

ditch near Topeka. Bjorklund and I spent some time tallying a few harriers and kestrels but mostly we added sparrows and juncos along the ditch. The best birds of the afternoon were found in the Mason tree farm when I spotted two Cedar Waxwings near one of the service buildings. We also discovered 21 pheasants and a Cooper's Hawk.

The best find came when Bohlen and Oehmke discovered a Chipping Sparrow in with some juncos along one of the juniper windbreaks at the nursery. When evening came we finally made it back to the refuge headquarters and identified the swans which were better pinpointed by the refuge personnel during our afternoon forays. There were 13 Tundra Swans as well as five Trumpeter Swans all with green and yellow collar-bands signifying they had come from Wisconsin's re-introduction program. As daylight faded we recorded two Greater White-fronted Geese off one of the refuge dikes which we had not seen earlier but had been reported several days before and up to the count day.

Our team recorded 69 species and 255,584 individuals for the day. I left the team behind and headed for Chicago. At least three more counts to go!

Chicago Lakefront.

25 December. Christmas Day is usually spent under the tree with Santa and the kids. Not this year! The Chicago Lakefront Count which is almost always held on Christmas Day - after all it is a Christmas Bird Count - was one I had never before experienced. The Chicago lakefront's monolithic skyline as a backdrop for birding was as good of a change for the normal Christmas Day as I could get.

I will always remember the Christmas Day Surprise (Stokie 1992) when the state's first CBC Ivory Gull appeared on this count at Montrose Harbor. I was out of state visiting relatives and missed the bird. Who knows? I thought. Maybe I'll find a rarity like the Ivory Gull.

The mission assigned by compiler Joel Greenberg was to be at Meigs Field at dawn to look for Snowy Owls. Since none had been reported and it was not a Snowy Owl flight year, I was doubtful about any success. Nevertheless, I stood my vigil scanning the runways seeing only a goldeneye or Herring Gull offshore. The most interesting find was a drake Hooded Merganser off the 12th Street beach and an American Robin (my first in seven counts) along the parkway to the Planetarium from Meigs Airport. Sixteen American Coots were off the Shedd Aquarium breakwater along with Common and Red-breasted Mergansers.

Soon I met Greenberg and Margot Milde. We headed to Navy Pier and Olive Park where we added an unusual Ruddy Duck out in the harbor off the Chicago Metropolitan Water District Plant. Greater Scaup and an occasional Lesser Scaup were also seen. With lakefront areas covered, I headed home to my parents for an early evening Christmas Dinner.

Evanston North Shore.

26 December 1994. 5 a.m. This is my *alma mater* count. I have been compiler for this count for 15 years since 1980 (with one year off) and have diligently computerized all of the data since 1962. I usually field some 50 plus observers and coordinate some 20-30 feeder observers. Owling has always been a tradition on this count, so when Bill Moskoff, Drew Cromwell, Scott Hickman, Debi Stolarik, John Csoka, and I met in Lake Forest near Fort Sheridan, Lake County, I was delighted to have little or no wind or traffic noise. This was a perfect situation for owls. We immediately counted two dueting Great Horned Owls without playing tape recordings. Soon we were treated to many wonderful views of Eastern Screech Owls.

As day broke along Lake Michigan, many Common Goldeneyes and Red-breasted Mergansers could be counted as well as an occasional Bufflehead. The birds we were looking for and are often quite distant

from shore were Oldsquaws with their white heads and dark sides. My telescope picked up a raft of these birds about one-half mile out. We counted 110 Oldsquaws there, and later, at the north end of Highwood, we recorded 60 more.

We thoroughly searched the lake again off Forest Park Ave. where we recorded a bizarre hybrid Hooded Merganser X Common Goldeneye, 3,000 Greater Scaup with several Lesser Scaup mixed in, two Hooded Mergansers, and two Surf Scoters.

Landbirding the ravines in Lake Forest failed to turn up either a single Winter or Carolina Wren, no Pine Siskin, and not much else save a Red-bellied or Red-headed Woodpecker or two and an occasional White-breasted Nuthatch. My territory had never been as quiet! We did manage to shake out a few American Tree Sparrows at the east end of the old Fort Sheridan airport runway. Toward evening an accipiter shot in front of our car. An adult Sharp-shinned Hawk landed on the roof of an abandoned building momentarily for us to see quite well.

I'm biased because I always like the Evanston North Shore's CBC parties. Birds are counted from the most to least usual amid a big spread of at least two birds (turkeys), plus a dessert table that could clog your arteries for life. This year's grandest bird was the Pileated Woodpecker found at Ryerson Conservation Area by Rick Siebert and Alan Stokie along the Des Plaines River. New to the count was Laurence Binford's immature Trumpeter Swan. It had no collar band, but was still not countable. Several count highs of waterbirds were established including a state high of 2,815 Greater Scaup and a tied high of five Surf Scoters.

Waukegan.

1 January 1995. By the time the Waukegan Count rolls around I'm either buried in snow or it's just too cold to be birding. Neither was the case this year. While it was windy, there was no snow and Third Lake, the deepest in Lake County, was to-

Meadowlark