

currently perceive (Lee and Birch 1998). This article is a great resource for sorting out the identification pitfalls for this species. Fortunately, the adult male is rather distinctive. Also in its favor is the fact mentioned by a panelist that it breeds as close to Illinois as Western Nebraska.

Numerous records of adult male Bullock's east of Illinois exist, including two records (spring and fall) from Iowa and one spring record from Missouri recently (Lee & Birch 1998). It's possible one could be found during the same migration as that of the Baltimore, in late April through late May and late July through early September. Another possibility would be a late fall or overwintering bird at a feeder, adult males having been confirmed in Massachusetts a number of times (Lee & Birch 1998), and also in Iowa (see Brock 2000 for an excellent photo). The overwintering possibility works in this bird's favor. The species frequents feeders. Besides the identification pitfalls between the female and immature orioles, a possible hybrid would need to be eliminated. An adult male would certainly have the easiest time making it through a records committee evaluation.

The Long-billed Murrelet was granted full species status from the Marbled Murrelet only as recently as 1997, so records are just starting to trickle in giving a suggestive pattern of vagrancy. It was our only bird among the top seven to not receive a first place vote. However, it appears on our list in fourth place overall largely because of four second place votes it received among its seven votes. This deep water bird could be seen on Lake Michigan or some other large lake such as Rend, Carlyle, Clinton, or Springfield. This member of the alcid family will probably jump on the heels of an Arctic cold front most likely arriving in our state in mid-November through mid-December (although there are two other records from as early as mid-September). There are already three Indiana records and along with recent records from Ohio (Mlodinow 1997), Kansas (Grzybowski

1998), and Wisconsin (Tessen 1999), it's as if the Midwest serves as target practice for overmigrants of this species. There are also scattered records in the East (Mlodinow 1997) showing that more birds of this species have moved from Siberia eastward past Illinois and the Midwest. Preventing a quick addition to the Illinois list would be the fact that the identification can be difficult, especially with Marbled Murrelet. Birders wishing identification treatment of this species are directed to the article cited above.

### Final three

The final three species all had first place votes with the Brambling garnering four, a tie for the most. However, outside of those four voters, it didn't elicit much passion, so it dropped from an early first place down to a final third place in our poll. So why would this European bird have such a good chance at being added to the Illinois list? First, it's a very easy identification for a beginner and would most likely be found at a backyard feeder at a time when birders are investing many hours watching birds in their backyards, i.e., winter. Second, this regularly occurring North American winter finch has already been added to the avifauna list in the nearby states of Michigan with 4 records (Tessen 1999), as well as in Minnesota (3 records), Wisconsin, Indiana, and Ohio (Mlodinow 1996). Third, five panelists said this species is way overdue for making it on the Illinois checklist. Hopefully, if this bird appears at a feeder, the homeowner will alert the birding community so that many may get a chance at seeing it. A Brambling might arrive as early as late October, with a number of records after a mid-November cold front, but it's most often discovered starting in late December (perhaps first noticed during CBC feeder counts?). The bird sometimes stays the whole

winter leaving in late February, although the Ohio record listed above stayed through 7 April, giving a late date boundary.

Perhaps it's not surprising that another hummingbird took the No. 2 spot on the overall list. The Green Violet-Ear received only one first place vote, but the consistency of opinion on the bird (seven voters had it among their top three) demonstrates that many birders believe it's soon to arrive at a hummingbird feeder near you. It has been seen at feeders in Wisconsin (Tessen 1999) and Kentucky (Brock 2000), spent a late summer at a south Michigan feeder (Tessen 1997), and occurred north to Ontario (Mlodinow 1996). There's even a report in 2000 from the Indiana bird chat line. It does have an established pattern of vagrancy in eastern North America. Expected times? Most Texas records are from mid-May to late July with a peak in early June (Mlodinow 1996). A bird could certainly appear in our area about that time; however, another possibility for the upper Midwest is from August through November. A number of recent records are of birds that arrived in late summer/early fall and then stayed at the same food source for a number of months. Interestingly, while the identification is quite easy for this brightly colored hummingbird, it could pose a problem for some since it's not included in older field guides. Many new state records are species in hard-to-identify plumages. Not so with the Green Violet-Ear, a species that would stand out even to a novice birder, which significantly increases the chances of it being added to our state list in the very near future.

### Gold medalist

Our gold medalist bird really separated itself from all other species, getting more votes than any other, was the only bird that a majority of panelists voted for along with receiving four first place votes! The next