

crew recorded a high number of Red-headed Woodpeckers along the Cache River bottoms, which contributed to a state record of 738 Red-headed Woodpeckers on a CBC. Other woodpeckers such as the Hairy Woodpecker and Northern Flicker were recorded in record numbers, 109 and 291, respectively. Todd Fink turned up an Orange-crowned Warbler at Wildcat Cemetery in a pine grove. He also produced out of his pocket a plastic bag with a fresh specimen of a Northern Parula (Illinois State Museum specimen 660401), a neotropical migrant that should have long been gone, but instead failed to migrate and died.

Steve Olsen recorded good numbers of Le Conte's Sparrows (23). A state record number of Northern Harriers and Short-eared Owls were seen, 73 and 19, respectively. Cypress Creek recorded 98 species and nine new all-time state high counts. A PBS news crew even visited and videotaped the party. This was the second official year of this count and it's already a member of the 98 club. It's one to watch in the future.

Union County.

22 December. My assignment was a 7-mile walk with Robert Chapel from the top of Hamburg Hill in Shawnee National Forest down to Lyerle Lake. At twilight after the drive up from the Wicker Club lodge, Chapel and I heard a Barred Owl call from the distant hills. We left my car at Lyerle Lake and proceeded to the top of Hamburg Hill near the summer camp where Scott Robinson does his neotropical migrant research. By the time we reached the top of the hill there was plenty of sunlight to begin our descent and count. The quiet stillness of the winter woods was punctuated by a Pileated Woodpecker and a pair of nuthatches. Many of the beech trees retained their light brownish leaves and as we began our walk down Hamburg Hill, a trickle of water drew in our first kinglets, Carolina Chickadees, and Winter and Carolina Wrens. One Purple Finch stopped briefly on a sycamore and by the time we reached

the bottoms below, birds were popping up all over. Numerous Hairy, Downy, Red-bellied, and Pileated Woodpeckers called at every listening stop we made. Tufted Titmice, Brown Creepers, and kinglets were bountiful. As we walked along the water's edge at the foothills junction with the swamp we found Wood Duck and many Gadwall. Cries of Red-shouldered Hawks also pierced the swampland. Occasionally I found a cane break and said to Chapel, "Maybe this could hold Swainson's Warbler in the summer."

We left the swamp at about 11 a.m. in time for the annual "pit bull walk by", so named because to get to the next spot we had to walk by 15 chained and growling pit bulls. We quickly left those howling confines to the sounds of more Carolina Wrens, White-throated Sparrows, and cardinals. A mockingbird flew up along a fence row and by the time we reached Lyerle Lake many House Finches were tallied.

At the top of the dike, Bohlen spotted an immature male Surf Scoter, a first for the Union County count. Most all the count participants saw this rarity. The afternoon was spent out on the levee roads which offered commanding views of the Mississippi River valley and its birds. We counted abundant sparrows in the fallow bottomlands adjacent to the river. Longspurs and Horned Larks were often out in the stark bottomlands. As evening approached we tallied a Loggerhead Shrike on a weed stalk and several Eastern Bluebirds flying up to a forest edge. Soon we were at Trail of Tears refuge headquarters where hot chicken soup was waiting and once again the count-down festivities began.

That evening's best bird had to be Bohlen's sighting of an immature Chipping Sparrow. Bohlen also recorded an immature Golden Eagle earlier in the day flying over the refuge, a bird I'd hoped to see in southern Illinois while on the counts but missed. The Mississippi River fallow bottomlands fields (left over from the great flood of 1993) hosted new state

record high counts of Song and Swamp Sparrows, 894 and 654, respectively. Union County also recorded a new state high for Eastern Bluebirds, 199 individuals.

The drive back to Decatur was tough after three straight days of bird counting. Myrna Deaton drove back to her home in Decatur and I made it back to Clinton and crashed only to be awakened at midnight since I had a piece of Deaton's luggage in my trunk. I also recovered my boom box which I had left at the motel on the 17th.

The next day was the Chautauqua Count. I told Bohlen I would try to meet him at the refuge headquarters at 6 a.m., if I could get up!

Chautauqua NWR.

23 December 1994. At 5 a.m. I managed to drive to the east side of Lake Chautauqua, just south of Goofey Ridge where I met Sig Bjorklund, Dennis Oehmke, and Bohlen at a turn-a-round north of the refuge headquarters.

This was some count! As soon as daylight began, clouds of Mallards (200,000) blackened the sky at the south end of the refuge. Many pintail and Gadwall were about, as well as an occasional Green-winged Teal. Bald Eagles coursed the shoreline and an occasional Northern Harrier flew by. A rather large group of swans was seen along the southern shore but the birds were too far away for positive identification.

At the southern end of the refuge, we saw many Common Mergansers as well as a dozen or more Bald Eagles. The swans had moved back north and were again too distant for identification. We then did some car birding through Havana getting some rather close views of Eurasian Tree Sparrows in shrubby backyards along with the regular House Sparrows. I enjoyed looking at these "ETS's" (as Bjorklund and Bohlen called them) at the northern limit of their range.

Around noon we decided to split up and drive to some open field country along the Mason Tazewell