

only two species not encountered on a national count were the Solitary Sandpiper and Northern Saw-whet Owl. Nine species of birds were encountered on all 18 NAS counts (Table 2), while only 8 of these were observed on all 20 CBCs (Table 2). During the course of completing this CBC marathon, I drove a total of 6,322 miles and accumulated 331.25 hours of effort, including travel time and miles, as well as daily compilation time. I averaged 316 miles and 16.5 hours of effort per count.

I am certainly not encouraging or even suggesting that others attempt a CBC marathon. However, I hope those who read this article will be inspired to actively participate as much as possible in a program for which I am so very passionate. In the years to come, I believe that "citizen scientists" will play an ever-increasingly important role in the wildlife research and monitoring which is vital if we are to preserve the Earth's biodiversity. As for undertaking a CBC marathon, I agree, a person has to be crazy...next year, I go for 23!

**Editor's Final Note:** *Kelly tried for 23 CBCs during the 2003/2004 season. We'll let you know how he did in a future issue of Meadowlark or Wings Over The Prairie. Kelly wrote two separate articles on his CBC marathon, one for American Birds, the 103rd Christmas Bird Count, 2002-2003 (Pp. 36 - 43) and one for Meadowlark. We appreciate him taking the time to include more detailed information in this issue about the habitats and the birds he saw along the way, and acknowledge his fine article that appeared in the aforementioned American Birds.*

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## Virginia Rail

*Virginia Rail. Montrose Harbor,  
Chicago, Cook County. 19 April 2003.*

*Photos by Eric Walters.*

*See Field Notes page 149 for additional sightings.*

