

Letter from the Editor

A recent report from the American Bird Conservancy and the National Wildlife Federation includes more than 40 species that may stop breeding in Illinois if future global warming predictions are accurate. These species include Yellow-headed Blackbird, Acadian Flycatcher, and Hooded Warbler.

While scientists debate the likelihood of global warming and its impacts on the environment and humans, data will be needed to determine whether or not bird life is changing in the prairie state. And who will be gathering that data? Illinois birders!

For the past 10 years, *Meadowlark* has featured seasonal reports of birds observed in Illinois during fall, winter, spring and summer. Before that, distributional bird data were published in *Illinois Birds & Birding*, Vernon Kleen's *Seasonal Reports*, and H. David Bohlen's *The birds of Illinois* (1989).

This means we have hard data over several decades that can begin to show patterns of bird distribution in Illinois — and these patterns would not be available for research if it weren't for birders like you.

If you are concerned about global warming, its effect on bird life, or even just what birds you may or may not be able to see in Illinois in the future, you owe it to yourself and others to report your field notes.

IOS has made it simple to send in your data. We've got a list of the field notes compilers at the back of every issue, and now all four of our compilers have e-mail so you can send data to them on line. If you've got the time to send a note to IBET, Illinois' birding list serve, then certainly you have the time to send the data on to the compilers. These four dedicated birders — Bob Chapel, Vern Kleen, Paul Clyne and Kelly McKay — work many long hard hours to compile your data and to examine emerging patterns. They'd appreciate hearing from you, and they'd also appreciate your sending them the notes in AOU checklist order.

Please contribute your observations of bird life in Illinois. It will make you feel good, and it will help scientists determine what is happening to bird life here and why. To make it easy for you, here's the e-mail of our compilers. More details are on the back cover of this journal.

Fall/Bob Chapel: r-chapel@uiuc.edu
Winter/Kelly McKay: KellyJMckay@aol.com
Spring/Paul Clyne: prelyne@hotmail.com
Breeding Season/Vern Kleen: kleen@quixnet.net

Have a great day in the field.

— Sheryl De Vore

MEADOWLARK

A Journal of Illinois Birds

Volume 11, Number 2-2002

Tenth Anniversary Year

ISSN 1065-2043

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About our cover

Pete Olson created the nesting White-throated Sparrow (see page 2 for an article on the state's first confirmed breeding record of this species). Pete is the Preparator at the Northern Illinois University Art Museum. He's been showcased in more than 100 art exhibits in the past decade. For the second consecutive year, his work has been accepted for the Birds in Art show at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wausau, WI. For more on Pete's work, see <http://www.umarain.com/pete.htm>

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