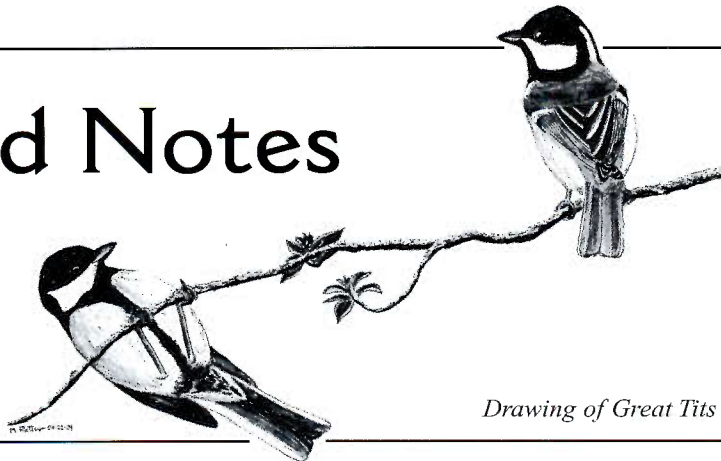


Field Notes



Drawing of Great Tits by Michael L. P. Retter:

2003 Breeding Season Report

by Vernon M. Kleen, Compiler

The 2003 Breeding Season was similar to that of other recent years, with, perhaps, a bit more rain (and associated flooding) that caused problems for some nesting birds. Bob Montgomery noted that for Canada Geese, "...low water during the nest-site selection and incubation periods placed many nests below normal water level. These nests were then flooded out following rains, which raised water levels." Dick Bjorklund said "...locally heavy rains 8-10 July, and additional heavy rains over Illinois River tributaries east of Peoria, kept the (Illinois) River at or slightly above flood stage at Havana (14 ft) through the end of July. Local breeders and early migrant waders and shorebirds found the south pool of Lake Chautauqua, undergoing draw down and protected by levees, a convenient refuge or stopover." Doug Stotz reported that "...in terms of the general pattern of the summer, I had the sense that the numbers of birds in the Chicago area woods were low...and, at Calumet, the water levels were out-of-whack all spring and summer giving me a sense that it really hurt the rare nesters there." Stotz also indicated that at Lowden-Miller State Forest the number of Black-throated Green Warblers was lower than in their heyday, while numbers of Kentucky, Hooded, and Yellow-throated Warblers seemed to be higher than normal.

Based on the information received for the 2003 nesting season, it turned out to be a rather good season. Some of the more interesting nesting records include Gadwalls at Lake Calumet, Northern Shovelers at Arcola, Ospreys at two Cook County locations and the potential at several other locations, five Swainson's Hawk nests in the Kane/McHenry County area (however, apparently only one was successful), a King Rail nest in McHenry County, a family of Soras at Arcola Marsh, Common Terns at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center, Forster's Terns (taking advantage of a specially created dredge spoil site) at Chain O'Lakes State Park, Monk Parakeets near Carlyle Lake, Western Kingbirds in Madison County, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers in Jackson County, Brown Creepers at Lowden-Miller State Forest, a relatively large incursion of Prairie Warblers into Vermilion and Champaign Counties, Golden-crowned Kinglets at Morton Arboretum, Clay-colored

Sparrows in Cook and Du Page counties, Lark Sparrow in Du Page County, Painted Buntings in Madison County and Brewer's Blackbirds in McHenry County.

The best non-breeding June records were **Fulvous Whistling-Duck** at Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, **ROSEATE SPOONBILL** at Vandalia and later, Carlyle Lake, Greater Prairie-Chicken in Fayette County, a Willet in Henry County, Wilson's Snipe in Ogle County, Bonaparte's Gulls in Lake County, Olive-sided Flycatcher in Calhoun County, a Bobolink at Crab Orchard NWR and several individual ducks, shorebirds, flycatchers and warblers. The most notable July vagrants were Red-necked Grebe at Arcola, Tricolored Heron at Lake Calumet, Mississippi Kite at Rockford, adult male Rufous Hummingbird at Springfield and White-winged Dove(s) in Jefferson County.

Some of the most interesting Non-breeding Summer Occurrences (NBSO) were fairly large number of American White Pelicans (several locations), the Whooping Crane (#14 from Wisconsin's 2002 re-introduction flock) all summer in the Bureau/Putnam County area, an adult Wilson's Phalarope at Hennepin Lake, Laughing Gulls at four locations and Caspian Terns at 14 locations.

As has become traditional, the quantity and quality of notes submitted for the annual breeding season report continues to be phenomenal. Had more of the traditionally regular contributors made their notes available, this report would have been even more phenomenal. As always, many thanks to all of you who took the time to prepare and submit notes for inclusion in this report. I urge you to continue doing so every year. I also wish to thank and congratulate the dozens of you who completed your assigned Breeding Bird Survey routes again this year; please be sure to note your efforts in the soon-to-be-published *The Illinois Breeding Bird Atlas*. Finally, the following persons are responsible for the data in this compilation and are individually acknowledged after the records they provided. As usual, considerable effort was made to be sure all printed information is correct and properly acknowledged and