

abundant and widespread. Northern Bobwhite and Ring-necked Pheasant were scattered and relatively scarce, with the bobwhite concentrated in the south and central regions, while the pheasant was restricted primarily to the north. In fact, no pheasants were reported from southern Illinois. For the first time in three years, the Gray Partridge was identified in Illinois during the winter season (two reports from the north). Due to the lack of aerial waterfowl survey data, American Coot numbers were once again relatively small and scattered. The harsh winter undoubtedly resulted in a substantial reduction in the number of Sandhill Cranes reported compared with last year--only three reports. A single Virginia Rail was found in Rock Island County (19 December).

Five species of shorebirds were identified; among these was a somewhat reduced number of Killdeer, while Common Snipe was abundant and widespread. Four Least Sandpipers were located in southern Illinois, while a single late migrant Dunlin was observed at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center (1 December). All reports of American Woodcock were of spring migrants observed in February.

A total of 11 gull species were identified. The highlights included a second year Western Gull at Starved Rock State Park (7 January), along with at least one adult Laughing Gull in Madison County (throughout January), and a Franklin's Gull at Rend Lake (12 February). In general, gull numbers appeared to be substantially reduced in 2000-2001, especially among the typical wintering species. Once again, cold temperatures and extensive ice cover were probably responsible for the decrease in gull abundance, similar to the lesser numbers detected among many species of "waterbirds" and waterfowl. Notable exceptions included: 3000 Bonaparte's Gulls at Crab Orchard (2 December), 50,000 Ring-billed Gulls at Carlyle Lake (11 February), as well as 14,500 and 10,000 Herring Gulls at Starved Rock State Park (12 January and 22 December, respectively).

Doves to Kinglets

Three species of doves and 8 species of owls were recorded in the state during the 2000-2001 winter season. Among the more common species (Rock and Mourning Doves, and Eastern Screech-Owl, and Great Horned and Barred Owls, relatively low numbers were reported. These more common species may have simply been overlooked and under-reported. For example, Great Horned and Barred Owls were only reported once in southern Illinois. The Eurasian Collared-Dove appears to have a fairly low but stable population in select locales in central and southern regions, while the Monk Parakeet seems well-established in Chicagoland. Long-eared and Short-eared Owls occurred in their normal scarce and scattered numbers across the state. Once again, it was a fairly poor winter for invading northern owls. A small number of Northern Saw-whet Owls were reported (primarily in the north), along with five Snowy Owls. One of these Snowies was found in southern Illinois at Rend Lake. Only one Barn Owl was reported in the state this winter (Union County). Belted Kingfishers occurred in smaller numbers, which were scattered this winter, probably restricted by lack of open water.

In 2000-2001, 8 species of woodpeckers, 1 flycatcher, and both shrikes were observed. This included a single Red-cockaded Woodpecker which was reported at Illinois Beach

State Park (10 December). See Meadowlark 10:2 for an account of this federally endangered species visiting Illinois. Once more, I suspect the common woodpeckers (Red-bellied, Downy, and Hairy) are all greatly overlooked and under-reported throughout the state. Red-headed Woodpeckers occurred in slightly smaller numbers, while Northern Flickers seemed to slightly increase. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and Pileated Woodpeckers were observed in their normal scarcity. Only three Eastern Phoebe were reported, along with substantially fewer Loggerhead Shrikes. Northern Shrikes were found in fewer numbers this season compared with the invasion that occurred last year.

Horned Larks occurred in large flocks statewide. However, the substantial snow cover may account for these large numbers, in that larks were forced to the roadsides and were therefore much more visible (see Johnson 2001 in this issue: Christmas Bird Count). The numbers of Red-breasted Nuthatches and Brown Creepers were substantially fewer. A single migrant Tree Swallow was reported in Massac County (27 February).

Overall, the common permanent residents (corvids, Tufted Titmouse, chickadees, White-breasted Nuthatch, European Starling, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, and House Sparrow) were reported in relatively very low numbers.

Thrushes to Sparrows

During the 2000-2001 winter, 4 thrushes, 2 mimic thrushes, and 3 warbler species were recorded. Among these, the highlights included two Varied Thrushes, and single Cape May and Pine Warblers. See Field Notes for details. Eastern Bluebirds and Hermit Thrushes appeared to be somewhat more abundant this winter, while American Robins occurred in fairly normal numbers. All three of these species however seemed to be concentrated, where they were encountered, probably due to lack of food. The two mimic thrushes, Northern Mockingbird and Brown Thrasher, were found in relatively normal numbers, primarily in the south, while the Yellow-rumped Warbler was somewhat less abundant as compared to last year. Only two reports of American Pipits were recorded this winter, while both fairly normal numbers of Cedar Waxings were reported.

Eastern Towhees were slightly less abundant this winter, and were concentrated primarily in the southern region. A total of 13 sparrow species were recorded, of which the highlight was a remarkable four Chipping Sparrows. Three additional species occurred in very low numbers across the state including: 1 Vesper Sparrow in Winnebago County, 3 Lincoln's Sparrows, and 6 Harris's Sparrows. Song, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows were slightly more abundant and widespread across Illinois, while Fox and Swamp Sparrows were slightly less common compared to last year. Four species of sparrows occurred in fairly normal numbers. Of these, the Field, Savannah, and Le Conte's Sparrows were largely reported from the south, while the American Tree Sparrow was primarily concentrated in the north. The latter species was undoubtedly under-reported.

Buntings to Finches

Dark-eyed Juncos, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings were widespread and reported in fairly good num-