



Varied Thrush at Adams Sanctuary, Springfield, winter 1991-92. Drawing by Diane Johnson.

On 10 January 1992, a Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*) followed the American Tree, White-throated and Field Sparrows to my feeders. Among these winter regulars, the chippie stood out with its rufous crown, gray neck, and rump. Todd Fink certified my identification. The Chipping Sparrow came almost daily to the ground feeding stations to eat cracked corn until it got lost among the early spring migrants in March.

- Judy De Neal, 4240 Highway 34 South, Harrisburg, IL 62946.

Yellow-headed Blackbird Arrives Early in Southern Illinois

Almost as soon as a flock of blackbirds arrives in southern Illinois, Todd Fink and I begin search

ing for Yellow-headed Blackbirds. In January 1992, we had a few days of frigid temperatures, followed by somewhat milder weather. In the agricultural fields along the Mississippi, we found a huge flock of blackbirds foraging in the waste grain. In the flock were Common Grackles, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Red-winged Blackbirds, and Rusty Blackbirds.

Todd spotted a male Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) with golden head and chest shining in the sunlight. It's difficult to direct other birds to see a particular individual, but with a lot of verbal coaching and after the birds settled in the treetops, a group of us all got good looks. Some of us even noticed the white wing stripe of the yellowhead when in flight.

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