

## Blackbirds to Weaver Finches

During the 2009-2010 winter season, 8 species of blackbirds were observed in Illinois. Although most of these species were reported in larger numbers this year, the two most common icterids (Red-winged Blackbird and Common Grackle) were considerably less abundant, primarily due to much lower concentrations at various southern locales. Nevertheless, there were still noteworthy concentrations found in the south compared to the rest of the state. A juvenile Baltimore Oriole was photographed in Sangamon County.

Six species of finches were recorded this winter, as well as the exotic European Goldfinch, although it was of a different subspecies than normally found in Illinois. All finch species occurred in slightly to greatly reduced numbers this season, with no notable concentrations anywhere in the state. There appeared to be very minimal migration among the more regular winter finches. Purple Finches were slightly less numerous, as were American Goldfinches, while Pine Siskins and House Finches were noticeably less abundant this season. However, there was no irruptive "winter invasion" event as we experienced last winter. In fact, only one individual each of the Common Redpoll and White-winged Crossbill were observed this winter, and Red Crossbill and Evening Grosbeak were not encountered at all. Both House Sparrow and Eurasian Tree Sparrows were reported in reduced numbers

### Acknowledgments

The foundation of this summary was the detailed information regarding wintering avian populations as submitted directly to the compiler by field observers throughout the state. Maximum counts are provided, where available, from each of the three regions of Illinois (north, central, and south) as described by Bohlen (1978). Additional data reflecting the progress of the season are noted, when available, for species and areas of special interest. The species accounts which follow, utilize the taxonomy and nomenclature of the 7th Edition of the A.O.U. Check-list (American Ornithologists' Union 2003) and its latest supplement (51<sup>st</sup> supplement, 2010) as well as the official Illinois Ornithological Records Committee bird checklist (1999), and an updated version on-line at [http://www.illinoisbirds.org/birds\\_of\\_illinois1.html](http://www.illinoisbirds.org/birds_of_illinois1.html).

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### Literature Cited

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