

The Arctic Tern at Great Lakes represents the sixth accepted record of this species for Illinois. The first accepted record was found by H. David Bohlen and confirmed with photos 28 June 1992 at Lake Springfield, Sangamon County. (See *Meadowlark* 2:12). The second was recorded 27 May 1993 at Brandon Road Lock and Dam in Will County. (See *Meadowlark* 2:140). The third record was recorded during the Spring Bird Count at Braidwood Lake in Will County 6 May 1996. (See

Meadowlark 4: 140). The fourth and fifth records were found on Waukegan Beach in Lake County (See *Meadowlark* 6:138. In that issue H. David Bohlen predicted the Arctic Tern might prove to be a regular Waukegan Beach visitor if observers check the area in late May or early June when winds are from the northeast).

– Daniel Williams
6055 Safford Road
Rockford, IL 61101
twotringas@earthlink.net

Immature Male Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) in Lake County

My husband, Bill, and I have many bird feeders and running water in our Wadsworth yard in Lake County, and after several days of heavy rain we were glad to see the sun the morning of 21 April 2000.

We have two goldfinch feeders near our picture window in the living room. As I watched the goldfinches feeding, I noticed a new bird eating with them. It was the same size as the goldfinches, but had quite a different color. Its head, back, tail, and wings were green, and I detected a little brown in the wings and tail. The pale buff breast had a hint of yellow. The bird also had a white eye ring.

After checking several books, reading, and looking at the bird again and again, I decided it was a female Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*). I called Richard Biss of the Chicago Rare Bird Alert. Within a short time, he, his wife, Mary and their two daughters, Grace and Ellen, were at my home. They spent a good share of the afternoon taking pictures and observing the bird. Richard agreed it was a Painted Bunting, but he said it was probably an immature male, not a female.

Richard called other birders, and by late afternoon and early evening, I had a parade of people coming to see the bunting, as well as more on the next day and the day after that. At least 24 people on 22 April and 9 on 23 April came to view the bunting. They took notes and more pictures, and agreed it was an immature male Painted Bunting.

Observers watched as the bird ate thistle seed for 15 to 20 minutes at a time, then flew to an evergreen tree in the yard to rest and preen. However, the bird became more wary of people and we had to be careful not to disturb it. The last time it was seen was Sunday morning, 23 April 2000.

I'm an avid birder, but still a beginner, having only started after I took early retirement from nursing six years ago. What a surprise to discover a lifer in my backyard so early in my birding career!

This bird represents the fourth state record for Painted



Immature male Painted Bunting at feeder. 21 April 2000. Lake County. Photo by Richard Biss.

Bunting. The third record, an adult male, visited Ewing Park in McLean County 10 May 1999, and remained until at least 22 May. At least 300 people came to see it (*Meadowlark* 8:128-129). Ann Minckler found the state's first Painted Bunting, a male in breeding plumage, in Jackson County. It remained there from 20-22 May (*Meadowlark* 2:127-128). An immature male Painted Bunting was killed by flying into a window at McCormick Place in Chicago 10 October 1996 (*Meadowlark* 6:66), making it the first specimen record for Illinois.

– Donna Mellen
37947 N. Dilleys Rd.
Wadsworth, IL 60083

Editor's Note: Illinois' fifth record of Painted Bunting was discovered 29 July 2000 near East St. Louis. But more exciting was the fact that this bird was also confirmed breeding in the state. The next issue of *Meadowlark*, Vol. 10 No. 1, will feature photos and a story by Dan Kassebaum about the first confirmed nesting of the Painted Bunting in Illinois.