



Pileated Woodpecker.

This species was seen on the Evanston North Shore Christmas Bird Count for the first time in 32 years. Drawing by Brian K. Willis.

tates data aggregates and comparisons (more on that, later). It also follows the general isothermal lines as defined by Gault (1922) and Smith and Parmalee (1955).

The count organization follows latitudinal and longitudinal lines north to south, then east to west. This helps lakefront counts (and other counts) line up for better data comparison.

From this data organization (Table 2) some immediate patterns can be recognized. Carolina Chickadees seem to crawl up the Wabash River valley while Eurasian Tree Sparrows move slowly up the Illinois and Mississippi River valleys with displaced individuals being recorded at Lake

Clinton and Muscatine, Iowa.

Northern Shrike, recorded in such northern Illinois counts as Rockford and Barrington and Evanston, is not recorded in southern Illinois and seldom is it recorded, even, in central Illinois. Conversely, Loggerhead Shrike is recorded in southern Illinois, but not in northern and central Illinois.

The data also shows the unusual and local occurrence of 100 Black Vultures at Cypress Creek in southern Illinois. Then, there were the 17 Field Sparrows at Thorn Creek, one of the northern counts. Seventeen Field Sparrows are to be expected in southern Illinois. But in northern

Illinois, even a single individual is a rarity. Were there really 17 Field Sparrows at Thorn Creek? Or were some of those birds actually American Tree Sparrows?

While all these facts may seem intuitively obvious to a seasoned birder and Christmas counter, they serve to illustrate a point. The data and winter bird distribution begs to be analyzed to determine the seasonal population trends for a particular species. (The pitfalls of analyzing this data are discussed in the accompanying article, "CBCs: Science or Seance?")

Highlights

New to the state's Christmas count species list was the astounding **Northern Gannet**, which was seen being chased by a Bald Eagle along the Mississippi River at Sunset Park, Rock Island. Also, new for the state's list was a **Cattle Egret** at Crane Lake and a **Mew Gull** (perhaps overdue) at Davenport, on the Illinois side of the river.

While not a state first, a well-described **Red-throated Loon**, seen by many observers, was recorded on the Springfield count. It was the fourth time this species has been observed during the Christmas bird count. A well-described **Common Moorhen** (Calumet Sand Ridge, Chicago) was recorded previously only twice in Illinois including a 1975 Waukegan count bird that was injured.

Other unusual birds included 20 White Pelicans (Pere Marquette, a new state high count); **Great Egret** (McHenry); Greater White-fronted Goose (Union, 11, all-time state high count; Horseshoe, 8; Princeton IA; and Clinton Lake); Ross' Goose (Rend Lake); Black Scoter (Rend Lake); 1 Osprey (Clinton, IA); 4 Golden Eagles in southern Illinois; 2