

County had two Red-necked Grebes, while Rend Lake had an Eared Grebe. Crab Orchard had an impressive 90 Pied-billed Grebes. American White Pelicans were only reported on 3 counts, while Double-crested Cormorants were reported on 14. An American Bittern was photographed at Meredosia (see Field Notes for photo), while Springfield had the only Great Egret. Black-crowned Night-Herons were reported on four counts, with the one at Muscatine the only one not in the Chicago area.

Raptors through Terns

Turkey Vulture numbers were closer to normal this year, while Black Vultures were 600 percent above last year's totals. The 206 reported at Cypress Creek represented a state high, while a count week individual at Starved Rock was later captured on the verge of starvation by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. An Osprey was documented at Rend Lake. Fifty-seven counts reported Bald Eagle—a new record—although the total number was 50 percent below last year's total. The 49 Red-shouldered Hawks at Union County represented a new state high. Golden Eagles were reported on two counts, Union County and a count week bird at White Pines. Merlin were reported on 10 counts, Peregrine Falcon on 11.

Union County reported the only Virginia Rail, as well as two King Rails, only the state's 4th report and a new high. Sixty-four Sandhill Cranes were reported on four counts, with the eight seen at Cypress Creek well off of the normal migration route.

Six species of shorebirds were reported this year, including 17 Least Sandpipers on four counts, a count-week Purple Sandpiper at Chicago Lakefront, and two Dunlin at Newton. Although American Woodcock has become an expected species on Southern Illinois counts, the 30 seen at Warbluff Valley represented a new state high. Seven species of gulls were reported this year, including 11 Thayer's on three counts, three Lesser Black-backed on three counts, six Glaucous on three counts, and eight Great Black-backed on two counts. Glaucous and Lesser Black-backed were the only notable gulls seen away from Chicago. A Caspian Tern lingered at Calumet City until count day, Illinois's first CBC record.

Doves through Owls

Eurasian Collared Doves were reported on 35 counts this season, reflecting their spread throughout the state. The 87 seen at Newton represented a new record. Monk Parakeets were reported from four counts this year. Six Barn Owls were reported on three southern counts this year. The four reported at Carlyle appears to be a new state high. No Snowy Owls were reported. One-hundred eight Short-eared Owls were reported on 17 counts, while 36 Long-eared Owls were reported on 15 counts. Six counts reported singleton Northern Saw-whet Owls, with one more count-week bird.

Flycatchers through Warblers

Twelve counts reported Eastern Phoebes, although the total seen was well below last year's total. An Eastern Kingbird was well described at Bird Haven to add another species to the state list. Fifteen Loggerhead Shrikes were reported on five counts. Northern Shrikes were present in typical numbers – 21 birds on 12 counts. Nearly 283,000 American Crows were reported this year. The 119 Brown Creepers at Fermilab was a new state high. Five species of wrens were reported, with House Wren on seven counts, Sedge Wren on two, and Marsh Wren on four. The 344 Winter Wrens at Cypress Creek represented a new state high, as did the three Sedge Wrens at Newton.

Hermit Thrush numbers were down from last year, but the 394 Eastern Bluebirds at Union County represent a new state high. Four Gray Catbirds and 66 Brown Thrashers were reported. Although well below the record from two seasons ago, this season's 254 American Pipits were spread across a record 15 count circles, including several northern ones. Orange-crowned Warblers were reported on three counts, while a Pine Warbler at Shelbyville was the only one. Palm Warblers were at Fermilab and Crab Orchard, lone Ovenbirds were at Jackson County and Chicago Urban, solitary Common Yellowthroats were at Clinton Lake and Rend Lake, and a Northern Waterthrush was at Hennepin.

Sparrows through Weaver Finches

Lisle Arboretum reported the only Spotted Towhee. Twenty-six Chipping Sparrows were reported from nine counts, several of them photographed. Lone Vesper Sparrows were at Crane Lake and Bloomington. A Lincoln's Sparrow was at Pere Marquette, while Harris's Sparrows were at Springfield and Union County. Indigo Buntings were at Meredosia and Fermilab.

Western Meadowlarks were reported at Mermet Lake and count week at Eastern Knox County. Rusty Blackbirds showed a 138 percent increase from last year, but all of the other common blackbirds were down. Forty-five counts reported Purple Finch, for a total of 480, while 11 counts reported a total of 77 Pine Siskins. Thorn Creek had 14 Common Redpolls, the only ones reported. Clinton, Iowa had the only White-winged Crossbill (on the Illinois side of the river). Evening Grosbeak, Pine Grosbeak, and Red Crossbill were not reported this year. Eurasian Tree Sparrows were reported on 19 counts this year.

Acknowledgements

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.

— Paul Sweet
2114 Elisha Ave.
Zion, IL 60099
paul.sweet@att.net