



*Purple Gallinule, 22 May 1999. Anderson Japanese Gardens, Rockford, IL. Photo by John McDaniel.*

or young birds were reported. They were last seen in late July. Mermet Lake is the only place in Illinois where Purple Gallinules are known to have nested, although these nests have been infrequent. A successful nesting occurred there in 1998 (Bennett 1999). The only other confirmed Purple Gallinule nests were in 1963 and 1973 (Bohlen, 1989).

On 11 May 1999, Tim Gruner and the grounds crew at Anderson Gardens in Rockford, another northern Illinois location, discovered a Purple Gallinule. He notified Barbara Williams at the Burpee Natural History Museum for assistance with the identification. This bird remained at Anderson Gardens for two weeks and was last seen on 25 May.

The author discovered another Purple Gallinule on 12 May at Wilkinson Renwick Marsh, a De Kalb County forest preserve wetland. When it emerged from the cattails, several Red-winged Blackbirds mobbed it, and it retreated back into the cattails. It was last seen on 13 May. Searches later in May and in early June were unsuccessful. By late May the marsh vegetation had grown almost to its full height, making wading birds in

any wetlands difficult to see.

On 15 May Myrna Deaton saw two Purple Gallinules at the Cox's Bridge Access area at Lake Carlyle in central Illinois. They were also seen again on 18 May.

Back in northern Illinois, Adam Reyburn and Jen Scharst reported a Purple Gallinule from 19-24 May in Lee County at the Richardson Wildlife Foundation. Carolyn Fields also found a Purple Gallinule at Ron Beese Park in Barrington, Cook County, on 26 May. A Purple Gallinule was also reported in late June, in Missouri at the Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, just across the Mississippi River from Alton, Illinois. On 27 June 1999, Charlene Malone discovered the Purple Gallinule walking on Wise Road at the demonstration area.

The Purple Gallinule flight of 1999 was unprecedented all across the east and Midwest, as well as in Illinois. Recent spring records for the state, besides those in 1999, are limited to a sighting on 1 May 1987 at Heron Pond Nature Preserve (Kleen 1987) and a specimen found on a golf course in Mundelein 10 April 1997 (Hurley 1997). A Purple Gallinule

flight of note also occurred in late April and early May 1973. Four were found in northern and central Illinois between 17 April 17 and 6 May of that year. (Bohlen 1978)

### **Acknowledgments**

Thanks to David Johnson, Dan Williams, Michael Retter, Frank Bennett, and Angelo Capparella for helping me search the records.

### **Literature Cited**

- Bennett, F. 1999. Purple Gallinules Hatch Young at Mermet Lake, Meadowlark 8:1.
- Bohlen, H. 1989. The Birds of Illinois, Indiana University Press.
- Bohlen, H. 1978. An annotated Check-list of the Birds of Illinois, Illinois State Museum.
- Brock, K. and Wood C. 1999. North American Birds 53: 3.
- Kleen, V. 1987. Illinois Birds and Birding 3: 4.
- Hurley, M. 1997. Meadowlark 6:4.
- Darrell Shambaugh  
PO Box 554  
Somonauk, IL 60552  
[dshambaugh@prairienet.com](mailto:dshambaugh@prairienet.com)