Pete Monacell+—Chair, 2324 W Main St., Jefferson City, MO 65109,
(573) 289-8116, plmonacell@ccis.edu

Bill Rowe—Secretary, 7414 Kenrick Valley Drive, St Louis, MO 63119-
5726 (314) 962-0544, rowemb45@gmail.com

Seasonal Survey Editors:

Spring: Josh Uffman, 707 Ashton Way Circle, Eureka, MO 63025,
(314) 616-0296; birdsandbugs@sbcglobal.net

Summer: Joseph Mosley, (660) 492-7954; birder.je@gmail.com

Fall: Allen Gathman, PO Box 1, Pocahontas, MO 63779, (573)
579-5464; agathman@gmail.com

Winter: Kendell Loyd, 1730 E Valley Watermill, Apt. D 108, Springfield MO
65803, (573) 776-0901, kloyd892@gmail.com

*** Executive Committee Member + Board Position**

Deadlines for submission of material for publication in *The Bluebird*

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

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

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

Manuscripts submitted for peer review may be published in a subsequent issue.

Deadlines for submissions to the Seasonal Survey Editors

Winter (Dec. 1-Feb. 28)—to Kendell Loyd by Mar. 10

Spring (Mar. 1-May 31)—to Josh Uffman by June 10

Summer (June 1-July. 31)—to Joseph Mosley by Aug 10

Fall (Aug. 1-Nov. 30)—to Allen Gathman by Dec. 10

TABLE OF CONTENTS

June 2025

Volume 92, No. 2

51	President's Corner — Michael O'Keefe
53	We welcome our new MBS members — Greg Leonard
54	Subscribe to the MOBIRDS listserv
54	MBS mission statement
55	Recent MBS board actions — Karen Lyman
56	Bauer Scholarship proposal — Georgia Coleman and Michael Byrne
61	Birders' Guide: Miller Reserve — Allen Gathman
64	Missouri Christmas Bird Counts 2024-2025 — Kendell Loyd
73	Fall 2024 Seasonal Report — Allen Gathman

Front Cover — Sage Thrasher, Columbia Bottom CA, St Louis Co 25 Oct 2024. Photo Josh Uffman.

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.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER—MICHAEL O'KEEFE



Having just returned from the 2025 Spring Meeting held at Bunker Hill, I am excited to share some of the highlights. Over the course of the weekend we saw a cumulative 130 species. Reva Dow led two trips to the Current River Pinery for life views of the Brown-headed Nuthatches busily feeding their newly hatched chicks. Many in the group led by Steve Paes were delighted to see elk and collared lizards on the Peck Ranch/Big Springs field trip.

Experiences like these are why we often come to Bunker

Hill. Aside from their warm welcome, Bunker Hill affords us the opportunity to immerse ourselves in the Ozarks. Not only by traipsing through the woods, glades and fields, but through presentations by speakers who live and work in the region. This time we learned about managing Ozark forests for different bird species from Dana Morris, Chief Ecologist for the L-A-D Foundation. Then we were virtually taken underground by Mick Sutton, cartographer for Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, and ecologist for the Cave Research Foundation.

Over the weekend we enjoyed reuniting with friends, meeting other long-time members for the first time. I especially enjoyed meeting our newest members on their first MBS Meeting. I was honored to lead two groups on field trips around the grounds, the first of which distinguished themselves by fording the creek six times on what was to have been a one-way walk. Finding the path overgrown led us to ford the creek six more times. That they kept their dual senses of adventure and humor inspires me to nominate them for the yet-to-be-established MBS/Bunker Hill Corps of Discovery.

I thank Steve Paes and Mike Grant for organizing the weekend, and appreciate the work by field trip leaders Reva Dow, Cindy Bridges, Mike, Steve, and last minute pinch hitter Bob Bailey. These folks don't do it for the glory, but to help ensure that participants have the best opportunity to see the migrating birds. I thank them and everyone who pitched in to help throughout the weekend – by setting up, cleaning up, keeping the coffee pots full each morning, and all the incidentals in-between. It has always been my experience that birders are great people who work well together, whether in the field when 'life birds' are on the line, or back home looking after their neighbors. I'm proud to know and be associated with so many helpful people.

On that note, Mike Grant is beginning to make arrangements for the Spring 2026 Meeting. We look to hold the event in St. Louis while celebrating our society's 125th anniversary year. To help make it a special event for you and to extend the celebration to the public we will look to our members and friends. We're in the early stages, so watch for information in this space as well as our e-newsletter and social media.



MBS/Bunker Hill Corps of Discovery – Left to right, Hailey and Kelly Smith, Ellen Zellmer, Sue Hagan, Jim Zellmer, Mick Sutton, Jennifer and Eric Heckenbach

WE WELCOME OUR NEW MBS MEMBERS!

Greg Leonard

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 12 new MBS members in the 2nd quarter of 2025!**

Cindy Bass

Joanne Carr

Dana Morris

Dan Petry

Matthew Schamberger

Ryan McGinty

Darin Layman

Lee Wilbeck

Agnes Mallard

Kurt Junger

Gwynnie Tien

John Sansone

Blue Springs, MO

Glendale, MO

New Franklin, MO

Wildwood, MO

Saint Louis, MO

Columbia, MO

Cuba, MO

Brookfield, MO

Kansas City, MO

Mission Hills, MO

Lees Summit, MO

Saint Louis, 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 here:

<https://po.missouri.edu/SCRIPTS/wa.exe?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/SCRIPTS/wa.exe?A0=MOBIRDS-L>

Missouri Birding Society Mission Statement

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.

Recent MBS Board Actions

Karen Lyman, Secretary

February 16, 2025

The Missouri River Relief application for funds for the 2025 Missouri River Adventure Camp program has been approved by the MBS Board of Directors. The amount of the grant is \$2,000.

We are looking forward to a brief article about the 2025 camp session for *The Bluebird* for the September or December 2025 issue.

February 19, 2025

The Graduate Scholarship Committee is pleased to share that the 2025 recipient of the Bauer Scholarship is Georgia Coleman at the University of Missouri with her research *Nest-site Selection and Nest Success of Northern Harriers (*Circus hudsonius*) in California's Sacramento Valley*. See her proposal on page 55 of this issue.

March 18, 2025

The Greater Ozarks Audubon Society (GOAS) submitted a request for a \$3000 contribution from MBS to fund two GLADE participants for the upcoming (2025) summer session. The request contains a thorough explanation of the mission of GLADE and how it aligns with MBS's mission.

March 18, 2025

The Board approved funding of \$1,500 from CACHE/SPARKS funds for barn owl box construction, bedding, and installation tools/equipment for a project as requested by Mizzou Women in Natural Resources, with the expectation that an article describing the project be submitted to Allen Gathman, editor of *The Bluebird*, within 3 months of installation of the last of the boxes.

Bauer Scholarship Proposal

Nest-site Selection and Nest Success of Northern Harriers (*Circus hudsonius*) in California's Sacramento Valley

**Georgia Coleman, Dr. Michael Byrne
U.of Missouri School of Natural Resources**

[This proposal was funded for the 2025 Bauer Scholarship by the MBS board. Look for the results of this research in a future issue of the Bluebird. –ed.]

Introduction

The Northern Harrier (*Circus hudsonius*) is a medium-sized hawk widely distributed across North America in open habitats such as grasslands and wetlands (Smith et al. 2020). The IUCN considers Northern Harriers a species of “least concern,” but notes that the species has undergone small or statistically insignificant declines in the last 40 years (BirdLife International 2016). Across the United States, harriers are listed in multiple states as endangered, threatened, or as a species of special concern. Most harrier research has occurred in the Midwest and Northeast, which is also where harrier populations are known to be in decline (see Toland 1985, Hamerstrom 1986, Massey et al. 2009, for example). There are far fewer studies of harriers from the western part of the country, and information about the status of these populations is lacking (Skalos 2021). In California, harriers are a Species of Special Concern (breeding, priority 3), due to the degradation and loss of suitable breeding habitat (Davis and Nielmela 2008). Skalos (2021) studied harrier nest-site selection and reproduction in California's Suisun Marsh from 2017-2019. Prior to that, surveys for harrier nests in the Sacramento Valley were last conducted in the late 1980s (Loughman and McLandress 1994), though scattered, more recent records of harrier nests are known by state wildlife officials (L. Matthews, personal communication). The Sacramento Valley is the northern portion of the greater Central Valley, which runs through the heart of the state and once held some of the highest breeding densities of harriers in North America (Loughman and McLandress 1994, Davis

and Nielmela 2008). This region likely still supports the majority of California's breeding harriers, but because of the lack of research on the species, the current status of harriers is unknown (Davis and Nielmela 2008). In conjunction with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, we will be conducting research on harrier nest-site selection and nest success to address gaps in knowledge on the breeding population of harriers in the Sacramento Valley. Specifically, our objectives are to:

1. Survey the distribution and reproductive success of harriers in the Sacramento Valley
2. Identify factors important to harrier nest-site selection
3. Identify factors that influence harrier nest success

This research will provide a baseline for further research on harriers in the Sacramento Valley. Over the course of two breeding seasons, we will survey for and track the fate of harrier nests in wildlife areas and surrounding agricultural land. By figuring out where and in what specific habitat harriers are nesting, we can provide updated information to managers that can be used to implement habitat conservation and management strategies for harriers.

Hypotheses

1. Because harriers are a ground-nesting species that can be susceptible to high predation rates (Datta 2016, Skalos 2021), we hypothesize that factors which decrease detection of nests by predators influence nest-site selection. Specifically, we believe harrier nest-site selection is influenced by vegetation structure and landscape features that facilitate predator access, such as roads. We predict that when compared to available sites, harrier nest sites will have taller, denser vegetation, be closer to water, be further from roads and trees, and will be in larger patches, further from patch edge. Many previous studies have studied harrier habitat selection and have found that they tend to select nest sites with taller, denser vegetation (see reviews Shaffer et al. 2019, Smith et al. 2020).
2. Harriers should be adaptively choosing nest sites that optimize their fitness. If predation influences nest-site selection, then we hypothesize that the ecological factors that influence nest-site selection will also be related to harrier nest success. We predict that successful harrier nests will be in taller and denser vegetation, be

closer to water, further from roads, trees, and patch edges, and in larger patches than failed nests.

Field Methods and Analysis

Nest surveys and monitoring

We will complete two seasons of surveys for nesting harriers (April-July 2025 and 2026). Nest surveys will occur in 8 managed wildlife areas as well as in surrounding agricultural land in California's Sacramento Valley. We will search for harrier nests by going to pre-determined survey blocks and scanning the landscape for signs of harrier reproductive activity (courtship displays, nest building, food passing, copulation). Survey blocks that have harrier reproductive activity will be surveyed further until nest presence or absence is determined. All nest surveys and subsequent nest checks will be done from a distance (i.e. with binoculars instead of walking through nesting habitat) to minimize disturbance to harriers, which are known to abandon nests in response to human disturbance, especially early during the nesting period (Skalos 2021). Once a nest has been located, detailed nest location notes and approximate coordinates of the nest will be recorded, so the nest can be physically visited once its final fate has been determined. Nest checks will occur regularly (at least 2 times a week) and final fate will be determined by the presence of a least one fledged young. Once nest fate is confirmed (fledge or fail), surveyors will ground truth the location of the nest and measure nest habitat characteristics.

Vegetation and landscape features

We will be measuring vegetation and other landscape features to understand the factors influencing harrier nest-site selection and nest success. Nest vegetation metrics will be measured one week post-fledge (or at time of failure and projected one week post-fledge if the nest fails). Vegetation height, vegetative cover, vegetation functional groups, lateral cover, and nest-site moisture will physically be measured at each harrier nest. Patch area, distance to patch edge, distance to nearest road, tree, and water, and landcover proportions will be measured for each nest, using GIS software.

Analysis

We will use a use-versus-availability study design to compare actual harrier nest sites to available ones to understand nest-site selection

(Manly et al. 2002). The vegetation and landscape features mentioned above will be measured at each nest site, as well as at paired, randomly selected available points. We will use conditional logistic regression to evaluate the influence of these covariates on nest-site selection (Thomas and Taylor 2006).

We will use logistic exposure modeling to assess the influence of the vegetation and landscape covariates on nest success. Logistic exposure models are a flexible method that require no assumptions about when nest failures occur and can handle variation in exposure periods (Shaffer 2004). This will be useful in our study as we will likely find harrier nests on different dates and at varying stages of development.

Literature Cited

- BirdLife International. 2016. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. *Circus hudsonius*. <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/22727740/94959659>.
- Datta, S. 2016. Raptors in Temperate Grasslands: Ecology of Ferruginous Hawk, Golden Eagle, and Northern Harrier in the Northern Great Plains. Doctorate of Philosophy, South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD.
- Davis, J. N., and C. A. Niemela. 2008. Northern Harrier. Pages 149–155 in W. D. Shuford and T. Gardali, editors. California Bird Species of Special Concern: A ranked assessment of species, subspecies, and distinct populations of birds of immediate conservation concern in California. Western Field Ornithologists, Camarillo, California, and California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento. California.
- Hamerstrom, F. 1986. Harrier, hawk of the marshes: The hawk that is ruled by a mouse. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington D.C.
- Loughman, D. L., and M. R. McLandress. 1994. Reproductive success and nesting habitats of Northern Harriers in California. Page 20. California Waterfowl Association, Sacramento, CA.
- Manly, B. F. J., L. L. McDonald, D. L. Thomas, T. L. McDonald, and W. P. Erickson, editors. 2002. Introduction to Resource Selection Studies. Pages 1–15 Resource Selection by Animals: Statistical

Design and Analysis for Field Studies. Springer Netherlands, Dordrecht.

- Massey, B. H., C. R. Griffin, and K. McGarigal. 2009. Habitat Use by Foraging Northern Harriers on Nantucket Island, Massachusetts. *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology* 121:765–769.
- Shaffer, J. A., L. D. Igl, D. H. Johnson, M. L. Sondreal, C. M. Goldade, M. P. Nenneman, J. P. Thiele, and B. R. Euliss. 2019. Northern Harrier (*Circus hudsonius*). U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper, U.S. Geological Survey.
- Shaffer, T. L. 2004. A Unified Approach to Analyzing Nest Success. *The Auk* 121:526–540.
- Skalos, S. 2021. Reproductive and Migration Ecology of Breeding and Wintering Northern Harriers (*Circus hudsonius*) in Suisun Marsh, California. Doctorate of Philosophy, University of California Davis, Davis, CA.
- Smith, K. G., S. R. Wittenberg, R. B. Macwhirter, and K. L. Bildstein. 2020. Northern Harrier (*Circus hudsonius*), version 1.0. *Birds of the World*.
- Thomas, D. L., and E. J. Taylor. 2006. Study Designs and Tests for Comparing Resource Use and Availability II. *The Journal of Wildlife Management* 70:324–336.
- Toland, B. 1985. Nest Site Selection, Productivity, and Food Habits of Northern Harriers in Southwest Missouri. *Natural Areas Journal* 5:22–27.

Birders' Guide: Miller Reserve Allen Gathman

27.22 acres, Scott County, DeLorme 58, I5

37.132, -89.461

Owned by Southeast Missouri State University.

For more information call SEMO Biology Department, (573) 651-2170

Directions: From I-55, take Kelso exit 89. Go east on State Hwy. PP 5 miles to State Hwy. N; turn right (south) and follow N two miles to the Miller Reserve parking area.

ADA Information: No accessible facilities. Birding can be done from the parking area.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: For its small area, Miller Reserve boasts a surprising variety of habitats. Pools and sloughs harbor waterfowl and shorebirds in season, while open-country species such as Horned Lark, Lapland Longspur, and Killdeer can be observed in the surrounding farmland. The private woodland east of the area holds typical species, and the grassy portions of the Reserve are good for a wide variety of sparrows in season. Least Bittern has been found in the summer, and migrant warblers and shorebirds occur in spring and fall. Short-eared Owls work the area in the winter.

Features of interest to birders: The Miller Reserve is a 27.22-acre donated to the Southeast Missouri University Foundation in 2008 by the family of the late Georgia Lee Miller Lawrence. The Southeast Missouri State University Biology Department is managing the site, formerly farmland, to restore it to its original state as bottomland hardwood forest and wetlands.

The University maintains mowed paths through the area that provide access to observe several pools and sloughs, with vegetation ranging from grasses and forbs to stands of small trees. A private woodland adjoins the area to the east, and it is otherwise surrounded by farmland.

A typical birding strategy for the area would be to park in the gravel

lot and observe for a while from there, then to walk the paths. One path loops around the inside of an oxbow-shaped slough. Another path parallels Highway N along the western edge of the property, then skirts the southern edge of a shallow pond with some willows and other wetland trees.

Picnic Areas: None

Toilets: None

Camping: None

Hazards/Limitations: As with any wetland in the region, there can be snakes, and there will certainly be chiggers and ticks in season.

Nearby Birding Sites: Sand Prairie Conservation Area, Brenda Kay Sand Pit, General Watkins Conservation Area, Tywappity Community Lake, Headwaters Access



Miller Reserve aerial photo, with water and trails

Missouri Christmas Bird Counts 2024-2025

Kendell Loyd

This year was the 125th Christmas Bird Count (CBC), hosted by the National Audubon Society. Missouri has now held CBCs for 123 years. Each annual count consists of count circles that are established around a central, fixed point and have a 15-mile diameter. Each holiday season—between December 14th and January 5th—volunteers descend into each circle to count every individual bird they see or hear within a single day. These counts occur into perpetuity, all in the name of bird population science. The data of each circle are collected by groups of volunteers, then compiled and submitted by the count compiler. There are over 2600 count circles across North America, South America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. The CBC is the largest and longest-running citizen science project in history, and provides scientists invaluable long-term trends of bird populations.

This season, Missouri hosted 34 active count circles—the highest number yet, beating last year’s record high of 33 (Table 1, Figure 1). While no new circles were established, Laclede County was revived (compiled by Zach Haring). This count was founded in 1996 and was formerly operated by Lester Pannell. With the retirement from the count by Pannell in 2011 and then his unfortunate passing in 2016, the circle had lain dormant ever since—but no longer!

A record high of 691 participants recorded 145 species with a total of 1,699,195 individual birds. On average, 1 species for every 5 participants was recorded, and about 2460 birds per person were counted. In total, this year’s efforts included about 1500 hours of birding and about 8000 miles of walking or driving. Collectively, there were 35 bird feeders watched as a part of a count and 35 hours of nocturnal birding logged. Most of these measurements are lower than last year’s totals.

Globally, 2024 was the warmest year on record. In fact, the top 10

warmest years have all been post-2015 (i.e. the past 10 years). In Missouri, December 2024 was 5.0°F above average, making it the eighth consecutive December with temperatures above the long-term average. The year 2024 as a whole was the tenth consecutive year with warmer than normal temperatures. In fact, 22 of the past 27 years have been above-average. As Missouri experiences the effects of climate change, citizen science projects like the CBC will become increasingly important to monitor the climate's effects on bird populations and distributions.

The weather within the count season was mild with an average count temperature of 39.7°F. The coldest temperature was 17°F, recorded at Four Rivers, and the warmest temperature was 58°F, recorded at Kansas City. While a few counts experienced light precipitation during parts of day, opening day of the CBC season—Saturday, December 14th—was stricken with widespread and steady rain across most of the state. About a quarter of circles traditionally hold their counts on the first Saturday of CBC season, so many counts were impacted by rain. As stated previously, several measurements (e.g. number of species, distance traveled, observation time) were lower this year than last. It seems rain on this particular date directly and negatively impacted the overall data collection of this year's counts.

As for total species counted, Dade County and Four Rivers both had the highest total with 108 species. These were the only counts this season to top 100 species. Laclede was the only count to set a personal high species count with 59 species.

Twenty-two species were seen on all 34 counts: Canada Goose, Mourning Dove, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, American Kestrel, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, European Starling, Eastern Bluebird, House Sparrow, American Goldfinch, Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow, and Northern Cardinal.

Two new species were added to the Missouri CBC list this year. A flock of Black Scoter at Confluence represented a first state CBC record and the third species of scoter to be added to the MO CBC checklist. A Wilson's Phalarope at Maryville represented a first winter record for Missouri as a whole, as well as a first for any CBC.

A Northern Rough-winged Swallow, reported last year as a first CBC record, was subsequently not accepted by the Missouri Bird Records Committee (MBRC) due to possible misidentification concerns. Therefore, the species has been removed from the state CBC checklist and is now listed as provisional, indicating that its presence on a count was possible but unconfirmed.

Other noteworthy birds in the state included Blue-winged Teal, Surf Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Eared Grebe, Sora, Greater Yellowlegs, Iceland Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Great Egret, Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, and Common Yellowthroat. A more in-depth description of notable sightings follows in taxonomic order. Numbers within parentheses mark the number of individuals recorded, and, unless specified, high counts refer to the greatest number of individuals of a species counted in a specific circle. Species not seen on the count day, but recorded within three days before or after the count day, are denoted as “count week birds”.

Collectively, Missouri set high counts for eight relatively expected species: Bald Eagle (1425), Red-bellied Woodpecker (2498), Northern Flicker (2423), American Kestrel (729), Blue Jay (6882), Golden-crowned Kinglet (615), White-throated Sparrow (6623), and Western Meadowlark (554).

A high count for Snow Goose was set at Mingo (77,900). Confluence set a high count for Ross’s Goose (21), while Poplar Bluff recorded its third record and Kansas City recorded its fifth. Greater White-fronted Goose was in record highs at Trimble (113). Cackling Goose at Jefferson City represented the circle’s second record, and birds at Liberal and Montrose represented third records for those circles. Weldon Spring saw its second record of Trumpeter Swan. Dent-Texas County reported its first record of Wood Duck, and Grand River got its second. Blue-winged Teal was reported at Four Rivers, Loess Bluffs, and St. Joseph. Trimble set its high count for Northern Shoveler (43), and Swan Lake set its high count for Ring-necked Duck (1807). Confluence had two species of scoter—Surf Scoter and Black Scoter—both representing first records for the circle, and the latter representing the first state record for a MO CBC. Mingo had its third record of Long-tailed Duck. Big Oak Tree reported its fifth record of Common Goldeneye (19), which is only the second time multiple birds have been recorded on this count. Additionally, this record is more than triple the previous (6 in 2016). Red-breasted

Merganser was recorded for the first time at Kirksville and for the second time at Weldon Spring. Kirksville also received its second record of Hooded Merganser, and Dallas County had a high count (25). Kirksville had its first Ruddy Duck.

Big Oak Tree reported its first Horned Grebe. Dade County and Kansas City both had Eared Grebe. Five counts reported Sandhill Crane. As stated previously, Wilson's Phalarope at Maryville was a first winter record for MO as a whole, and a first for MO CBC. Greater Yellowlegs was seen at Four Rivers and at Mingo, representing a second record for the latter. Dade County had its first record of Least Sandpiper. Columbia had both Virginia Rail (8) and Sora (6). Four Rivers set its high count for American Coot (809), and Kansas City set its high count of Ring-billed Gull (5281). Confluence and Dade County both reported Lesser Black-backed Gull, while Confluence also reported Iceland Gull. Confluence had its first detection of Common Loon, though it was a count week bird. Double-crested Cormorants were numerous this season. Cole Camp recorded its second record, Liberal and Maramec Spring had their third records, Weldon Spring had its sixth, and Kansas City set its high count (148). Great Egret was located at Big Oak Tree (third record) and Montrose (sixth record).

Assumedly due to the warming average winter temperatures in the state, the historical winter range of Black Vulture has been expanding both northward and eastward in past years. This year was no different. Cole Camp had its first record. Jefferson City reported its fourth record—an impressive 40 birds. All of Jefferson City's records of Black Vulture have been in the past 5 years. Maramec Spring had its fourth record as well (all since 2017). Columbia saw its seventh record (all since 2017), and Weldon Spring saw its eighth record (all since 2015). Dent-Texas County set its high count (42). Turkey Vulture was also prevalent, with Kansas City seeing its third record, Big Oak Tree receiving its tenth record (all in the past 11 years) and high count (111), and Maramec Spring setting its high count (298).

Cole Camp saw its first record of Golden Eagle. Big Oak Tree set a high count for Northern Harrier (49) and Dent-Texas County did as well (6). Dent-Texas County (54), Springfield (14), and Swan Lake (242) all set high counts for Bald Eagle. Loess Bluffs saw its fourth record of Red-shouldered Hawk. St. Joseph had its seventh record (all since 2015), and Big Oak Tree tied its high count (13; tied with

2004). While not a full species, Weldon Spring reported its first record of a Krider's-type Red-tailed Hawk. American Barn Owl was only seen at Four Rivers. Dallas County set a high count for Barred Owl (17), and Jefferson City had its third record of Short-eared Owl. Dent-Texas County set its high count for American Kestrel (33). Prairie Falcon was seen at Four Rivers and Dade County, a first record for the latter. Peregrine Falcon was only reported at Confluence.

It was another seemingly great season for woodpeckers, with 5 of the 7 expected species being seen on every count in the state. Confluence set its high count for Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (10). Johnson's Shut-Ins had its first record of Red-headed Woodpecker, allowing for this species to be seen universally for the first time. Dent-Texas County set its high count for this species (20). High counts were set for Red-bellied Woodpecker at Kansas City (116), Hairy Woodpecker at Big Oak Tree (13), Pileated Woodpecker at Jefferson City (26), and Northern Flicker at Dent-Texas County (53), Montrose (119), and Springfield (123).

Eastern Phoebe was recorded on 17 counts—a new record. It was seen for the first time at Dade County and the second time at Jefferson City. Big Spring set a high count for the species (9). Dent-Texas County recorded a high count of Loggerhead Shrike (3). Big Oak Tree also saw a high count for the species (14), toppling the previous high count set in 1971. Big Oak Tree also saw its second record of Northern Shrike, the first being in 1989. While not on the count day proper, Dent-Texas County had Fish Crow within the count week: a first detection for the circle and the only detection in the state this season.

High counts for Tufted Titmouse were set at Confluence (129) and Kirksville (120). Confluence also saw high counts of Brown Creeper (15) and Winter Wren (14). Jefferson City also had a high count of Winter Wren (5). Confluence had its second record of Sedge Wren, and Loess Bluffs had its fourth. Kansas City had a count week Marsh Wren. Confluence had high counts for Ruby-crowned Kinglet (21) and Golden-crowned Kinglet (56). Mingo also set its high count for Golden-crowned Kinglet (130). Confluence had a high count of Northern Mockingbird (24); Kirksville had a high count of Eastern Bluebird (127); and Cole Camp had had its second record of Hermit Thrush. American Pipit at Jefferson City and Poplar Bluff represented first and second records respectively.

Chipping Sparrow was only reported at Taney County. White-crowned Sparrow high counts were set at Jefferson City (133) and Kirksville (45). Confluence had its third record of Harris's Sparrow. Savannah Sparrow represented the second record at Kirksville, the sixth record at Maramec Spring, and high counts at Grand River (15) and Jefferson City (49). Swan Lake had its seventh record of Eastern Towhee. Spotted Towhee was recorded on four counts, including Weldon Spring where it represented the eighth record for the circle.

Confluence and Dallas County both had second records of Western Meadowlark, and Jefferson City (65) and Liberal (118) both set high counts. Confluence had its high count of Eastern Meadowlark (37). Brown-headed Cowbird was seen at Kirksville (175), and Joplin had its second Brewer's Blackbird record. A high-count record for Common Grackle (12,044) was set at Confluence. Great-tailed Grackle was reported on two counts: Liberal and St. Joseph.

Orange-crowned Warbler was oddly absent from the state this year. Common Yellowthroat was only reported at Four Rivers. Pine Warbler was seen on two counts: Dent-Texas County, where it is expected annually, and at Four Rivers where it represented a third record for the circle. Kansas City (76) and Kirksville (19) both set high counts for Yellow-rumped Warbler.

I would like to thank the many compilers and participants that make the Christmas Bird Count a success year after year. It is an incredibly important data collection project that allows professional and citizen scientists alike to participate and provide data, as well as meet new people and have an enjoyable time birding. It is something I look forward to every winter, and I know many of you feel the same way. If you have any questions about CBC data or how to get involved, please contact Kendell Loyd at KLoyd892@gmail.com.

References

eBird. (n.d.). eBird: An online database of bird distribution and abundance [web application]. Retrieved April 2025, from <http://www.ebird.org>.

- Igini, M. (2024). *2024, Hottest Year on Record, Marks 'Decade of Deadly Heat'*. Earth.Org. <https://earth.org/2024-hottest-year-on-record-marks-decade-of-deadly-heat/>
- Guinan, P., Leasor, Z. (2025). *December 2024 weather and its impacts on Missouri*. Missouri Climate Center. <http://climate.missouri.edu/news/arc/jan2025.php>
- Guinan, P., Leasor, Z. (2025). *January 2025 weather and its impacts on Missouri*. Missouri Climate Center. <http://climate.missouri.edu/news/arc/feb2025.php>
- Polan, J. (n.d.). *Audubon Christmas Bird Count* | Audubon. National Audubon Society. Retrieved April 2025, from <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count>
- Polan, J. (2013). *History of the Christmas Bird Count* | Audubon. National Audubon Society. Retrieved April 2025, from <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count/history-christmas-bird-count>
- Robbins, M.B. (2020). *The Status and Distribution of Birds in Missouri*. University of Kansas Libraries.
- Rowe, W.C. (2025). 37th annual report of the Missouri Bird Records Committee. *The Bluebird*, 92(1), 18-33.

Abbrev.	Count Name	Date of Count	Count Compiler	Number of Years Active
BO	Big Oak Tree SP	Dec 18	Bill Eddleman	59
BS	Big Spring	Dec 20	Steve Paas	28
CA	Cass County	Dec 18	Barry Jones	2
CC	Clarence Cannon NWR	Jan 04	Bruce Schuette	23
CP	Cole Camp Prairies	Dec 30	Ryan Steffens	16
CO	Columbia	Dec 14	Allison Vaughn	68
CF	Confluence	Jan 01	Tommy Goodwin	16
DA	Dade County	Jan 03	Rick Hostetler	4
DC	Dallas County	Dec 30	David Blevins	36
DT	Dent-Texas County	Dec 21	Melissa Lewis	10
GP	Grand Pass	Dec 19	Laura Semken	2
GR	Grand River	Dec 14	Terry McNeely	36
HF	(Horton) Four Rivers	Dec 17	Kendell Loyd	27
JC	Jefferson City	Dec 21	Barbara Brueggeman	47
JS	Johnson's Shut-Ins SP	Jan 03	Dairan Elam-Pyles	6
JO	Joplin	Dec 21	Lydia Swift	37
KC	Kansas City	Dec 29	Mike Stoakes	94
KI	Kirksville	Jan 02	Sarah Kendrick	10
KN	Knob Noster	Dec 22	Shelby Palmer	47
LA	Laclede County	Dec 29	Zach Haring	17
LI	Liberal	Jan 03	Dana Hoisington	24
LB	Loess Bluffs NWR	Dec 19	Mark Robbins	65
MA	Maryville	Dec 17	David Easterla	62
MI	Mingo NWR	Dec 14	Bill Eddleman	61
ML	Montrose Lake WA	Dec 14	Rhonda Edmunds	61
MS	Maramec Spring	Dec 14	Linda Frederick	41
MT	Mark Twain Lake	Dec 28	George Wisdom	5
PB	Poplar Bluff	Dec 28	Bruce Beck	38
SJ	St. Joseph	Dec 14	Tom Nagel	61
SL	Swan Lake NWR	Jan 01	Steve Kinder	48
SP	Springfield	Dec 14	Greg Samuel	70
TC	Taney County	Dec 21	Charley Burwick	42
TR	Trimble	Dec 21	Kristi Mayo	49
WS	Weldon Spring	Dec 15	Anne McCormack	74

Table 1: Missouri Christmas Bird Counts data for 2024-2025

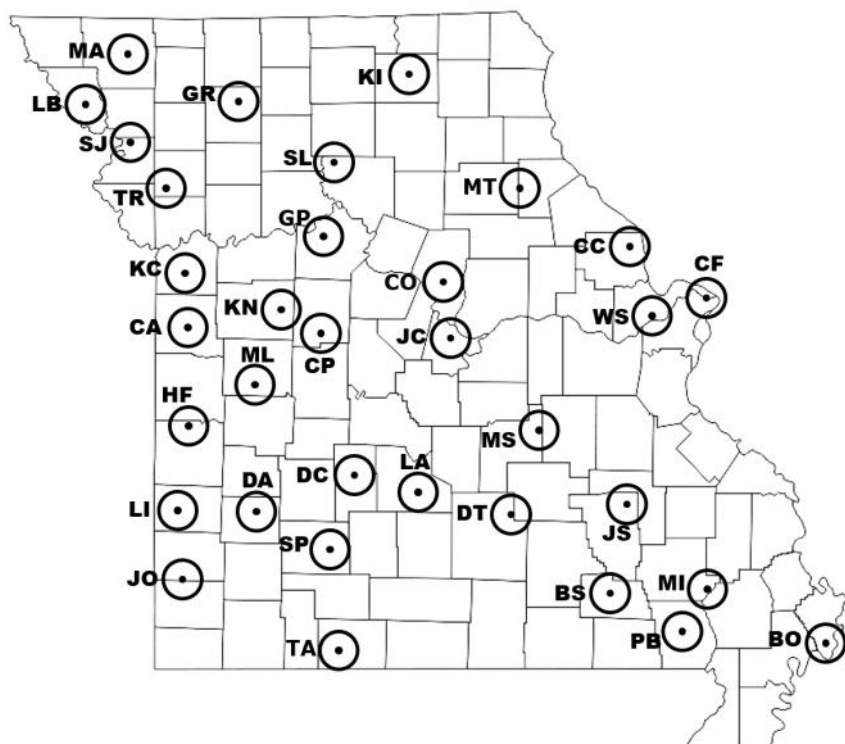


Fig. 1. Locations of active Christmas Bird Counts
(for abbreviations see Table 1)

Fall 2024 Seasonal Report

Allen Gathman

Following a warmer than usual summer, August temperatures were slightly below average, with variable rainfall. While September started slightly cooler than normal, warmer conditions later resulted in average September temperatures about 1.7 degrees above average, with rainfall an inch below average. This continues a decade-long trend of warmer, dryer September conditions. These warm, dry conditions extended into October, which was the 11th warmest October on record, and the sunniest October since 1994. While November continued the warm trend, rainfall was well above average. Overall, the 2024 meteorological fall (September through November) was the fourth warmest in Missouri in 130 years.

A Magnificent Frigatebird was a remarkable find at Stockton Lake, and the third record of the species for the state. A Green-tailed Towhee, casual transient, was the tenth state record for the species and stayed around for a few days to let a lot of birders get a look. Two different Sage Thrashers were the fifth and sixth state records. Chaseable Swallow-tailed Kites drew lots of attention at both Columbia Bottom and Eagle Bluffs Conservation Areas.

It was a season of early and late records: earliest fall records were set for Canada, Prairie, Bay-breasted, and Mourning Warblers, as well as American Black Duck. At the other end of the season, Barn Swallow, Wilson's Warbler, Broad-winged Hawk, and Cinnamon Teal set latest fall records, and a Virginia Rail tied for latest.

Several birders were able to submit eBird checklists with all three scoters at Brenda Kay Sand Pit in Scott County. This eBird "scoter trifecta" has only been recorded in Missouri on one occasion before, in 2023.

WHISTLING DUCKS THROUGH LIMP KIN

Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, usually with young, were in Bollinger, Jackson, Livingston, St Charles, St Louis, Stoddard, and Wayne Cos. An adult with eight young in Chariton Co 6 Sep–8 Oct (acc.) was the first breeding record in the northern half of the state (ph. †Steve Romo, ph. Jeff

Folkerts). A **Cinnamon Teal**, casual in fall, at the Maryville Sewage Lagoons, Nodaway Co 10 Nov (†David Easterla) was the latest fall record. An **American Black Duck** (acc.) at Duck Creek CA 17 Aug (ph. †Josh Uffman) set a new earliest fall record with photographs. A **Surf Scoter** was at Smithville Lake, Clay Co 1 Nov (ph. Doug Willis); one was at Perry County Community Lake (ph. Allen Gathman, m. obs.); and one was at the Brenda Kay Sand Pit, Scott Co 19–23 Nov (ph. Tim Kavan, m. obs.). A **White-winged Scoter** was at Smithville Lake, Clay Co 3 Nov (Steve Bingham); one was at the Brenda Kay Sand Pit, Scott Co 19–26 Nov (ph. Tim Kavan, m. obs.); and one was at Fellows Lake, Greene Co 26 Nov (ph. Kendell Loyd). A **Black Scoter** was at Creve Coeur Lake 7–10 Nov (ph. Peggy Oates, m. obs.) and up to 9 were at the Brenda Kay Sand Pit, Scott Co 18–26 Nov (ph. Tim Kavan, m. obs.), completing the scoter trifecta at that location. A **Long-tailed Duck** was at Riverlands 21 Nov (ph. Jim Malone, ph. Jake Kick-bohle, ph. Jonah Eckels, David Becher, Cornelius Alwood), and five were at Stockton Lake 23 Nov (ph. Kristie Nelson).



Mountain Bluebird, Columbia Bottom
CA, St Louis Co 16 Nov 24
Photo Diane Bricmont

A **Common Ground Dove** (acc.) was at Shawnee Trail CA, Barton Co 7 Aug (ph. †Kelly Ormesher). A **White-winged Dove** was in Bollinger Co 7 Aug (Chris Busse); two were at Mingo NWR, Stoddard Co 7 Aug (Chris Busse); one was at Mingo NWR, Wayne Co 7 Aug (Chris Busse); up to three were in Kennett, Dunklin Co 13 Aug–26 Sep (Kent Freeman), including two juveniles 31 Aug (Josh Uffman, Samuel Belley); and one was in East Prairie, Mississippi Co 2, 7 Sep (Tim Kavan). Single **Greater Roadrunners** were in Laclede Co 3 Nov (Zach Haring) and Taney Co 28 Nov (Alex Marine). Single **Chuck-will's-widows** were in Cape Girardeau Co 9 and 16 Aug (Arron Hendershott), Jefferson Co 10 Aug (Kyle Hawley), and Oregon Co 26 Aug (Cindy Bridges).

Tying the latest fall record for the state, a **Virginia Rail** was at Shawnee Trail CA, Barton Co 22 Nov (Alex Marine). Seven **Common Gallinules** were at Mingo NWR, Stoddard Co 4 Aug (Theo Brockhorst, Jonah Eckels); up to six, including four or five juveniles, were at Lake Gray Ghost, Dunklin Co 8 Aug – 3 Sep (Timothy Jones, Kyle Bess, ph. Kent Freeman, ph. Joshua Uffman, ph. Samuel Belley); one was at Loess Bluffs 20 Aug, 8 Oct, 14 Oct (Debbie and Steve Martin, Don Merz); four were at Sunshine Lake, Ray Co 20 Aug (ph. Doug Willis); one or two were at Cutoff Lake, Buchanan Co 26

Aug, 28 Sep (ph. Tom Nagel, ph. Clint Wiederholt); two were at Lake Contrary, Buchanan Co 14 Sep (Brent Galliart, Tom Nagel); one was at Mingo NWR, Wayne Co 28 Sep (Dustin Kohler); and one was in Buchanan Co 4 Oct (Joanne Dial). Single **Limpkins** were at Valley Water Mill, Greene Co 3 Sep (ph., m.obs.); Stockton Reservoir, Polk Co 24 Sep (Debbie and Steve Martin); and Lake Springfield, Greene Co 20 Oct (Jordanya Raos).

PLOVER THROUGH BITTERN

This fall's only **Piping Plover** was at Stockton Lake, Polk Co 9–10 Aug (ph. Kelly Ormesher, Krista Smith, ph. Kendell Loyd). An **Upland Sandpiper** outside of the usual Glaciated and Osage Plains habitats was in Dunklin Co 31 Aug (ph. Samuel Belley, Joshua Uffman). One to two **Wilson's Phalaropes** were at Dalbow Road, St Charles Co 8 – 16 Aug (ph., m. obs.); one was at Confluence Road, St Charles 12 – 16 Aug (ph., m. obs.); one was at Ferguson Lane, St Louis Co 12 Aug (Seth Winkelman); one was at Lake Gray Ghost, Dunklin Co 25 Aug (Timothy Jones); one was at Hedeman Lake, Dade Co 28 Aug (Kelly Ormesher); and two were at Loess Bluffs 8 Oct (Don Merz). A **Red-necked Phalarope** was at Winfield Dam, Lincoln Co 4 – 20 Sep (ph., m. obs.), and one was at Montrose CA, Henry Co 7 – 9 Sep (Jacob Tsikoyak, Debbie and Steve Martin). A **Willet** was Tiptonville Bar, New Madrid Co 17 Aug (Alan Troyer, Ruben Stoll); two were at Smithville Lake, Clay Co 26 Aug and Smithville Lake, Clinton Co 27 Aug (ph. Doug Willis); and two were at Stockton Lake, Polk Co 6 Oct (Nathan Steinbach). A **Ruddy Turnstone** was at Truman Reservoir, Henry Co 22 Aug, 24 Aug, and 1 Sep (ph. Kelly Ormesher, Mark Robbins, Pete Monacell); one was at Ten Mile Pond CA, Mississippi Co 31 Aug (ph. Samuel Belley, Joshua Uffman); and one was at Schell Lake, Vernon Co 14 Sep (Vicki Nelson). **Sanderlings** were in Cape Girardeau, Dunklin, Henry, Mississippi, New Madrid, St Charles, and Vernon Cos. A **White-Rumped Sandpiper** was in Polk Co 14 Sep (Asher, Darby, Dylan, and Tobias Nugent). **Western Sandpipers** were in Dade, Dunklin, Henry, Lincoln, New Madrid, Polk, St Charles, and Vernon Cos.

A record high count of ten **Sabine's Gulls** were at Smithville Lake, Clay Co 25–26 Sep (ph. Doug Willis); a single bird was in the same area 5–8 Oct (ph., m. obs.), and one was at Lake Jacomo, Jackson Co 12 Oct (Shawna and Aaron Mitchell). A **Laughing Gull** was at Riverlands 7 Oct (Dave Haenni, ph. Andy Reago and Chrissy MccClarren, Davidd Becher, Cornelius Alwood). An adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was at Long Branch SP, Macon Co 16–17 Sep and another 30 Nov (ph. Josh Uffman, ph. Peter Kondrashov); one was in Dade Co 7 Oct (ph. Alex Marine, ph. Austin Hess); and one was at Riverlands 16 Oct (ph. Mike Thelen). Up to three **Common Terns** were at Smithville Lake, Clay Co 24 Aug – 24 Sep (ph. Doug Willis, Terry Miller). One **Eared Grebe** was at the Farmington Sewage Lagoon, St Francois Co 2 Sep (William Reeves); one or two were at Smithville Lake, Clay Co 7 Oct, 13 Oct, and 11 Nov (Andrew Rights, Doug Willis, Steve Bingham); one was at Loess Bluffs Oct (Don Merz); three were at Fellows

Lake, Greene Co 27 Oct (Debbie and Steve Martin); and two were in Cedar Co 25 Nov (Alex Marine). A single **Western Grebe** was at Longview Lake, Jackson Co 4–26 Nov (Sherry Leonardo and m. obs.). Additionally, single *Aechmophorus* grebes that could not be identified to species were at Riverlands 7 Oct (ph. Kara Hollansworth, m. obs.) and Fellows Lake, Green Co 26 Nov (Darbias Nugent, Tobias Nugent, Eugene Nugent and Asher Nugent). A **Red-throated Loon** was at Smithville Lake, Clay Co 1–14 Nov (ph. Doug Willis, Andrew Christy, Susan Rohrmeier, Steve Bingham), and one was at Fountain Grove CA, Livingston Co 29 Nov (Steve Romo, Alex Marine). A **Pacific Loon** was in Cedar Co 25 Nov (ph. Alex Marine).

A **Magnificent Frigatebird** (acc.) at Stockton Lake, Dade Co 14 Nov (ph. †Betty Daniel) was the state's fourth record. Last fall's only **Anhinga** was at Duck Creek CA, Stoddard Co 28 Sep –2 Oct (ph. Dustin Kohler, Jim Landrum, ph. Keith Brink, ph. Jim Malone, Tim Kavan). Two **White Ibis** were along CR 713, New Madrid Co 2–8 Aug (ph. Tim Kavan, ph. Raymond VanBuskirk, Theo Brockhorst, Philip Lyon, Dewey Heppe), and one was nearby on CR 716, New Madrid Co 7 Sep; up to seven were at Otter Slough CA, Stoddard Co 4–17 Aug (Raymond VanBuskirk, Jonah Eckels, Theo Brockhorst, ph. Karin Pelton, Mark Haas, ph. Leon Book). This season's high count of 33 **White-faced Ibis** was at Loess Bluffs 30 Sep (Don Merz). Up to three **Least Bitterns** were at Loess Bluffs 18 Aug–24 Oct (ph., m. obs.); one was at Cutoff Lake, Buchanan Co 24 Aug (Brent Galliard); and one was at BK Leach CA, Lincoln Co 3 Sep (Billy MCaslin).

KITES THROUGH LONGSPURS



Swallow-tailed Kite, Columbia Bottom CA, St Louis Co 5 Sep 24. Photo Doug Hommert

Two **Swallow-tailed Kites** attracted a lot of observers at Eagle Bluffs CA, Boone Co 15 Aug – 8 Sep (Sharon Lu and m. obs., ph.); up to four were at Columbia Bottoms CA and environs, St Louis Co 22 Aug–6 Sep (ph. Jake Kickbohle, m. obs., ph.); one was in Saline Co 2 Sep (Jack Lapin, Alex Lanter); and one was a yard bird for Grace Jordan in Cedar Co 17 Aug. The season's only **Golden Eagle** was in Texas Co 21 Oct (Kristie Nelson). A **Broad-winged Hawk** (acc.) at Rockbridge SP, Boone Co 26 Oct (†Paul McKenzie) set the latest fall record. **Swainson's Hawks** were in Cedar, Christian, Greene, Henry, Holt, Jasper, Newton,

Platte, and Texas Cos. A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was at the Boone Co Nature School 8 Nov (ph. Andrew Kinslow, Dawn Huber, Chelsea Mosteller).

A **Say's Phoebe** was at the Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center, Cape Girardeau Co 11 Sep (ph. Leon Book), and one was at Hi Lonesome Prairie CA 16–22 Nov (Veronica Mecko, ph. Ryan Steffens, ph. Sheila Yoder). Two **Northern Shrikes** were at Shawnee Trail SP, Barton Co 14–29 Nov (ph. Alex Marine, m. obs.); up to three were in Prairie SP 14–26 Nov (ph. Gail White, m. obs.); one was at McGee Family CA, Clinton Co 14 Nov (Sherry Leonardo, Jennifer Pederson); one was at Fountain Grove CA, Linn Co 15 Nov (ph. Jacob Tsikoyak); one was at Poosey CA, Livingston Co 26 Nov (ph. Kari and Steven Romo); one was in Harrison Co 30 Nov (Doug Willis); and one was at Clarence Cannon NWR, Pike Co 20–29 Nov (ph. Mike Thelen). A **Barn Swallow** (acc.) at Eagle Bluffs CA, Boone Co 22 Nov (ph. †Andrew Kinslow, †Carol Weston, Dawn Huber) was the latest fall record for the state. **Brown-headed Nuthatches** were around the release site in Current River Pinery, Carter Co 26 Oct 10 Nov (ph., m. obs.); in addition, up to three individuals were in the Pioneer Forest – Virgin Pine Randolph Tract, Shannon Co 2 Oct–17 Nov (David Wiedenfield, Steve Paes, Allisyn-Marie Gillet, Matt Jones, Terry McNeely, Billy McCaslin, Paul McCaslin).

A **Sage Thrasher**, accidental transient, visited a private yard in Buffalo, Dallas Co 19–23 Oct (acc., fifth state record) (ph. †Kendell Loyd, m. obs.), and another was at Columbia Bottom CA, St Louis Co 24–26 Oct (acc., sixth state record) (ph. †Randy Schiller, †Diane Bricmont, †Bill Rowe, m. obs.). A **Mountain Bluebird** was in Cass Co 6–7 Nov (Pat and Richard Glessner, ph. Doug Willis), and one was at Columbia Bottom CA, St Louis Co 16 Nov (ph. †Diane Bricmont, David Dean, m. obs.). Single **Veerys** were in Boone, Holt, St Charles, St Louis, Stoddard, and Webster Cos, as well as St Louis City, all in Aug and Sep. Single **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were in Greene Co 7 Sep (anonymous); Howard Co 8 Sep (Doug Willis); Ranacker CA, Pike Co 15 Sep (Tommy and Jessie Goodwin); St Louis Co 9 Sep (Cornelius Alwood); Forest Park, St Louis City 9–28 Sep (Isaac Boardman, ph. Rad Widmer, Natalie Rekittke); and Tower Grove Park, St Louis City 9–28 Sep (Seth Winkleman, Mimi Calter, Phil Eager, ph. David Seidensticker). Up to five **Sprague's Pipits** were at Prairie SP, Barton Co 14–20 Oct (aud. Jacob Tsikoyak, Keith Brink, Steve and Debbie Martin, ph. Jerry Savage, ph. Greg Enns). Up to seven **Chestnut-collared Longspurs** (acc.), accidental in eastern MO, were at Columbia Bottom CA 25–28 Oct (ph. Henry Gorski, Joshua Uffman, ph. †Pete Monacell, m. obs.). As many as 60 **Smith's Longspurs** were in Prairie SP, Barton Co 12–29 Nov (Mark Robbins, ph. Alex Marine, Austin Hess); one was at the Montrose Power Plant, Henry Co 11 Nov (Mark Robbins); five were in Dade Co 12 Nov (Kelly Ormesher); five were in Jasper Co 13 Nov (Roy Boyd); up to ten were in Shawnee Trail CA, Barton Co 14–22 Nov (Alex Marine); and two were at Penn-Sylvania Prairie, Dade Co 26–29 Nov (Alex Marine, Austin Hess).



Green-tailed Towhee, Orton Rd, St Charles Co 5 Sep 2024
Photo Doug Hommert

SPARROWS THROUGH BUNTING

Grasshopper Sparrows were in 21 counties; the latest one observed this fall was at John Rushin Teaching and Research Prairie, Buchanan Co 16 Oct (ph. Clint Wiederholt). **Clay-colored Sparrows**, rare in the east, were in Lincoln, St Charles, and St Louis Cos, and in St Louis City; one was trapped in Joshua Uffman's St Louis Co garage! A **Lark Sparrow**, casual after early October, was at Jerry Smith Park and Saeger Woods CA, Jackson Co 12 Oct (Sherry Leonardo). **Nelson's Sparrows** were in Barton, Boone, Clay, Greene, Linn, Perry, St Charles, and St Louis Cos. A **Green-tailed Towhee** (acc.), casual transient and tenth state record, was at Riverlands 9 – 11 Oct (ph. †Jake Kickbohle, m. obs.). Single **Yellow-headed Blackbirds**, rare in the eastern part of the state, were at Eagle Bluffs CA, Boone Co 22 Sep (ph. Jean Leonatti); Pleasant View, Greene Co 22 Sep (ph. Nathan and Heather Steinbach); Riverlands 24 Sep (ph. Tom Parmeter, ph. Bill Rowe, Mike Thelen); and four were in Vernon Co 23 Sep (Jacob Decker).



Black-throated Blue Warbler, Tower Grove Park, St Louis
City 29 Sep 2024.

Photo Chrissy McClarren and Andy Reago

A **Worm-eating Warbler** at Mingo NWR 1 Oct (Mark Hahn, Mark Haas) tied for the third latest record of this species. A **Golden-winged Warbler** (acc.) at Riverlands 14 Aug (†Henry Gorski) was a new earliest fall record, and so was a **Mourning Warbler** (acc.) at 3M Wetlands, Boone Co 11 Aug (ph. †Lottie Bushman). A **Cape May Warbler**, casual after mid-October, was at Berry Brook Gardens, St

Louis Co 25 Nov (ph. Anita Otal). A **Cerulean Warbler** was at Montauk SP, Dent Co 17 Aug (Kristie Nelson). A **Bay-breasted Warbler** (acc.) at Little Creek Nature Area, St Louis Co 22 Aug (ph. †Jonah Eckels) set a new earliest fall record. A **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was in Adair Co 13 Sep (ph. Peter Kondrashov), and another was at Tower Grove Park, St Louis City 29 Sep and 7 Oct (Bryan Prather, ph., m. obs.). Single **Prairie Warblers** were Forest Park, St Louis City 24 Sep (Matt Schamberger), tying the record for fourth latest; Lead Mine CA, Dallas Co 26 Sep (ph. Barbara and David Blevins), tying for fifth latest; and at Busch CA, St Charles Co 1 Oct (ph. Jeff Johnson), new latest record. A **Canada Warbler** (acc.) at Eagle Bluffs CA, Boone Co 11 Aug (ph. †Joseph Bieksza) was the earliest fall record. A **Wilson's Warbler** (acc.) at Forest Park, St Louis City 28 Nov (ph. †Rad Widmer) set a new latest fall record. A female/juvenile type **Painted Bunting** was at Lake Allen Island, Dunklin Co 13 Oct (ph. Timothy Jones).

Abbreviations:

aud. — Audio recording

CA — Conservation Area

Co — County

m. obs. — Multiple observers

NWR — National Wildlife Refuge

ph. — Photo

SP — State Park

Riverlands — Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, St Charles Co

Loess Bluffs — Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge, Holt Co

References:

- eBird. 2024. eBird: An online database of bird distribution and abundance [web application]. eBird, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. Available: <http://www.ebird.org>. (Accessed: December 15, 2024).
- Guinan, P. and Z. Leasor (September 2024). August 2024 Weather and Its Impacts on Missouri. Missouri Climate Center. Retrieved from: <http://climate.missouri.edu/news/arc>
- Guinan, P. and Z. Leasor (October 2024). September 2024 Weather and Its Impacts on Missouri. Missouri Climate Center. Retrieved from: <http://climate.missouri.edu/news/arc>
- Guinan, P. and Z. Leasor (November 2024). October 2024 Weather and Its Impacts on Missouri. Missouri Climate Center. Retrieved from: <http://climate.missouri.edu/news/arc>
- Guinan, P. and Z. Leasor (December 2024). November 2024 Weather and Its Impacts on Missouri. Missouri Climate Center. Retrieved from: <http://climate.missouri.edu/news/arc>

THE BLUEBIRD

Awards Committee: The MBS Executive Committee

Executive Committee: Michael O'Keefe, Mike Grant, Karen Lyman, Ellen Zellmer, and Allen Gathman

Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative: Bill Eddleman

Conservation Partnership Coordinator: Edge Wade

Bluebird Mailing Coordinator: Lottie Bushmann

Missouri Bird Records Committee:

Chair: Pete Monacell

Secretary: Bill Rowe

Voting Members: Cory Gregory, Kendell Loyd, Kristi Mayo, Pete Monacell, Marky Mutchler, Mary Nemecek, Josh Uffman

ADDRESS CHANGES

If you move to a new address or you register a temporary address with the post office, please let MBS know. For an address change, just send me an email with your new address, or mail me a note. If it is a temporary address, do the same thing, but also let me know the date of your return and whether you want THE BLUEBIRD sent to your temporary address or held and sent after you return home. You can also change your address anytime on your own by logging into your profile at MOBIRDS.ORG. Thank you!

Greg Leonard
MBS Membership Chair
2101 W. Broadway, PMB 122
Columbia, MO 65203-1261
(573) 443-8263
egreg2@yahoo.com

JOIN
The Missouri Birding Society
Membership Brings You

The Bluebird—quarterly journal of the MBS
Birding Fellowship
Spring and Fall Birding Weekends
Organized Input into Conservation Issues
Birding Education

**Go to www.mobirds.org and pay using PayPal, or by mail:
Application for MBS Membership**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Preferred Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

_____ Do NOT Publish My Phone Number in the MBS Membership Directory

_____ Do NOT Publish ANY of My Information in the MBS Membership Directory

~~~~~  
\*\*Indicate whether this is a NEW membership or a RENEWAL\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_ New      \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal

\*\*Please check the Membership Category that applies and your BLUEBIRD choice\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual—\$20.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Contributing—\$50.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Family—\$25.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Benefactor—\$150.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Student—\$15.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Mail paper BLUEBIRD—\$12.00 per year

\_\_\_\_\_ I'll read the BLUEBIRD online at MOBIRDS.ORG—FREE!

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Enclosed**

Send checks (payable to Missouri Birding Society) to:

**The Missouri Birding Society**  
**2101 W. Broadway, PMB 122**  
**Columbia, MO 65203-1261**

THE BLUEBIRD  
The voice of MBS since 1934