

## Passerines

Several Least Flycatchers were once again detected into mid-June, but without any confirmation of breeding. It is unclear if the small population that formally bred each year at Lowden-Miller State Forest is still present. A number of Western Kingbirds were discovered this year, but with confirmation of breeding found at only one typical breeding location in Granite City. Scissor-tailed Flycatchers once again nested in Illinois marking the 9<sup>th</sup> year (in 9 counties) since 2000 that this species has been recorded in the breeding season, and the 7<sup>th</sup> year that nests/nesting evidence have been located during that time, in six southwestern Illinois counties. Loggerhead Shrikes are now becoming harder to find in their last remaining stronghold within Illinois in the southeastern portion of the state. Will they persist through the next decade in Illinois?

Reports of Bell's Vireo seem to be on the increase, especially in far southern Illinois where this species was once rarely reported. Corvid populations in the state also appear to be on the increase, or have at least begun to increase above the low numbers being reported a few years ago as West Nile Virus first swept through the state. Cliff Swallows continue to reclaim and increase their numbers in former breeding areas in the state, although numbers in the eastern third of the state are still much lower than more western areas of the state, especially along the major river systems.

The numbers of breeding Carolina Wrens remain low outside of far southern Illinois after the severe winter weather of the last few years. Bewick's Wren was not reported this year from their usual Siloam Springs breeding location. Marsh Wrens are very rare as a breeding species outside far northeastern Illinois, so those found singing at two locations, one a large, newly restored wetland in west-central Illinois could portend a new breeding population in that area. Wet and somewhat cool temperatures limited the number of young fledging from early Eastern Bluebird

nesting efforts. Northern Parulas seem to be making small inroads into the northcentral and northeastern parts of the state where the species has rarely been reported. Outside of southern Illinois, this species has always had a rather unusual distribution in the state, not often being found in the former "Grand Prairie" regions of the state, even along major river valleys. Breeding populations of Pine Warblers continue to appear in new pine plantations in areas of the state where this species has never before bred. Have these pines matured to the point where they are now "acceptable" to use during the breeding season, or is something else going on? The singing male Tennessee Warbler in late June was a quite unusual migrant report. Likewise, a Dark-eyed Junco caught in a mist net and a singing male, in late June and mid-July, respectfully, were also very unusual, and begs the question which direction were they moving? Although always a pleasant find wherever located, the increasing numbers and locations where Henslow's Sparrows are being found makes one wonder why they remain on the state threatened list when species nearly or as uncommon like Grasshopper Sparrow and other more uncommon species have not been similarly designated. Summer Tanagers, Blue Grosbeaks and Orchard Orioles continue to be found in new and/or increasing numbers of locations in central and northern areas of the state. Several new breeding pairs of Painted Buntings were found this summer near the historic breeding location of Illinois's sole breeding colony. With more search effort given in southwestern Illinois near the Mississippi River, could there be even more breeding pairs of this species than we now realize? The first Illinois nest was located for the naturalized, exotic European Goldfinch. A small, localized population of this species is beginning to grow and develop a year-round population in a few areas of the Chicagoland lakefront and occasionally elsewhere. Some have now been seen every year in at least each of the last ten years at this location. Will this become one of the newest additions to the Illinois state checklist, similar to the Monk Parakeet?

## 2011 Breeding Season Observers/Reporters

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Andrew Aldrich, Amar A. Ayyash, Alan B. Anderson, Charlene K. Anchor, David K. Antieau, Ed Anderson, John Adams, Les Allen, Mary Jo Adams, Aaron T. Boone, Bill Bertrand, David Benson, H. David Bohlen, John Bates, Jackie Bowman (JBn), John Baxter (JBr), Larry A. Bertinetti, Lawrence G. Balch, Mark Bowman, Margie Busic (MBc), Marilyn Bell (MBI), Maury H. Brucker, Madelyn W. Bradley, Peter Y. Bullock, Richard Biss, Richard G. Bjorklund, Samuel B. Burckhardt, Steven D. Bailey, Sigurd N. Bjorklund, Bob Carper, Doug & Maggie Crane (D&MC), Elizabeth J. Chato, Hal Cohen, John Cebula, Karin M. Cassel, Liz Copeland, Matthew M. Cvetas, Paul R. Clyne, Rob Curtis, Rena Cohen (RCn), Ryan Chew (RCw), Scott A. Cohrs, Bonnie Duman, Carl & Pen Daubach (C&PD), Donnie R. Dann, Jeff Donaldson, Michelle Devlin, Mike Descamps (MDs), Nandu Dubey, Patricia A.

Durkin, Ron Dickenson, Tim J. Dever, Daniel Eastman, Eden Essex, Josh Engel, Terry Esker, Thad R. Edmonds, Jeff Fox, Kurt Frieders, Karen A. Forcum, Matt E. Fraker, Mark & Lorraine Fritzmann, Rick Fox, Robert Fisher, Sean Fitzgerald, Aaron Gyllenhaal, Dave Gruver, Ethan Gyllenhaal, Evan Graff (EGf), Eric Gyllenhaal (EGI), Eric J. Ginsburg, Glenn Gabanski, Jerry Goldner, Nathan Goldberg, W.Sullivan Gibson, Ann B. Haverstock, C. Leroy Harrison, Dustin Holschuh, Don Hartzler (DHR), Frank R. Holmes, Gary Hantsbarger, Jed B. Hertz, Kanae Hirabayashi, Larry L. Hood, Robert D. Hughes, R. Given Harper, Ted Hartzler, Thomas Haase (THE), Brian Kraskiewicz, Bill Koch (BKh), Dan M. Kassebaum, Peter Kasper, Rob Kanter, Vernon M. Kleen, Tom Kelly, Tim L. Kuesel, Bob Lootens, Gregory S. Lambeth, Judith Joy, John Longhenry, Joe Lewis (JLs), John P. Leonard, Joseph W. Lill, Karen Land, Karen M. Lund,