



Immature Little Blue Herons. Meacham Grove, Cook County. 15 August 2005. Photo by Jerry Kumery.

of Scarlet Tanager, and 22 November for Blue Grosbeak and Lincoln's Sparrow.

Irruptive Species

After a good showing in 2004, numbers and diversity of winter finches were low with small numbers of Red Crossbills, moderate counts of Purple Finches and very little else. Despite being on off-year for Red-breasted Nuthatch, they were widely reported in small numbers in September and October. By the end of the period numbers had declined, and they seemed to be largely limited to conifer stands where they probably wintered. 5 Northern Shrikes was a poor season for this species compared to recent years. An excellent season for Rough-legged Hawk at Illinois Beach SP did not translate into many reports elsewhere in the state. Finally, it was another poor year for Snowy Owl, with only one fall report.

Data gaps

Every year there are some species for which I receive few if any reports; these can range from abundant species of blackbirds and introduced species to uncommon residents that are difficult to detect when they are at their quietest in the fall, like owls and Northern Bobwhite. Others may be telling us something about conditions in the year for certain groups of birds. Perhaps the lack of Western Grebes, and only single reports of Red-necked and Eared Grebes, and poor numbers of Common Loons means something about conditions for those fish-eating birds. However, some of the species with few or no reports may represent declines. Birds for this year that stand out in that regard are Long-tailed Duck, Whip-poor-will, and Loggerhead Shrikes.

Continued poor irruptions for Evening Grosbeak document a notable decline in its abundance in Illinois. One wonders if continuing poor redpoll counts is also indicating a long-term decline in Illinois of that irruptive species.

An area where birders in Illinois could improve is in documenting the departure of breeding populations. A number of species at or near their northern range limits leave Illinois almost completely unnoticed. Warblers stand

out in this regard. Birders focus on them during fall migration, but there are few migrants and of Prairie, Cerulean, Prothonotary, Worm-eating and Kentucky among others, and almost no word on when the breeding birds leave. Even the abundant Yellow Warbler's departure is largely a silent affair, as they sneak off under the cover of a small number of migrant individuals visiting from farther north.

Our sincere thanks to the following observers, who supplied all the data included in this summary. These observers are credited by their initials following each record; disambiguating citation forms are indicated where needed. As in previous reports, the sequencing of observers below is based on alphabetization of last and first initials or citation forms rather than on alphabetization of last names: Alan B. Anderson, Bill Atwood, Charlene Anchor, Jill S. Anderson, Arlene E. Brei, Denis M. Bohm, Frank K. Bennett, H. David Bohlen, Joan C. Bruchman, Lawrence G. Balch, Richard Biss, Richard G. Bjorklund, Steven D. Bailey, Sigurd N. Bjorklund, Vic Berardi, Robert Bradley (RBy), Christopher L. Cudworth, Du Page Birding Club (DBC), Elizabeth J. Chato, Jeff D. Chapman, Karin M. Cassel, Paul A. Cruikshank, Paul R. Clyne, Rena Cohen, Scott A. Cohrs, Alfred G. Dierkes, Donald R. Dann, Glyn Dawson, John Duran, Jon J. Duerr, Myrna F. Deaton, Patricia A. Durkin, Sylvia A. Dawson, Joshua I. Engel, Joe W. Eades, Robert Erickson, Thad Edmonds, W. Dow Edgerton, Anthony Friend, Karen D. Fisher, Robert E. Fisher, Sue Friscia, Steven M. Freed, Michal Furmanek (MFk), Matt Fraker (MFr), Brian A. Guarente, Caleb E. Gordon, Evan S. Graff, Urs W. Geiser, Cathie Hutcheson, C. Leroy Harrison, Frank R. Holmes, Jed B. Hertz, Kanae Hirabayashi, L. Barrie Hunt, Larry L. Hood, Roger Hotham, Robert D. Hughes, Steven J. Huggins, David B. Johnson, Rhetta L. Jack, Arlene Koziol, Bob Kleiger, Dan M. Kassebaum, Vernon M. Kleen, Gregory S. Lambeth, Joseph W. Lill, Kent Lannert, Karen M. Lund, Charlene Malone, Carolyn A. Marsh, Cindy K. McKee, Jim Malone, John D. McKee, Keith A. McMullen, Luis G. Muñoz, Mike Miller, Michael A. Madson, Pete Moxon, Robert A. & Anita L. Morgan, Richard D. Messenger, Travis A. Mahan, Walter J. Marcisz, John H. Purcell, Sebastian T. Patti, Bill Rudden, Jeff Reiter, Kevin B. Richmond, Lisa Rest, Rhonda Monroe Rothrock, William C. Rowe, Anne Straight, Alan F. Stokie, Andrew P. Sigler, Douglas F. Stotz, Darrell J. Shambaugh, Eric E. Secker, Francie Muraski Stotz, G. Marc Simmel, Illinois Ornithological Society, James O. Smith, Jim S. Solum, Mike & Mark Seiffert, Paul W. Sweet, Randy Smith, Robert E. Shelby, Randy L. Shonkwiler, Wesley S. Serafin, Jeff Smith (JSh), Jacob Spendelow (JSp), Barb Thayer, Craig A. Taylor, Craig B. Thayer, David L. Thomas, Ed Teune, Christopher L. Wood, Deb Wesselmann, Eric W. Walters, Geoffrey A. Williamson, Jason D. Weckstein, Kenneth R. Wysocki, and Tony Ward.