

portion of the Lake Michigan shoreline, most within 30 miles of Chicago. Of 230 jaegers identified to species there, 183 (79.6 %) were Parasitics, while only 33 (14.3 %) were Pomarines. These data also include a very large number of unidentified jaegers (546). It is probably safe to conclude that at least 75 % of all jaegers passing through the Midwest in any given fall are Parasitics.

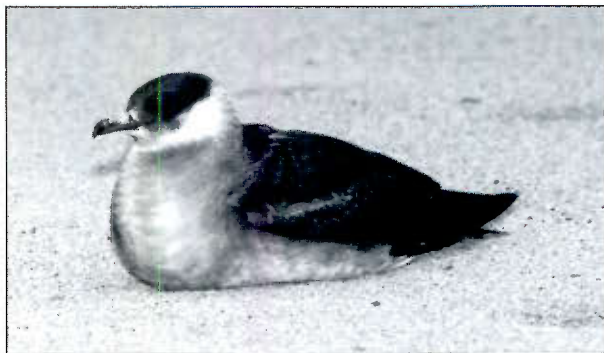
However, the picture may be different away from Lake Michigan, (and the other Great Lakes?), at least in Illinois. A more interesting picture unfolds if the numbers and percentages of Chicago area birds are compared with the records for downstate or "inland" jaegers. (Of the 144 Chicago area jaeger records, all are from the Lake Michigan shoreline except for one bird at Lake Calumet, which is less than five miles from the lakefront, and another at Greene Valley Forest Preserve, approximately 26 to 28 miles from Lake Michigan.) Of the 31 jaegers identified to species downstate, 54.8 percent (17 of 31) are Pomarine, with Parasitic making up only 38.7 percent (12 of 31), and Long-tailed, 6.4 percent (2 of 31). If the 30 unidentified jaegers (total = 61 birds) are added to the mix, only 27.8 percent are Pomarine, 49.1 percent are jaeger species, 19.6 percent are Parasitic, and 3.2 percent are Long-tailed.

In contrast, only 5.7 percent (4 of 69) of the jaegers identified to species along Lake Michigan (since 1974) are Pomarines. Parasitics make up 94.2 percent (65 of 69) of Lake Michigan/Chicago area jaegers identified to species. In addition, there are two accepted records and three unaccepted/questionable records for Long-tailed Jaeger (see Bailey 2001), all from downstate. Although some Long-taileds are likely going undetected on Lake Michigan (especially in Illinois), when comparing downstate with Lake Michigan records for all three jaeger species, a clear dichotomy exists between numbers of Pomarine vs. Parasitic Jaegers. The various data sets noted above clearly show this dichotomy between the Great Lakes in general (and Lake Michigan in particular) versus "inland" records.

Little changes with the addition of historical records. I was able to find 80 specific jaeger records in the published record for the period 1876 to 1973, making Illinois' all-time jaeger record total 286 birds. At least a few other jaegers were mentioned but no specific numbers, dates, or locations were given. The first person to mention jaeger occurrence in Illinois was Nelson (1876). I was able to find 58 specific jaeger records (42 Parasitic, 5 Pomarine, 1 Long-tailed, and 10 jaeger sp.) in Illinois between 1876 and 1967. Only two of these birds were aged; one juvenile Parasitic and one adult Pomarine. I found 22 additional records from 1970 to 1973, including 13 Parasitic (7 adult, 1 juvenile, 5 unknown) and 9 jaeger sp., all unknown. While most jaegers migrating through Illinois will be juveniles, as in other Midwest regions (Sherony and Brock 1997, Sherony 1999), both observers and seasonal field notes editors should report ages of all recorded jaegers when known. This kind of information is important for a still-uncommon and little understood group of birds (see Leukering 2001).

## Out-of-Season Sightings

As stated by Sherony and Brock (1997), experts on the movement of sub-adult jaegers have conflicting opinions. The



*Parasitic Jaeger. Duluth, Minnesota. Photo by Peter Weber.*

subject is barely even broached by other experts such as Olsen and Larsson (1997) and Wiley and Lee (1998, 1999). "Luckily" for Illinois birders, virtually all jaegers that pass through our state and other inland locations in the United States, are either in juvenile or adult plumages, a fact recognized by other authors (Landing 1966, Mather 1981, Sherony and Brock 1997, Sherony 1999). There are only two records of sub-adult jaegers for Illinois — one jaeger sp. (reported as Pomarine) at Alton, 9-12 July 1981 (Kleen 1982) and one Parasitic at Springfield, 22-23 June 1998 (Kleen 1999). Interestingly, these two records are also Illinois' only two "summer" records. Although these dates seem late for spring migration or early for fall migration, Wiley and Lee (1999) mention regular July sightings off the Atlantic coast for Parasitics, and Olsen and Larsson (1997) state (for Parasitics in northern Europe), "the first part of the migration consists mainly of immatures and non-breeding adults, peaking in July and the first part of August." There are also a few other June and July records for other Midwestern States (Mumford and Keller 1984, Robinson 1990, Robbins 1991, Granlund et al. 1994).

Illinois also has only two spring jaeger records, both very early and neither identified to species. The first was observed at Chicago, 8 April 1982 (Kleen 1983), and the other was 20 March 1996 at Carlyle Lake, a bird reported as a Pomarine (see Johnson et al. 1998).

Early spring records are not unprecedented though, as Kentucky has a record for a Pomarine, 4-24 March (Monroe 1994); Minnesota has a Long-tailed record for 12 April 1962 (Janssen 1987); a flock of 5 Parasitics was reported 23 April 1916 in Missouri (Robbins and Easterla 1992); and Ohio has a Parasitic specimen from "late March or early April 1880" (Peterjohn 1989). Sightings of any jaeger inland (away from the coast) in spring, including the Midwest are rare. Most of these are on the Great Lakes (Lake Superior and the Point Pelee area) in late May through early June (Sherony and Brock 1997).

True winter records are even rarer in Illinois. Many records exist of fall jaegers lingering well into November and early December. However, the only records beyond that period are the only December (23rd) record for a Parasitic, in 1973 (Mlodinow 1984); a Pomarine Jaeger near Alton, 23 November — 15 December 1996 (Danley 1997); a Pomarine Jaeger 18 December 1982 at Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge (Robinson 1996); and another Pomarine Jaeger (and