

rounded head with relatively large dark eyes (giving it an Upland Sandpiper-like appearance); diffuse buffy eye ring; dark streaked crown; white outer tail feathers; yellow-orange lower mandible contrasting with the darker upper mandible; bright orange-pink tarsi and toes; and a small buffy-rust patch in the auricular region. Unlike American Pipits, this bird did not wag its tail while it walked.

Only one other spring record of Sprague's Pipit exists for southern Illinois. Graber (1957, *Audubon Bulletin* 102:5-7) found six or seven in an alfalfa field near Omaha, Gallatin County on 16 March 1957. Sprague's Pipits may migrate through Illinois regularly, but the vast open fields that they prefer are often neglected by birders.

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Western Tanager in Du Page County

At 4 p.m. 16 April 1992 our 3-year-old grandson, Danny Volgenau, called our attention to a bird outside our patio window. Looking at our feeder, I was

stunned to see a bird which was so brilliant for such a gray day. Our daughter, Krista, from Portland, Oregon immediately recognized the bird as a male Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*).

The tanager was feeding on oiled sunflower seeds at our feeder. It occasionally flew to the branches of the hawthorn tree from which the feeder was suspended. The bird lingered in our yard for two hours and was cautiously observed and photographed using a 35mm Nikon camera.

The following details were noted: tanager-sized, about seven inches long; bright yellow body; black wings with light stripes; black tail; black back; and red-orange face and crown. I later shared the Western Tanager photographs with Dr. Floyd Swink of the Morton Arboretum who confirmed the identification.

- Suzanne A. Reininga, 317 N. Garfield St., Hinsdale, IL 60521.

Editor's note: Documentation of this sighting, including a photograph are on file with IORC. This sighting is just one of three Western Tanagers seen in the state during spring 1992, all within three days of each other in April. They represent the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth records for the state. See the Field Notes section of this journal for the other records.

AVIAN ANNALS

by Eric Walters

70 years ago:

The state's first reported Lewis' Woodpecker was seen three consecutive days in late May in a backyard garden where it often perched on top of a large birdhouse in the Rogers Park area of Chicago (*Auk* 41:156-7).

55 years ago:

A Pine Woods Sparrow (Bachman's Sparrow) was observed in Chicago's Lincoln Park for three consecutive days (*Bird Lore* 40:224).

45 years ago:

Two pairs of Upland Sandpipers were frequently noted "on the prairie" within a slated subdivision near the Skokie/Evanston border where they nested that summer (*Audubon Bulletin* 69:1).

40 years ago:

For the second consecutive spring, specimens of the Burrowing Owl were collected in Chicago (*Audubon Field Notes* 7:276).

One observer reported 150 Smith's Longspurs near

Champaign which apparently was the first local record there since 1939 (*Audubon Field Notes* 7:276).

A Green-tailed Towhee seen in Murphysboro was the rarest find during that spring (*Audubon Field Notes* 7:276).

35 years ago:

A thunderstorm accompanied by severe winds downed a Yellow Rail near a men's dormitory at the University of Illinois where it was captured, kept alive in a cage for two weeks, and then released (*Audubon Bulletin* 107:8).

30 years ago:

An experienced observer described the Caspian Tern as a "prized find for Midwesterners being seldom seen away from the Mississippi River or Lake Michigan" (*Audubon Bulletin* 125:21).

10 years ago:

Illinois' first confirmed sighting of Cassin's Sparrow was verified after it was caught in a mist net at Chicago's Olive Park (*Illinois Audubon Bulletin* 206:22).