

In addition to the Pacific Loon at Clinton Lake, lone Red-throated Loons were reported at Chicago Lakefront, Carlyle (count week), and Springfield (count week). Chicago Lakefront also had a Red-necked Grebe, while Springfield reported a count-week Eared Grebe and Carlyle had a count-week Western Grebe. Seventy-six American White Pelicans were reported on 9 counts, with a high of 56 at Muscatine. Mermet Lake had the only Great Egret, and Calumet City had 10 of the 17 Black-crowned Night-Herons reported.

Raptors through Gulls

A Turkey Vulture was still present at Schapville in Northern Illinois. Bald Eagles were down slightly from last year, likely because of the lack of ice. Four counts reported lone Golden Eagles, and 12 reported Merlin. Clinton Lake had a Prairie Falcon. A Virginia Rail was at Lisle Arboretum, while Union County reported 3 Virginia Rails and a Sora. One-thousand-eight-hundred-sixteen (1,816) Sandhill Cranes were reported on 11 counts, including 1,367 at Lisle Arboretum.

Shorebirds were very well represented, with 77 Wilson's Snipe on 13 counts, 3 American Woodcock at Mermet Lake, a Spotted Sandpiper at Clinton Lake, and lone Lesser Yellowlegs and Dunlin at Meredosia. A California Gull was reported for the second year in a row, this time on Chicago Lakefront. Eight counts reported a total of 16 Thayer's Gulls, 9 counts reported Lesser Black-backed Gulls, 6 reported Glaucous Gulls, and Calumet City reported the only 2 Great Black-backed Gulls.

Four-hundred-thirteen (413) Eurasian Collared-Doves were reported on 33 counts, a total only surpassed two years ago. Lone Barn Owls were at Carlyle and Warbluff Valley. Five counts reported Snowy Owls, including 2 at Chicago Lakefront, part of a truly impressive invasion year. Long-eared Owls were reported on 13 counts, and 20 Northern Saw-whet Owls were reported on 9 counts, including 8 at Lisle Arboretum. A female Rufous Hummingbird was still present on the Chicago Urban – the 5th in state CBC history.

Flycatchers through Weaver Finches

36 Eastern Phoebes were seen on 11 counts this year, including 1 at Chicago Urban and 2 at Barrington. Loggerhead Shrikes were up as well, with 12 on 9 counts, compared to 6 on 3 counts in 2010. Northern Shrikes were also up, with 45 seen on 19 counts, including 11 at Fermilab. One count-week White-eyed Vireo was spotted at Carlyle. A record 334,685 American Crows were counted, one of 8 species to be recorded in every count circle. The 238,000 reported at Middlefork River Valley were more than the entire state finds in most years. Two counts reported Fish Crows, with 6 at Union County.

Kankakee Valley had a lingering count-week Northern Rough-winged Swallow and Rend Lake had a Barn Swallow. Four counts reported House Wrens, 3 reported

Sedge Wrens, and 4 reported Marsh Wrens. As mentioned, a Mountain Bluebird was still present at Collinsville. Five Gray Catbirds were reported on 3 counts. Brown Thrashers were reported on 16 counts.

Warblers were present in surprising numbers, including 3 Orange-crowned on 2 counts, a Cape May photographed at Chautauqua, 9 Pine Warblers on 5 counts, 2 Palm Warblers at Lisle Arboretum and one at Davenport, and lone Common Yellowthroats on 2 counts.

A Henslow's Sparrow was photographed at Evanston. Five counts reported Lincoln's Sparrows. Three counts reported solo Indigo Buntings, and Mermet Lake reported two Dickcissels. Union County reported 20 Western Meadowlarks. Twenty Brewer's Blackbirds were reported on six counts, led by the 11 at Collinsville. Thirty-eight (38) Red Crossbills were reported on six counts, with Union County in far southern Illinois reporting 22. Only two counts reported White-winged Crossbills. Only 9 counts reported Common Redpolls. The last two species moved into the area in numbers in January. Pine Siskins actually exceeded last year's total with 1070 reported on 30 counts. Only 2 counts reported Evening Grosbeaks, although Thorn Creek had a flock of 15. Eurasian Tree Sparrows were reported from 19 counts this year.

Paul W. Sweet
2114 Elisha Ave.
Zion, IL 60099
paulwsweet@att.net



*LeConte's Sparrow. Shelbyville Reservoir
Christmas Bird Count, Moultrie County.
2 January 2012. Photo by Rob Kanter.*