

Record late fall date in 2002 for Northern Parula

by Geoffrey Williamson

On 16 November 2002 Christine Williamson and I birded Lincoln Park in Chicago (Cook County). We made sure to visit the Jarvis Migratory Bird Sanctuary (formerly known as the Lincoln Park Bird Sanctuary) because we had heard that a White-breasted Nuthatch and a Red-bellied Woodpecker were present there. Both species are quite unusual for Lincoln Park.

While at the south end of the sanctuary, Christine called to me that she had spotted a late warbler foraging near the ground in some brushy growth. From 15 feet away we looked through 10-power binoculars at a small warbler with blue upperparts except for a green back, and with a relatively short tail. The two white wingbars, the white crescents above and below the eyes, the yellow throat and breast, and the broad and suffuse red and black partial band centered on the upper breast told us we were viewing a Northern Parula (*Parula americana*). The strength of the coloration overall and the size and extent of the breast band led us to believe this bird was an adult male.

A review of published sightings showed this bird to be the latest record for northern Illinois and the latest fall record, excluding winter



Northern Parula, Montrose, Cook County. 23 May 2004. Photo by Jerry Kumery.

sightings, for all of Illinois. Figure 1 (page 52) shows the distribution of sightings of Northern Parula in Illinois during October and November from 1980 to the present. Sources consulted to provide data for Fig. 1 include fall migration and winter reports in both *Meadowlark* Volumes 1 to 10 and *Illinois Birds and Birding* Volumes 1 to 7, fall and winter Seasonal Reports from Fall 1980 to Winter 1983/1984 of the Avian Ecology, Natural Heritage Section of Illinois Department of Conservation (Kleen 1980 to 1984), Robinson (1996), Mlodinow (1984) and Bohlen (1989). Sightings from northern Illinois are also marked in Fig. 1. The previous November

records were both from Springfield (Sangamon County): a 7 November 1985 sighting by H. David Bohlen (Bohlen 1989, Kleen 1986) and a 4 November 1980 bird banded by Vernon Kleen (Kleen 1980). The previous latest date for northern Illinois was 22 October 1995 for a bird found in Chicago (Cook County) by Al Stokie (Chapel 1996).

There are three winter records of Northern Parula in Illinois. The most recent was a freshly dead adult found by Todd Fink on 20 December 1994 at Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge (Robinson 1996). The specimen is housed at the Illinois State Museum. The second record was 1 January 1993 on the Middlefork Valley CBC (Palmer 1983). This bird was photographed by Dick Palmer and Myrna Deaton. The first record was from Belleville (St. Clair County) from mid-December to early February of the 1982/1983 winter, with this Northern Parula surviving on peanut butter at a feeding station (Bohlen 1989).

Interestingly, the former two records were birds roosting with Yellow-rumped Warblers in pine plantations (pers. comm. S. Bailey).

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