

# Brant found in DeKalb County in fall

by Eric Walters

While visiting the pond at Afton Forest Preserve at sunrise in north central De Kalb County 26 October 2004, I noticed a few Cackling Geese mixed into a huddled goose flock. Since Cackling Goose was recently declared to be a new species, I chose to try and get some photos of them. I didn't have to wait long for flight shots as the vast majority of geese took off and flew into nearby cornfields. I completely focused on taking geese flight shots so I wasn't aware of the smaller goose that passed through my camera view.

However, upon later review of my photos, I noticed a goose that was smaller, had black extending down its breast, no white on face with a small bill, faster wingbeat (more blurry wings) and had exten-

sive white upper and undertail coverts. The photo clearly showed a Brant of the eastern subspecies (*Branta bernicla hronta*). There

were some white markings on the Brant's neck, strongly suggesting this was an adult (although a few immatures can have faint white markings).

Based on the published records in *Meadowlark* and *Illinois Birds & Birding*, this is only the sixth fall season Brant record in the last 21 years.

Along with this Brant, a Vermilion Flycatcher and Say's Phoebe were also found 24-26 October 2004, three vagrants found in three days there. (See article in this issue by Mary Kay Rubey for more on the flycatcher and phoebe).

— Eric Walters  
3104 Bethel Boulevard  
Zion, Illinois 60099  
ericwalters7@comcast.net



Brant with flock of Cackling Geese. Afton Forest Preserve, DeKalb County. 26 October 2004. Note the dark bib that extends farther down the chest as well as the white throat line. Photos by Eric Walters.