

Four Virginia Rails were seen on 3 counts, with 2 at Union County. Union County also had the only Sora. Nine Sandhill Cranes were seen on 3 counts, including one at Carlyle, well away from the usual migration route for cranes in Illinois.

Shorebirds through Gulls

Three species of shorebird were reported in Illinois this CBC season, with 5 Least Sandpipers on 3 counts the only notable ones. Ten species of gull were reported this year, with a Glaucous-winged Gull at Collinsville the most notable. A Laughing Gull was at Rend Lake. Sixteen Thayer's Gulls were reported on 5 counts, and 3 Iceland Gulls were reported on 2 counts, including one at Lake Shelbyville. Glaucous Gulls were reported on 4 counts, including a lone bird at Decatur. Great Black-backed Gulls were only found on 2 counts, but the 18 at Calumet was a new state high by 10 birds. Finally, Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen on a record 10 counts.

Doves through Owls

Eurasian Collared-Dove was seen on 26 counts, a new record. Joliet only reported one Ringed Turtle-Dove. Only 69 Monk Parakeets were reported from 3 counts. No Barn Owls were reported in the state. There were 3 Snowy Owls – one at Calumet-Sand Ridge, one at Starved Rock, and a count week bird at Chicago Urban. Only 45 Short-eared Owls were seen, perhaps unsurprising given the windy conditions. Seven Northern Saw-whet Owls were reported on 6 counts.

Flycatchers through Warblers

Forty-five Eastern Phoebes were reported on a record 10 counts, with 12 at Horseshoe Lake and 13 at Union County. Six counts reported a total of 10 Loggerhead Shrikes, the lowest since 1950. In contrast, 41 Northern Shrikes were reported on 19 counts, with a notable 9 at Fermilab-Batavia. American Crow numbers appear to be recovering, with more than 212,000 reported, including 162,000 at Middlefork River Valley. Only 278 Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported, after 635 last year. Nine House Wrens were reported on a record 5 counts, while Sedge Wrens were reported at Newton and Baldwin Lake. The 11 Marsh Wrens reported included 1 at Baldwin Lake, 4 at Rend Lake, and a state record 6 at Union County.

Hermit Thrushes were reported in normal numbers, with 233 on 35 counts. Three Gray Catbirds were reported, as were 36 Brown Thrashers. Forest Glen had 7 well-described Bohemian

Waxwings. Collinsville had an Orange-crowned Warbler, while Meredosia Island had a Common Yellowthroat. Six Pine Warblers were reported on 3 counts, while 5 Palm Warblers were reported on 3 counts. Finally, Horseshoe Lake had a state record 387 Yellow-rumped Warblers.

Sparrows through Weaver Finches

Only one Spotted Towhee was reported, from Collinsville. Thirteen Chipping Sparrows were reported from 13 counts. One well-written documentation for Chipping Sparrow clearly described American Tree Sparrow – this continues to be an issue. A LeConte's Sparrow at Champaign County was rather far north. Lone Vesper Sparrows were at Baldwin Lake and Morton Arboretum-Lisle. Union County had a Lincoln's Sparrow, while a count-week Lincoln's was at Chicago Urban. Lone Harris's Sparrows were at Quincy, Monroe County, and Champaign. The 3194 Lapland Longspurs at Newton were a new state high, while the Smith's Longspur photographed at Newton marks only the 6th time the species has been reported on an Illinois CBC. Lone Dickcissels were at Carlyle Lake and Champaign County.

The 806 House Finches at Rockford were a new state high. Winter finches were present in decent numbers. Seven-hundred-sixty Purple Finches were counted in 51 circles. Five counts reported Red Crossbills, while 3 counts had White-winged Crossbills. The CBC counts had Common Redpolls reported only at Chicago Urban and Freeport. Pine Siskin was reported on 46 counts, while Evening Grosbeaks were at Rushville and Forest Glen. Eurasian Tree Sparrows were reported on 14 counts.

Exotics

Several exotics were reported this year – Mandarin Duck, Bar-headed Goose, Budgerigar, 17 White-winged Pheasant, 6 Greylag Geese and a Black-headed Parakeet.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank the observers who make this count possible. Turning birding into something truly useful is a noble cause. Our various count compilers are to be lauded for the time and effort spent putting all of this information into a usable form.

Data from this year's CBC can also be found at the National Audubon Society's website, at www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/.

— Paul W. Sweet
2114 Elisha Ave.
Zion, IL 60099



White-winged Crossbills were found on three CBCs. Harvey Meyers took this photo at Morton Arboretum, DuPage County on 25 February 2009.

Figure 1:
codes for the spreadsheets

| Code | Meaning |
|------|----------------------------------|
| hc | high count for that circle |
| lc | unusually low count |
| HC | State Record High Count |
| NC | New Species for the State Counts |