

Blackbirds to weaver finches

Most blackbirds occurred in greater numbers, possibly as the result of some early spring migration movements. Wintering Rusty and Brewer's Blackbirds remained relatively scarce statewide. The most noteworthy blackbird in 2004-2005 was a **single Great-tailed Grackle** at Pyramid State Recreation Area on 25 December.

Once again, there appeared to be a minor invasion of winter finches into the state. This invasion was primarily restricted to the northern and central regions, and was of lesser magnitude than the previous winter. Exceptional finch numbers included **400 House Finches** and **45 Red Crossbills**. Among the winter finches" the Purple Finch, Common Redpoll, and Pine Siskin were somewhat less abundant but widespread. Only one report of the White-winged Crossbill was made, while 2 Evening Grosbeaks were identified (1 at Lowden-Miller State Forest and the other at Sand Ridge State Forest). This was the first time in several years that the Evening Grosbeak has been recorded in Illinois.

Acknowledgments

The foundation of this summary is the detailed information regarding wintering avian populations as submitted directly to the compiler by field observers throughout the state.

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WINTER 2004-2005 FIELD NOTES

Greater White-fronted Goose

MC: 2665, Chau, 11 Feb (R&SBj); 1400, UCCA, 2 Jan (KAM, CL); 747, Rend L, 18 Dec (KAM, CL); 700, Easter Slough (Pulaski Co), 20 Dec (SDB,MW); 400, Bald.L, 29 Dec (JE); 400, Madison Co, 13 Jan (JPZ, FH); 383, BigL (Brown Co), 14 Dec (SDB,MW); 252, Clinton Co, 15 Feb (KAM); 200, LSpfld, 6 Feb (RJ); 125, Clin.L, 6 Feb (TAM); 122, HLCA, 29 Dec (SDB, TH); 120, Hennepin L, 16 Feb (DFS); 85, SRock, 5 Feb (ES). Widespread and abundant, especially through central and southern regions.



Ross's Goose at Kankakee Bird Park quarry, Kankakee County. 16 January 2005. Photo by Jed Hertz.

Snow Goose

MC: **200,000**, Carl.L, 9 Jan (DK); **75,000**, Montgomery & Shelby Cos, 5 Feb (TAM); **20,600**, HLCA, 29 Dec(SDB,TH); **18,000**, Rend L, 18 Dec (KAM, CL); **10,000**, Two Rivers NWR (Calhoun Co), 22 Jan (WCR); **10,000**, Perry Co, 24 Jan (KAM); 8000, LSpfld, 11 Feb (RJ); 2200 (1320 white, 880 blue morphs), Chau, 18 Feb (R&SBj); 1200, UCCA, 30 Dec (SDB, SD); 63 (36 white, 27 blue morphs), Rochelle (Ogle Co), 12 Dec (*EW).



Ross's Goose in Kane County at a pond in a subdivision on Allan Road. 11 December 2004. Photo by Jerry Kumery.

Ross's Goose

MC: 6 (4 ad., 2 imm.), Rochelle (Ogle Co), 12 Dec (*EW); 6, Decatur dredge ponds (Macon Co), 19 Feb (TAM); 4, Carl.L, 2 Jan (KAM, CL); 4, Bald.L, 24 Jan (KAM). **Others:** 3, HL, 20 Feb (KAM); Hampshire FP (Kane Co), 10-12 Dec (but present much longer; injured) (SDB,SD,ES); Rend L, 18 Dec (KAM, CL); Pyramid SRA, 25 Dec (KJM); Kinkaid L (Jackson Co), 1 Jan (KJM, SJ); Ramsey L SP (Fayette Co), 5 Feb (TAM). Less numerous this winter, particularly in the south.

Cackling Goose

MC: 3618, Rockfd, 18 Dec (DTW); 3110, Rochelle (Ogle Co), 12 Dec (*EW); 216, HLCA, 29 Dec (EW); 200, Chau, 9 Jan (RJ); 100, Bushnell (McDonough Co), 29 Dec (LLH); 40, Rend L, 18 Dec (KAM, CL). **Others:** 950, Hennepin L, 9 Dec (DFS); 435, Nachusa, 18 Dec (EW); 328, Johnson Sauk Trail SP (Henry Co), 19 Dec (EW); 100, Aurora West FP (Kane Co), 10 Dec (EW); 25, BigL (Brown