



Common Redpoll with Pine Siskins tallied on the Morris-Wilmington CBC, Will County. 1 Jan. 1994. Photo by Joe B. Milosevich.

Thrasher, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, Gray Catbird, and American Robin seemed to linger longer even in the northern counts. And, all compilers agreed the House Finch explosion is continuing (see histogram); even though total numbers dipped this year. Was this due to a stabilizing wintering population? Or were some birds undetected? Next year's numbers for this species might give a clue.

Laurence Binford, while on the Evanston North Shore count, said 4 waterfowl species he had staked out before the count, disappeared during the count due to freezing temperatures. The good white oak acorn crop was recorded by the author as the cause for Evanston North Shore's high count (in 32 years) of Red-Headed Woodpecker and correspondingly good numbers of Blue Jays, a species that eats and caches acorns.

Observer, Danny Diaz and com-

piler, Joel Greenberg, lamenting the loss of open field habitat and the corresponding crash of Ring-necked Pheasant numbers, have now found that species wintering, in, of all places, dense cattail marshes (Waukegan and Evanston). Other observers are finding different micro-climates or habitats for unusual species such as sewage lagoons or warm water effluent streams, ditches, or ponds for lingering birds. One example is Waukegan's Virginia Rails which have become an annual occurrence. Deep ravines are now known to provide habitat in northern Illinois for Winter and Carolina Wrens and an occasional Tufted Titmouse.

Finally, the great Mississippi River flood during the summer of 1993 did affect some observers' ability to cover the bottomland areas well. Robert Thomas (Pere Marquette) reported that 50 percent of his count's area was still flooded and that 80

percent of the bottomland areas was not covered by Christmas Bird counters due to uprooted trees.

Documentation of Rare Species

A word must be said about documentation for rare sightings. Generally this state's compilers are good at policing details regarding their counts' rarities. A majority also know their Illinois winter bird distribution well. However, there still seems to be a lack of knowledge as to whether documentation is required for certain species.

For example, Double-crested Cormorant is probably a logical addition to the list for all southern and central Illinois counts. However, species such as Pine Warbler must be documented, even if it is at a known location such as Crab Orchard NWR. At least minimal details are necessary.

Winter Chipping Sparrows and Brewer's Blackbird must be meticulously documented. A suggestion is to draw a sketch in the field or better yet, photograph the rarity.

Future Analysis of CBC Data

More comparative data analysis will be possible in the future. Unfortunately, last year's count data was not tabulated or compiled in time for publication. We ask that the readers of this journal bear with us as we work to fulfill one of our primary goals, which is to react to ornithological field data. We would also like to thank our readers for the indulgence in delivering this data to the professional ornithologist, biologist, and amateur for further research. Suggestions for improvement are welcomed.