

as she searched for the bird and I waited for Dan. Myrna quickly found the bird feeding in an inconspicuous section of a flooded corn field. We switched positions, so that I could get better photographs. At this particular field, the spoonbill was roughly 30 to 40 yards away! The feathering on the head and face, as well as the undeveloped pink body coloration, brought us to the conclusion that we were viewing a first year Roseate Spoonbill.

Dan Kassebaum and Albert Seppi joined Myrna and me at around 7:15 p.m. at the northern pool just in time to watch it fly to the south. While the spoonbill flew, we noted some limited dark coloration in the outer primaries, which provided more evidence as to the age of this bird. The spoonbill's flight path led our three-car caravan to Route 51. Luckily, we came to find that it decided to land in the same pool where I had originally noticed it. From this location, we watched it feed and preen until we left at approximately 8:00 p.m. We thought that the spoonbill had likely been present in this area for some time before its discovery given that it appeared to have already established a feeding territory.

The Roseate Spoonbill remained in these flooded cornfields near Vandalia from 22 June 2003 until at least 8 July 2003. During this time frame, many people were able to add this species to their state list while it stayed in this unlikely setting.

On 14 July 2003, Timothy Spires relocated the immature Roseate Spoonbill in much more suitable habitat than the flooded cornfields of Vandalia. His sighting took place in a section of the Carlyle Lake Wildlife Management Area known as Parking Lot #2, which is north of and adjacent to Carlyle Lake in Fayette County. The spoonbill likely followed the Kaskaskia River from Vandalia to this complex of sub-impoundments. Parking Lot #2 and the surrounding sections of the Carlyle Lake Wildlife Management Area possessed a large amount



A first-year Roseate Spoonbill preens in a flooded cornfield near Vandalia in Fayette County. 25 June 2003. This is the first accepted record of this species for Illinois. Photo by Travis A. Mahan.

of shallow pools with extensive mudflats that provided the spoonbill and other waders with adequate feeding opportunities. Leroy Harrison and others last saw the bird at Parking Lot #3 on 16 August 2003.

Illinois' Roseate Spoonbill was not the only individual to visit the Midwest. In fact, Illinois was one of a few Midwestern states that recorded the species during the summer of 2003. Missouri recorded one Roseate Spoonbill from 30 June to 2 July 2003 in Boone County east of Columbia (Dinsmore 2004). Kansas birders tallied multiple records of the species, which included three separate counties. The first Kansas sighting was of a second-year bird on 29 June 2003 at Hargis Lake, Barber County. Hargis Lake is positioned in the south-central section of the state and is close to the Great Salt Plains in Oklahoma. This immature spoonbill was last reported on 19 July 2003, but given the area's infrequent birding activity, the bird may have remained for a longer period of time. The other Kansas sightings took place at Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area (Barton County) and Quivira National

Wildlife Refuge (Stafford County) Between 10 July and 3 August 2003, one to two second-year Roseate Spoonbills were reported from these wetlands (pers. comm. P. Janzen). Due to the proximity of these two locations, the reports may have involved back-and-forth movement of the same individual. Other regional spoonbill sightings during the summer of 2003 occurred in Arkansas (Purrington 2004), Oklahoma (Grzybowski and Silcock 2004) and Tennessee.

On 26 September 2003, a Roseate Spoonbill was reported by Jeff Chapman in Will County, Illinois. The bird was located in flight on a day marked with strong winds from the south. Under favorable winds, spoonbills may make their way into Illinois as post-breeding wanderers. Spoonbills have been recorded in Iowa and Missouri in recent years as products of post-breeding dispersal. Though 2003 was an extraordinary year for vagrants, a Roseate Spoonbill is likely to make future appearances in Illinois.

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