

nearby Midwestern states mention food, and most of it is avian prey. One immature was seen attacking a Mourning Dove 10 November 1964 at Bristol, Tennessee, and was subsequently collected (Robinson 1990). A shrike was seen capturing a junco near Gary, Indiana on 24 January 1976 (Brock 1986). Mumford & Keller (1984), for Indiana, also include juncos, House Sparrows, and Carolina Wren as Northern Shrike prey species, and mentions shrikes chasing bluebirds and a Mourning Dove.

Illinois Birders' Experiences

Jonathan Simms mentions the shrike he banded on 27 November 1999 was less than 1 foot away from a House Sparrow in the net, and may have either chased the bird into the net or gone after it when it was caught. Illinois birders mentioned a few other accounts of prey taken during the winter 1999/2000 invasion. Bob Fisher of Downers Grove said the shrike that visited his backyard feeding station chased House Sparrows. Ed Franks of Macomb in McDonough County, watched a shrike enter his yard, most likely pursuing birds. Paul and Barb Johnson of Chesterfield,

Missouri, watched a Northern Shrike chase a small bird into some bushes at Horseshoe Lake in Madison County. An immature was seen "visiting" bird feeders at Fermi-Lab on 5 January 2000.

Other birders reported Northern Shrikes taking prey other than birds. Early upon their arrival, Carolyn Fields and John Wittbold saw an adult shrike hunting over a field near the marsh at Ron Beese Park, near Baker's Lake in Barrington, Illinois (Cook County). From the top of a multi-flora rose bush, the shrike "caught a big winged insect and swallowed it instantaneously." Gayle Wagner of McHenry County watched a shrike in the Bull Valley area "pluck what appeared to be a very frozen grasshopper impaled on a twig, and chomp it down." Wagner observed this while helping on a Christmas Bird Count 18 December 1999. Wittbold and Fields again saw a shrike that "appeared to be hunting insects" at the Paul Douglas Forest Preserve in Cook County on 5 March 2000. They watched it for almost an hour. "At times it was very active, diving to the ground, sometimes hovering and fluttering just above the ground, showing its beautiful monochrome

pattern." They also heard the bird sing for several minutes.

Tom Lally watched a shrike "fly down to a small tree used as a caching site and yank the remains of some small mammal off a thorn and wolf it down," along I-355 near Woodridge in Will County 9 February 2000. Richard Biss watched a shrike in his Lake Villa yard (Lake County) "fly down to the marsh, catch a vole and eat him." Biss later saw the bird regurgitating a pellet (see photos). Fields also related a few other interesting behaviors. On 6 February 2000 at the Paul Douglas Forest Preserve, she watched the shrike "dive into some dense shrubs and not come out" at dusk. Fields said she had observed the bird at this location on several other occasions, and hypothesized it was probably the bird's roost site. On 3 March 2000 the same bird was "heard vocalizing from the top of one of the tallest trees. But it stopped as soon as it became aware of me." Fields also heard and saw a singing Northern Shrike on "the tip-top of a snag over the edge of the cattails at Baker's Lake" (Cook County). She described the song as being like a "funny Green-winged Teal, with a little churrr at the end."

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Literature Cited

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