

landed here in spring 1999. The only place for mockingbird I know of in the county is just north of here on the Mackinaw River. To get to Lake Bloomington, take the Lake Evergreen exit on I-39 and go east four miles.

**8.** On the McLean-Woodford County line, **Lake Evergreen** and associative COMLARA Park may be in contention with Moraine View and Ewing for the title of McLean County's premiere birding hotspot. The lake itself attracts a high number of loons for its size. Up to 30 loons were on the small lake on one day in March 1999. Evergreen is also known for American White Pelicans and cormorants. The bridge on the south end of the lake has breeding Cliff Swallows and phoebes. Cooper's Hawk, and Prothonotary and Kentucky Warblers may breed here as well. On the east side is the Old Nature Trail, which is good for landbirds during migration. Interesting species found at Lake Evergreen include Black Tern, Trumpeter Swan, Golden Eagle, Willet, Hudsonian Godwit, Sanderling, Wilson's Phalarope, Franklin's Gull, Long-eared Owl, and Clay-colored Sparrow. The exceptional depth of the lake (57 feet) has been attributed to helping accommodate McLean County's most famous visitor, a first-year Yellow-billed Loon, from 19-29 December, 1998. The loon was counted on the Christmas Bird Count that year. Lake Evergreen is two miles west of the Lake Evergreen exit on I-39.

**9.** Along the roadsides between Minok (pronounced mih-NUNK) and northern McLean County along IL-251, Western Meadowlarks far outnumber Easterns. Look for Smith's Longspurs in March and April in corn stubble fields with foxtail grass or in short grass and alfalfa. Look for Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings on the roadside, especially when snow-covered fields force the birds up to the roads. The Vesper Sparrow is one of McLean County's commonest breeding birds. The species has adapted to nest in corn and bean fields. Watch and listen for them on wires and on the road when you're in the "agricultural desert." Ring-necked Pheasants are common in all open habitats; occasionally you'll find a bobwhite as well.

#### Author's Note:

*You may contact me at (309) 723-6644, Dale Birkenholz at (309) 452-8086, or Todd Bugg at (309) 828-2052 for recent bird sightings in the area. Also, please contact Dale, Todd, or me as soon as possible if you see any rare or unusual birds in the county. For more on birding McLean County, including a printable checklist of species occurrence, recent sightings, and more birding locations, go to [www.iwu.edu/~mretter](http://www.iwu.edu/~mretter) and click on the McLean County Birds button.*

— Michael Retter  
Illinois Wesleyan University  
Bloomington, IL 61701

