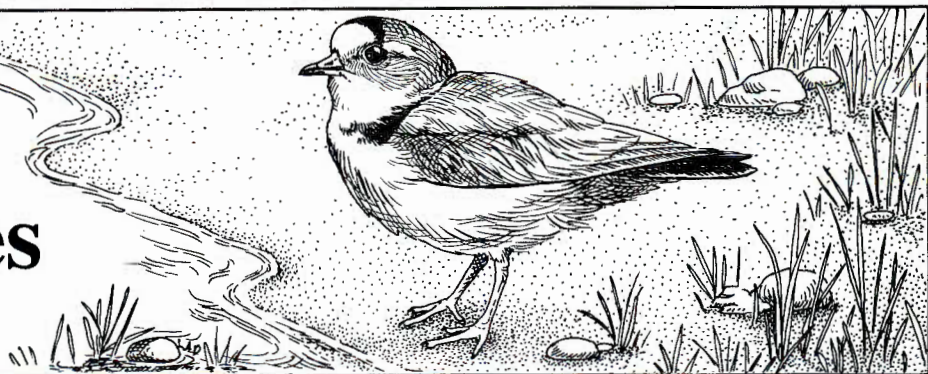


Field Notes



1992 SPRING MIGRATION

by Eric Walters

Many observers described the 1992 spring migration as less than exciting, yet others reported some noteworthy ornithological sightings making for a unique spring season.

Spring 1992 followed the warmest recorded Illinois winter. Lakes opened from January on, and fronts that would be considered warm for that time of year seemed to regularly come through the state before March. Nearly all the dabbling and diving ducks along with the usual late February migrants were located or noted in increased numbers in January. Instead of including all the January early arrivals, an attempt was made in the data below that best determined when the first strong northward "push" occurred for the various species.

Passerine species that appeared in the state during 29 February to 8 March may have wintered just south of Illinois. Many of these arrival dates were a month or more early.

On 9 March a massive coldfront and snowstorm hit much of Illinois, which ended the unusually early spring migration. However more passerines were observed during the next two weeks. Observers discovered many of these birds in protected woodland areas or at feeders. From 9 March to the end of spring, weather and precipitation made for less than desirable conditions for migration. Observers reported low numbers of terns, rails, vireos, warblers, and sparrows. However, shorebirds, which were not widely reported for the last few springs, were well represented this spring. Vagrants, numerous uncommon species, very early and late sightings along with high concentrations of a few of the regular species made this one of the better shorebird springs in recent years.

Many passerine vagrants appeared from 16 to 19 April. The three straight days of strong southwest winds over 25 miles per hour may have played a major role in driving these rarities and other early arrivals to Illinois. Also, a number of rarities usually associated with water areas occurred during the period from 22 April to 2 May.

Central Illinois observers noted late May and early June migration of passerines and flycatchers. Although observers reported a few straggling migrants into mid-June, migration ended by 25 May.

Statewide March temperatures averaged 3.4 degrees above normal, continuing a trend of recent springs. April temperatures averaged .1 below normal. May averaged 1.5 below the norm. Except for a few short and strong warm bursts in April, this spring's temperatures were quite cold from mid-March onward. Precipitation levels for all three months were below normal by -.81, -1.14 and -2.79 inches respectively.

A special thanks is extended to all contributors to this report. Those records that were most significant have been included in this report and the birders responsible for the sighting are listed below. The first initials of their names were used except as indicated below by three initials: Bruce Aird, Cindy Alberico, Ivars Ambats, Alan Anderson, Douglas Anderson, Louise Augustine, Steve Bailey, Laurence Binford, Richard Biss, Bill Bixby (BBx), David Bohlen, John Brandt, David Brenner (DBr), Arlene Brei, Ray Boehmer (RBo), Lynne Carpenter, Karin Cassel, Robert Cecile, Robert Chapel, Elizabeth Chato, Roger Coons (RCo), Robert Danley, Myrna Deaton, Rich DeCoster, Judy DeNeal, Sheryl DeVore, Danny Diaz, Peter Dring, Jeff Donaldson (JDo), Didge Donovan (DDo), Rodney East (REa), Ralph Eiseman, Bob Erickson, Carol Fialkowski, Darlene Fiske, Todd Fink, Sue Friscia, Rob Geoff (RGe), Michelle Georgi (MGe), Bill Glass, Joel Greenberg, Jim Hampson, Kay Hanson (KHs), Ralph Herbst (RHe), Kanae Hirabayashi, Michael Hogg, Jeff Hoover (JHo), Robert Hughes, Walter Jedd (WJe), Doris Johanson (DJh), David Johnson, Lee Johnson (LJo), Robert Johnson (RJo), Denis Kania, Peter Kasper, Dan Kassenbaum (DKa), Vernon Kleen, Al Knox (AKn), Tom Kreiling (TKr), James Landing, Eric Lattner, Steven Lee, Bob Lindsay (BLi), David Mandel, Walter Marcisz, Keith McMullen, Judy Mellin (JMe), Joe Milosevich, Jim Neal, Greg Niece, Joe Nowak (JNo), John O'Brien, Richard Palmer, Christine Philip, Jack Pomatto, Judy Pollock (JPo), John Purcell (JPu), Suzanne Reininga (SRs), Doug Robinson, Karen Rodemaker (KRo), Harriet Rylaarsdam, Jeffrey Sanders (JSa), Richard Sandburg (RSa), Darrell Schamaugh (DS), Wes Serafin, Sharon & Tom Schmitz (SSc), Tom Schulenberg, Val Schwarz, Andy Sigler (ASi), Jim Smith, Muriel Smith, Jim Solum (JSO), James Steffen (JSt),

FIELD NOTES HEADING: Piping Plover drawing by Leslie A. DeCoursey.