



nature notes

Journal of Webster Groves Nature Study Society

March 1999 Vol. 71, No. 3

Friday, March 12 Meeting

Doug Corbett

Due to icy weather at the Jan. meeting, we are rescheduling our speaker, Tim Morrison. Tim is a high school teacher and football coach of Parkway South. He was a WGNSS-sponsored attendee at the Audubon Field Ecology Camp in Wyoming this past summer. He will show slides and discuss his experiences and also his involvement with area high school students in Envirocorp. Some of this group's efforts include trail construction and grass restoration at Lone Elk Park. See you there! ~

Board Elections

Sue Gustafson

Yes, it's already that time again. Based on our staggered rotationsystem of electing our five officers, at the April general meeting we will be electing the Secretary and Treasurer. If you are interested in either of these positions, or are interested in a future appointment as a Member-at-large on our board, please contact me at 968-8128 or smgustafson@juno.com.

I will provide more information on the positions and pass your name on to our Nominating Committee. Get involved—it's a great group to work with! ~

Welcome to new members...

Susan Eaton Kirkwood
Lisa Francis..... Affton
Stuart & Janey Symington.....Ladue
Dr. James Trager.....Gray Summit, MO
Joe & Pat Devine..... Ferguson
Mark Weshel..... San Diego, CA
Rachel Crandell..... Chesterfield, MO
David Visintainer.....St. Louis

In this issue:

Warbler Migration.....	2
Changes to WGNSS By-laws.....	11
Janet Neilson.....	11
Year Lists.....	12
Bird Record Committe.....	12
Ornithology meeting.....	13
Jan. Bird Report.....	14
WGNSS/St. L. Audubon trips.....	17
Flora of MO.....	18
WGNSS events.....	20



Counting Warblers: A Timetable for the Spring Songbird Migration Through Saint Louis

Randy Korotev

The John F. Kennedy Memorial Forest in the southwest corner of Forest Park in the city of Saint Louis, Missouri, is one of the best traps for migrant passerines in the St. Louis area. During the spring migration, the density and species diversity of migrant passerines in the ~80-acre forest is many times greater than that of any equivalent area of land outside the city. The main portion of the JFK Forest contains many large trees that are ideal feeding areas for those migrants that prefer treetops. There is also a dense understory for the skulkers. Recent (1997) improvements in the trails by the Missouri Department of Conservation have made the area more accessible to birders. Birding is likely to improve over the next few years as newly planted trees and shrubs grow larger and plans are implemented to construct ponds in the forest, establish a savanna adjacent to the forest, and remove Valley Drive, which currently passes through the heart of the forest.

For 20 spring seasons (1979–1998) I have kept records of the numbers of migrant birds that I have seen or heard in the JFK Forest during morning birding visits in April and May. From these records I have constructed the Migration Timetable to be found at the end of this article. The Timetable is a guide to the number of individuals of each species that birders can expect to find on visits to the JFK Forest on a given date in spring. Within the limitations to be discussed later, it also indicates

more generally when various species migrate through the St. Louis area in spring as well as their relative abundances. This article is an update of one I prepared nine years ago after eleven years of observations (*Nature Notes*, Vol. 62, no. 3, March 1990).

Method

Starting in late March and continuing through the end of May, I make regular visits to the JFK Forest. Most years I manage to make 30–40 visits (Fig. 1). I usually begin birding sometime between 7 and 8 a.m. Early in April and late in May, when there are few birds to distract me, I typically bird for about 1 hour. During the height of the migration in early May, I average about 2–2.25 hours a visit, though I have stayed as long as 4 hours on weekends if the birding is good. I record of the duration of each visit to the nearest quarter hour. The area I census is bounded by Skinker Blvd. on the west, the golf course and art museum on the north, the zoo parking lot on the east, and Wells Drive on the south. I have regularly birded the area south of Government Drive, even before the improvements made by the Missouri Department of Conservation. I try to cover as much of the area as possible during each visit. Early and late in the season I usually walk about 2–2.5 miles but during the peak of the migration I walk 2.5–3 miles. In order to cover the route in the time I allot, I move along more quickly than most other birders I encounter. Many of my visits have been on mornings of light drizzle or immediately following or preceding heavy rain. Probably 90% of the time I am birding alone.

I count and record birds one at a time. I probably count conservatively in that I make an effort not to double count birds as I cross and parallel my previous route. Probably 80% of my observations are by ear only. In order to get a better record of the migration times for the rarer species, I have occasionally included observations made by others if they occurred on a day that I did not visit the Forest; far less than 1% of the observations reported here are of this type.

Most species listed in the Timetable are passerines, but cuckoos, nightjars, hummingbirds, and woodpeckers are also listed. In general, I do not count the common resident species (jays, titmice, cardinals) for which numbers do not change much throughout the period, although I count all the woodpeckers and nuthatches because some species of these groups are migrants. In part because I never expected to be doing this for 20 years, I never got into the habit of counting certain common species that are, in fact, more abundant during the spring migration than in winter or summer (robins, grackles, cowbirds). Although I keep records for ducks, herons, and raptors, these are not included in the Timetable.

Three factors (at least) limit the usefulness of the data I have collected for drawing conclusions about long-term trends (below). First, I have not kept record of weather conditions. Second, my coverage from year to year has not been consistent (Fig. 1). A couple of years (1984, 1996) I missed up to 13 consecutive days because I was out of town; other years (1979, 1991) I just birded less frequently. Finally, my high-frequency hearing (>3000 Hz) has degraded over the last few years and I don't observe as many

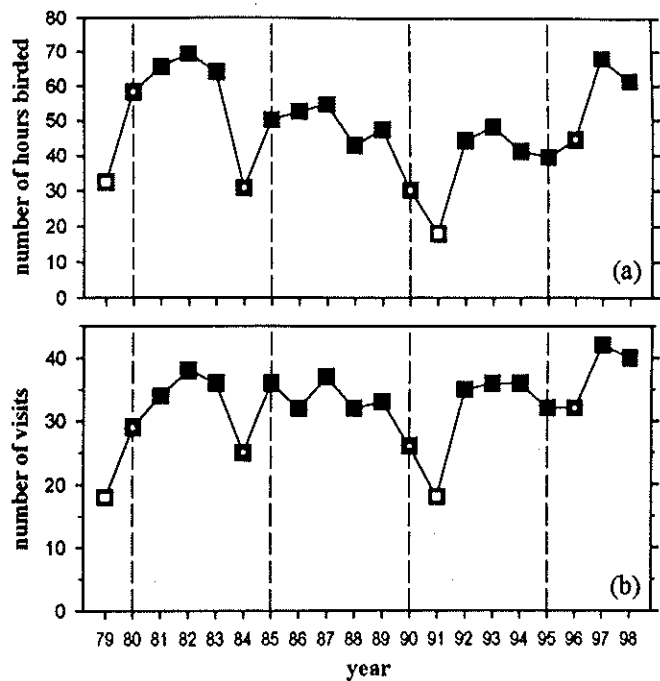


Figure 1. Number of hours birded (a) and number of visits made (b) each year during April and May. Filled points (■) represent years of "good" coverage, i.e., the number of visits was high and uniform throughout the period; ◐ = adequate coverage; □ = poorest coverage (e.g., few visits, large time gaps).

birds with high-pitched songs or calls (e.g., Blackpoll and Blackburnian Warblers) as I used to.

Timetable Description

The Timetable presents the probability of seeing a particular species on a given date in April and May. It is not an exact report of how many of each species I have actually observed because I've smoothed out some bumps and filled in some gaps in order to make it more useful and less confusing. The main portion of the Timetable has 61 columns, one for every day in April and May. These are grouped into blocks of five days to make it easier to locate specific dates. The top and bottom of each column are labeled vertically with the day of the month (e.g., a 1 over a 2 means the 12th of

April or May). The last column (labeled N) lists the total number of individual birds upon which the row of information is based. These range from 1 for Chuck-will's widow, Willow Flycatcher, and Vesper Sparrow to 6103 for Yellow-rumped Warbler. The column labeled Y is the number of years I have observed the species at least once. To save space, I have abbreviated many species names. The row "*emp. sp?*" represents all *empidonax* flycatchers that I could not identify by species. This is followed by a row labeled "*emp. total*," which combines all identified and unidentified *empidonax* flycatchers. Similarly, the row labeled "cuckoo tot." includes observations from the two previous rows plus any cuc-

koos I could not specifically identify. In total, the Timetable includes 106 species plus 1 hybrid ("Brewster's Warbler").

Some of the migrants that arrive in spring stay to breed in the JFK Forest or elsewhere in Forest Park. I have indicated these by a 2-digit code in the two columns preceding the species name. This information was obtained largely in conjunction with my participation in the Missouri Breeding Bird Atlas project.

Code Values. The code values in the body of the Timetable require explanation because they are an unusual way to present abundance data. The problem is how to present in a useful manner information for Yellow-rumped Warblers, which average

Table 1. Approximate order in which migrants appear in the JFK Forest, with approximate peak date*.

April	4	Fox Sparrow	May	3	Yellow-throated Vireo	May	8	Ovenbird
	5	Winter Wren		3	Summer Tanager		8	Scarlet Tanager
	7	Golden-crowned Kinglet		3	Orchard Oriole		9	Eastern Kingbird
	13	Louisiana Waterthrush		4	Cerulean Warbler		9	Veery
	14	Hermit Thrush		4	Lincoln's Sparrow		10	Gray Catbird
	16	Brown Thrasher		5	Warbling Vireo		11	Least Flycatcher
	16	American Goldfinch		5	Nashville Warbler		11	Blackburnian Warbler
	18	Ruby-crowned Kinglet		5	Northern Parula		12	Yellow-billed Cuckoo
	20	Pine Warbler		5	Northern Waterthrush		12	Chestnut-sided Warbler
	20	Field Sparrow		5	Kentucky Warbler		12	Blackpoll Warbler
	21	Swamp Sparrow		5	Blue Grosbeak		13	Magnolia Warbler
	22	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher		6	Wood Thrush		14	Ruby-throated Hummingbird
	22	Yellow-throated Warbler		6	Cape May Warbler		14	Philadelphia Vireo
	24	Red-breasted Nuthatch		6	Black-throated Green Warbler		14	Bay-breasted Warbler
	27	Worm-eating Warbler		6	Rose-breasted Grosbeak		16	Black-billed Cuckoo
	28	Yellow-rumped Warbler		7	Gray-cheeked Thrush		16	American Redstart
	28	Prairie Warbler		7	Golden-winged Warbler		17	Red-eyed Vireo
	29	Orange-crowned Warbler		7	Black-and-White Warbler		17	Wilson's Warbler
	28	Chipping Sparrow		7	Common Yellowthroat		18	Great Crested Flycatcher
	29	White-throated Sparrow		7	Yellow-breasted Chat		18	Black-throated Blue Warbler
	30	Prothonotary Warbler		7	Indigo Bunting		19	Olive-sided Flycatcher
May	1	Hooded Warbler		7	White-crowned Sparrow		19	Canada Warbler
	2	House Wren		7	Northern Oriole		20	Mourning Warbler
	2	White-eyed Vireo		8	Swainson's Thrush		21	Connecticut Warbler
	2	Blue-headed Vireo		8	Bell's Vireo		23	Acadian Flycatcher
	2	Blue-winged Warbler		8	Tennessee Warbler		25	Eastern Wood-Pewee
	2	Palm Warbler		8	Yellow Warbler		27	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher

* For most of the species listed, about 50% of the individuals seen in the JFK Forest are seen between 5 days before and 5 days after the listed date, on average. For some species there is no distinct peak; for these species the approximate date on which half the migrants have passed through the area is listed in italics.

over 20 birds per visit in late April (high of 60), on the same scale as Willow Flycatcher, which I have found only once in 20 years. The code values range from 1 to 9 and the key is given at the bottom of the Timetable. The mathematically inclined will note that the scale of code values is roughly logarithmic; a difference of 1 in code values means about a factor-of-two difference in abundance. A blank means that I have never observed the species on that date. Some dates on which I have never observed a given species have a code value of 1, but only if I have observed one or more individuals on nearby dates (the gap filling I mentioned earlier). For every species, however, the first and last non-blank columns represent the earliest and latest dates during April and May that I have observed the species.

As an example of how to interpret the Timetable, for Gray Catbird on May 2 the code value is 5 which, according to the key, indicates that one should expect to find "1 to 2 birds/visit." What that means is that over 20 years the average number of catbirds I've seen and heard on ~2-hour visits on May 2 and a few days on either side is between 1 and 2 (actually, it's 1.7). The fractional code values (1 through 4) are more difficult to interpret. For example, for Rusty Blackbird during the first 5 days of April and for Cape May Warbler the first 5 days of May, the code values are 3 or 4. This indicates that one should be able to find an average of about 0.4 birds per visit. I have, in fact, found a few fractional birds that were the victims of hawks, but in this case the fraction means that 5 visits in one year should yield 2 birds or 20 visits over 4 years should yield a total of about 8 birds.

For Cape May Warbler in early May, you will probably find 0, 1, or 2 birds on each visit, but 5 visits, even in the same year, will likely net you a total of only 2 birds. That's not true for Rusty Blackbird, however. I've only seen the species one year (1992), when there were about 6 birds on each of several visits ($6/20 = 0.33 \approx 0.4$) because the species usually occurs in flocks. In general, the code values reflect averages for visits on a given date over many years better than they do visits over consecutive days in a given year.

Interpretation. The Timetable allows one to pick the days most likely to produce a particular species in spring as well as to gauge the relative likelihood of finding it compared to other species. Some species consistently arrive early in spring and others consistently arrive late. Peak dates are evident from the Timetable, but are presented chronologically in Table 1. Keep in mind, however, that Table 1 and the Timetable represent a 20-year average. For any given year the 'pulse' of birds of a given species will usually be narrower than implied by the Timetable and may occur earlier or later. This is shown in Fig. 2 for Tennessee Warbler. In 1987 the peak occurred several days before the average peak date of May 8, whereas in 1980 it occurred nearly a week after. However, the relative *order* in which migrants appear is usually the same every year. Tennessee Warblers always peak after Palm Warblers and before Magnolia Warblers (Table 1).

Also important to note is that the Timetable is for *migrant* birds. Nearly any species listed that breeds in the St. Louis area (e.g., Blue-winged Warbler) can be found locally on its breeding grounds a week or

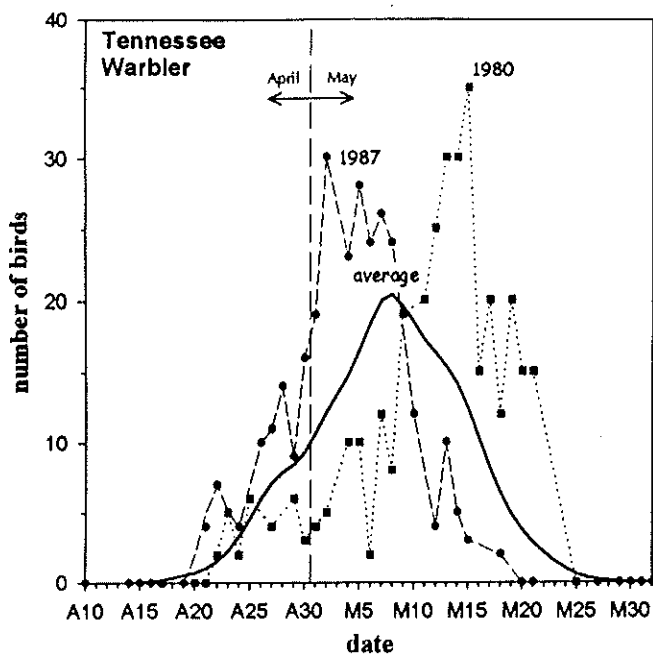


Figure 2. Daily numbers of Tennessee Warblers observed during April and May in 1980 and 1987 and the average number observed for the 20-year period 1979-1998, inclusive (solid line).

more before it is first seen in migrant traps like the JFK Forest or Tower Grove Park. Similarly, many species that have disappeared from the JFK Forest by the end of May can be found in June elsewhere as breeders. This includes House Wrens and Warbling Vireos that breed elsewhere in Forest Park in more suitable habitat. Some species that are relatively common as breeders in proper habitat outside the city (e.g., Yellow-throated and Prothonotary Warblers) are only rarely seen in the JFK Forest as migrants. Thus the Timetable may not represent well for the St. Louis area as a whole the arrival dates or relative abundances of species that breed locally.

With those caveats, the *dates* in the Timetable and Table 1 are probably applicable elsewhere in the city, such as in Tower Grove Park. However, it is likely that the *relative abundances* (code values)

of species inferred from the Timetable are different for Tower Grove Park because of the differences in habitat. Thrushes and certain species of sparrows are often mentioned as being more evident in Tower Grove Park (e.g., I have never seen a Clay-colored Sparrow in the JFK Forest although they are seen almost every year in Tower Grove Park).

Other Species

In total, I have observed 158 species of birds in, over, and around the JFK Forest during my spring birding visits. In addition to the resident passerines and species listed in the Timetable, these include (1) migrants that are often seen flying high over the Forest but which are not principally forest species (cormorants, herons, egrets, geese, hawks, shorebirds, gulls, swifts, swallows), (2) migrant non-passerines that sometimes rest in or feed in or over the JFK Forest (Green Heron, both night-herons, Turkey Vulture, Mississippi Kite, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, and Merlin), (3) some park-resident nonpasserines (Wood Duck, Mallard, Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, all of which have bred in the Forest), (4) resident birds of the St. Louis area that are not usually found in the JFK Forest, but which occur there some years (Wild Turkey, Northern Bobwhite, Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Eurasian Tree Sparrow), and (5) birds that don't belong there at all (Peacock – twice!).

The spring migration is not usually noted for out-of-range rare passerines, but a few observations from the JFK Forest that are not in the Timetable are noteworthy. On

May 12, 1982, Carmen Patterson and Dave Jones identified a Black-headed Grosbeak and on May 10, 1984, several other birders and I enjoyed a Lazuli Bunting. On March 29, 1998, much earlier than expected based on the Timetable, Ken Cohen and I saw an Orange-crowned Warbler that I believe to have been the *lutescens* (Pacific coast) subspecies.

Long Term Trends, and Some Opinions

Several years ago a birder who has birded in St. Louis for a long time said to me, "There just aren't as many Black-throated Green Warblers as there used to be. When I started birding, I would often see 20-30 in a day." I have often heard others voice similar sentiments.

These impression may be correct, but I'm not as pessimistic. Impressions don't always represent the facts well and I suspect birders have selective memory about good birding days of the past. We all remember those few special days when the warblers were as thick as Christmas tree ornaments, but we tend to forget about the ho-hum days, and ho-hum days were just as prevalent 20-30 years ago as they are now. Some species are clearly decreasing and others are increasing in abundance. However, according to the results of the Breeding Bird Survey I reviewed a few months ago (*Nature Notes*, November, 1998) the Black-throated Green Warbler is doing neither (0.0% change from 1966-1996 for the entire BBS area, 95% confidence). Even when one has "facts" in the form of many years of recorded data, like I do, I don't believe one can draw many valid conclusions about long-term trends from birds observed in migration. There are too

many variables that influence the number birds we see in spring that have nothing to do with long-term decreases or increases.

Weather is probably the most important factor. No two springs are the same with respect to weather and how the plants, insects, and birds respond to it. On any given day or any given spring, the birds we see in Tower Grove Park or Forest Park have been influenced by local, regional, and global weather. The overall effect is that in some years those weather patterns cause a lot of birds to descend on St. Louis in spring. If we're lucky, those same weather conditions cause the birds to stay here for several days. If we're very lucky, those days happen to include Saturday and Sunday, everybody gets to see the birds, and we all think it's a great year. Over the years I've had a number of great Tuesdays, birdwise, and there was no one else around for me to share them with.

Keeping these caveats in mind, I have taken the liberty to give each of the last 20 years a score on a 1-to-10 scale based on the number and variety of migrant birds I've seen each year (Fig. 3). I've used

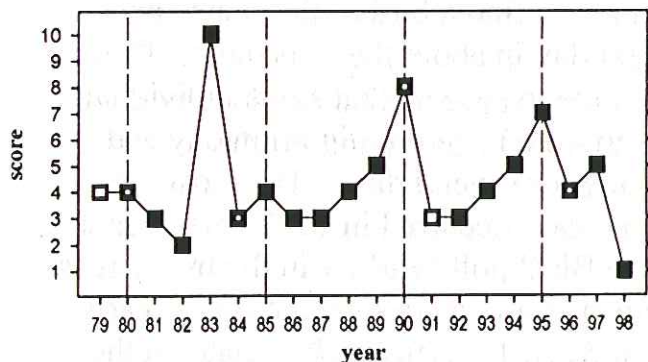


Figure 3. The years scored on a 1-to-10 scale, based on the numbers and variety of flycatchers, thrushes, vireos, warblers, tanagers, grosbeaks, and orioles observed each year. Scores for years with filled points are probably more reliable than those for years with partially filled points (Fig. 2)

different recipes to arrive at these scores and they all come out about the same, so the figure shows the averages.

Clearly, 1983 was a good year. On 3 successive days that year I saw 11–13 Blackburnian Warblers and on May 7, I found 28 species of warblers. So I defined 1983 as a 10. As many people noticed, last year was a dud (I saw only one Blackburnian Warbler all spring), so 1998 defines a score of 1. On that scale, most years have been in the 3 to 4 range. Different people might interpret Fig. 3 differently, but I don't see evidence for a decline over time. There appear to be occasional great years and bad years, with most years being fair to good.

It would be interesting if someone who had similar data for Columbia or Kansas City, MO, or Springfield or Chicago, IL, would also rate the years. Given what I said above about the effects of weather, it would not surprise me if different years scored high and low in other Midwest cities because of differences in local weather.

On numerous occasions I've encountered some unusual species, such as Prairie Warbler, only to find a bird of the same species the next day in about the same spot. That has led me to suspect that some individual birds arrive on a good migration day and then stay for several days. The most extreme case occurred in 1982 when I first heard a Blackpoll Warbler in the tree across the street from where I parked on the early date of April 19th (the earliest date on the Timetable). Nearly every day for the rest of the month I heard what I suspected to be the same bird calling from the same tree. Not until April 30th did I encounter more than one Blackpoll Warbler. In 1997 I spotted a

Gray-cheeked Thrush with a couple of white feathers in its wing. For the next 6 days, I or someone else saw the same "marked" bird, always in the same general area, confirming my suspicions that some birds, at least, stay around for a while. Thus, if some years weather conditions are such that a number of birds arrive and then do not leave for a while, it gives the impression that there are many birds compared to years when they pass through quickly.

May 8

In the previous 11-year version of this article I ended by saying that if you only have one day to bird in spring, do it on May 8. I'll stick with that date. On average, the total number of warbler species peaks on May 8 (Fig. 4), as do the total number of birds. In any given year, however, the peak may be several days before or after.

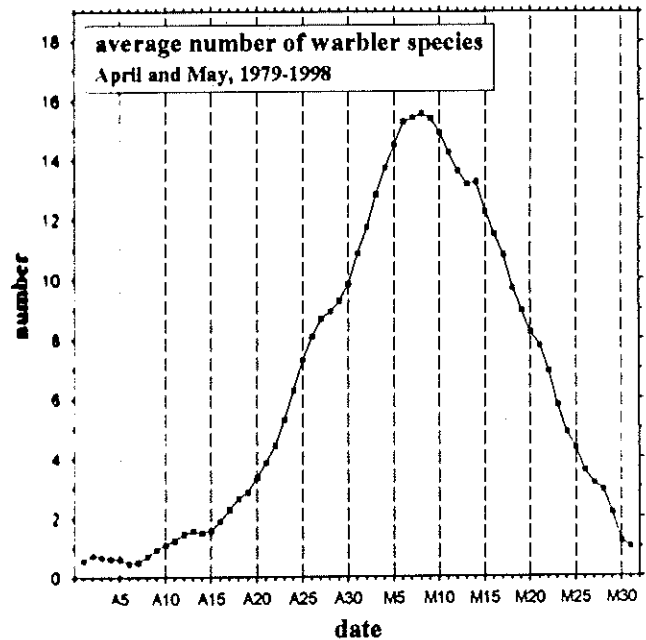


Figure 4. Average number of warbler species seen each day of April and May over 20 years (9-point smooth).

Timetable for Spring Migration of Birds through Forest Park, St. Louis — 1979-1998

MONTH:	----- April -----								----- May -----						Y	N
	1	11111	11112	22222	22223	1	11111	11112	22222	22223	222233					
	12345	67890	12345	67890	12345	67890	12345	67890	12345	67890	12345	67890	12345	67890	12345	67890
B1-b. Cuckoo							11		1211	12122	12221	111			9	27
Y.-b. Cuckoo							1	11111	12233	22222	22111	11111	1111		16	43
cuckoo tot							11	11111	12333	33333	33332	22222	2221		17	78
Ch.-w.-Wid.												1			1	1
Wh.-p.-Will				1	11111	111			1						9	10
R-thr.H'bird								111	22221	12233	22211	11111	111		14	42
C+ R.-h. Woodp.	45454	54545	45454	54555	55555	55555	55555	55555	55555	44444	44444	44333	333333		20	528
C+ R.-b. Woodp.	55555	55555	55555	55555	55556	66665	55555	55555	55555	55555	55555	55555	55555		20	1018
Y.-b. Saps.	44433	32334	44444	33322	11111	11111									15	72
C+ Downy Woodp.	66666	66666	66666	66666	66666	66665	55555	55555	55555	55555	55555	55555	55555		20	1195
C+ Hairy Woodp.	21212	12121	21212	21212	12121	21212	21111	11233	33222	11111	11111	11111			20	69
C+ N. Flicker	77777	77777	77666	66666	66666	66666	55555	55555	55555	55555	44455	55555			20	1371
Ol.-s. Flyc.							1	11111	11123	33322	22222	22221			17	43
P+ E.Wood-Pewee						122	33444	45555	55555	55566	66666	66666			20	552
Y.-bel.Flyc.								11	11112	22222	33333	34333			16	39
Acad. Flyc.					11111	11111	11111	11222	22223	33333	33333				17	48
Alder Flyc.									1	1	1				5	5
Willow Flyc.												1			1	1
Least Flyc.					11	11111	11123	44444	44444	33322	11111				18	115
emp. sp?						11111	11112	22222	22223	22222	22222	22111			15	61
emp. tot.					11	11111	12334	44444	44445	44444	44444	44444			19	256
P- E. Phoebe	44444	44444	44333	33333	21111	11111	11111	11111	1111						19	95
C+ Gr.-cr.Flyc.					2334	45555	56666	66666	66666	66666	66666	66665			20	890
C- E. Kingbird			1	11122	22222	23344	44445	55554	44444	44332	22111	11111			20	288
R.-br.Nuth.	11111	11111	11111	11111	12212	11221	11212	122		1					7	32
P+ Wh.-br.Nuth.	33333	34343	43434	34344	44444	44444	44444	44444	44444	44444	44444	44444			20	339
Br. Creeper	44444	44444	44433	43333	33322	11111	1111								17	99
C+ Car. Wren	55555	55555	55555	55555	55555	55555	55555	55555	55544	44444	44445	55555			14	627
C- House Wren				123	34444	44555	55555	55444	44444	44444	44444	44444			20	381
Winter Wren	43322	23333	33222	22211	12221	11111	1111								13	42
G.-cr.K'let	56666	66666	65544	44444	43222	21111									18	254
R.-cr.K'let	44555	55667	77777	77777	77777	66666	66555	44443	32111	1111					20	1512
Bl.-g.Gnatc.	12212	12122	34444	44445	55555	44444	44444	33222	11111	1111					20	307
C- E. Bluebird		1						11	11111	11111	11111	11			3	11
Veery						12222	23333	33333	33333	33333	32221	111			18	91
Gr.-c.Thrush			111	12223	33344	44444	44444	44444	44443	32223	22111	11111			19	170
Swain,Thrush			23344	45566	67777	77788	87777	77777	77776	66555	54443				20	2558
Herm.Thrush	43434	34344	45555	54444	44444	33333	321								17	180
C+ Wood Thrush				12223	33333	34444	44444	33333	32222	22111	11111				19	136
C+ Gr. Catbird				11	11123	44445	55566	66666	66666	65555	55555	55555			20	673
C+ Br. Thrasher	55666	66666	66666	66666	66666	66666	66666	66555	55555	55555	55555	55555			20	1328
Cedar Waxw.		45454	55555	55566	65656	65656	65656	55454	56565	65655	554				19	810
Wh.-e.Vireo				111	11233	33334	44433	33332	22111	1111					19	92
Bell's Vireo								1							2	2
Bl.-h. Vireo				11	11233	33444	44444	33333	33222	1111					19	138
Y.-thr.Vireo			1	11223	33333	33333	33333	34333	22222	21111	11111	111			20	122
C- Warbl. Vireo				11	22233	33444	44444	44444	33211	11111	11				20	156
Phil. Vireo						1111	11122	33433	34444	43434	34333	32221			20	103
R.-e. Vireo	11	11111	11111	11111	12334	44444	45555	56666	66777	77777	66666	66555			20	1056
Bl.-w. Wb.				1222	22234	44444	44444	44433	33222	11111	11111	1111	1		20	163
G.-w. Wb.					13	34444	45555	55555	54444	43321	11111	11			20	350
Brewst.Wb.						1	12	11	1	1					4	8
Tenn. Wb.			1	13344	55667	77777	88888	88988	88888	87776	66544	33221			20	4542
Or.-cr. Wb.		1111	12222	23444	44444	44444	44444	43332	11111	11111	11				20	163
Nashv. Wb.			1	23445	55667	77778	88888	88887	77666	55443	32				20	3290
N. Parula		1	22222	33333	33344	44444	44555	55554	44433	32222	21111	111			20	326
Yellow Wb.				1111	11111	22222	33333	22222	21111	11111	111				18	68
Ch.-s. Wb.				1	22344	45566	67777	77777	77666	55544	44432				20	1101
Magn. Wb.					11111	22345	56666	77777	76666	55544	43321				20	838
Cape May Wb.					11122	33444	44443	32111	11						15	91
Bl.-t.Bl.Wb.								1	1	1					3	3

MONTH: ----- April ----- May ----- Y N
 1 11111 11112 22222 22223 1 11111 11112 22222 22223
 12345 67890 12345 67890 12345 67890 12345 67890 12345 67890 12345 67890

Timetable for Spring Migration of Birds through Forest Park, St. Louis — 1979-1998

MONTH:	April								May								Y	N
	1	11111	11112	22222	22223	1	11111	11112	22222	22223	12345	67890	12345	67890				
Y.-r. Wb.	44555	55667	77777	77888	88999	99998	88888	87777	65543	321						20	6103	
Bl.-t.Gr.Wb.			12	23333	33444	55555	66666	66666	55555	55444	43434	4321				20	877	
Bl'burn. Wb.					11	11123	34444	55555	55555	54444	33332	222111				20	317	
Y.-thr. Wb.			2	2	1	1	1	1	221	1						7	14	
Pine Wb.	11	11111	12313	32321	11111	11			1						12	29		
Prairie Wb.			1	11111	11111	11122	11111	111							9	11		
Palm Wb.	1	11111	12344	55666	77777	77777	76655	43221	11						20	1173		
Bay-br. Wb.					11111	23334	45566	66666	66665	55443	3332				20	568		
Bl'poll Wb.				11	11234	44455	66677	77777	77777	77666	65544	443322				20	1325	
Cerul. Wb.				11	11123	11122	12222	11111	22			1			16	39		
Bl.& Wh. Wb.	11111	12222	11222	11112	22333	44444	44445	55554	44444	44333	22221	2121			20	353		
Am. Redstart				11	11112	23344	55666	66666	66666	65555	44443			20	728			
Proth. Wb.				11	11111	11111	11111	11111			1	11			10	17		
Worm-e. Wb.			11	11122	22333	33333	32222	32211	11222	11111	1111			19	80			
Ovenbird				12	23333	44445	55666	66666	66665	55544	44443	333222			20	731		
N. Waterthr.				1	22334	44445	55666	66555	44444	32211	11111	1			20	407		
L. Waterthr.	221	11	33322	11112	21111	21111	11111	11111	111	1					13	24		
Kentucky Wb.					12233	33334	34444	44444	33333	33322	2111			20	150			
Conn. Wb.								1	11111	11222	22221	111111			13	23		
Mourning Wb.							1	12223	33334	44444	44444	3321			20	102		
C.Yellowthr.					11112	22333	33444	44444	43334	43332	22211	111111			19	171		
Hooded Wb.	11111	1	111	11111	11111	11111	12233	33332	22122	22111	22111	11111	111123			18	63	
Wilson's Wb.						111	11112	33444	45555	55555	54443	3332			20	292		
Canada Wb.							111	12233	44444	55555	44444	433211			20	180		
Y.-br. Chat						11	1111	1							4	5		
Summer Tan.				12	22222	22223	34433	33221	11111	11111	11111	1			17	70		
Scarlet Tan.				111	22223	34444	44445	55555	44444	44433	33321			20	270			
R.-br.Gr'bk.					1134	44555	56666	66665	55554	44333	2221			20	549			
Blue Gr.bk.							21211	22111	1						3	7		
X+ Indigo Bunt.				111	12234	44455	66766	66655	55444	44443	322223			20	841			
East. Towhee	44444	44444	44444	44444	44444	43333	44433	33333	33222	22221	11111	1111			20	259		
C- Chipping Sp.	11111	11234	44444	55666	55566	77776	66665	55555	44443	33211	11111	111112			20	984		
Field Sp.	22333	21111	11123	44444	33333	32111	11111	11111	11					16	93			
Vesper Sp.	1														1	1		
Fox Sp.	45555	44444	43212	1221											15	72		
Song Sp.	34321	11122	22221	11											9	28		
Linc. Sp.				111	11111	11122	22222	22222	11111						13	41		
Swamp Sp.		2	11211	12211	11111	12112	1121	1							10	18		
Wh.-thr. Sp.	66777	77777	77777	77777	77788	88888	88887	77766	54443	33322	21			20	3366			
Wh.-cr. Sp.						12222	33344	44444	33332						18	103		
D.-e. Junco	77766	66666	55566	66543	11111	11111								17	524			
Rusty Bk.b.	43434	34343													1	34		
Orch. Oriole					2	21111	21112	22211	11111	1					11	29		
C- Balt. Oriole				1111	11123	34444	55555	55555	55555	44432	22111	11111			20	377		
Purp. Finch	12334	33221	11111	22333	34444	43333	32211	1							12	130		
C+ House Finch	33322	11111	22222	22111	22222	22333	33333	21123	33443	32122	22111	12322			9	110		
Pine Siskin	23111	11111	32231	11111	11111	1	3							5	23			
X- Am. Goldf.	67777	77777	77777	77777	77777	77766	66555	55544	33333	33321	11111	111121			20	1976		
Ev. Gr'bk.						3	1							2	7			

BREEDING KEY:
 C Confirmed
 P Probable
 X Suspected
 + in JFK Forest
 - near JFK Forest

ABUNDANCE KEY:

code	birds/visit*
1	>0 to 0.1
2	0.1 to 0.2
3	0.2 to 0.4
4	0.4 to 1
5	1 to 2
6	2 to 4
7	4 to 10
8	10 to 20
9	20 to 60

Y = number of years species observed
 N = total no. of individuals observed

prepared by:
 Randy Korotev
 800 Oakbrook Lane
 St. Louis, MO 63132

*1-3 hour visits, 7-10 a.m.

1979-1998, rev. 1998b

Changes to WGNSS By-laws

Sue Gustafson

Upon close scrutiny of the existing WGNSS Constitution and By-laws, the board would like to make two changes related to omissions, and another change related to the Treasurer's term of office. Any changes to our constitution and by-laws require an announcement to the membership, with a vote approving such changes 30 days after announcement. The changes were announced at the January general meeting, and we will vote to approve them at the March general meeting held on March 12. (Since the February general meeting was a joint meeting with Audubon, we didn't want to address our administrative items at that time.) The three changes are as follows:

- 1) There has been no previous mention of Membership Chairman as an official member of the Executive Board. Article VI will be changed to include the Membership Chairman as a member of the Executive Board.
- 2) The term of office of Member-at-large board member was never specifically defined. Article VI will be changed stating the term of office for a Member-at-large to be no more than two consecutive two year terms.
- 3) The Treasurer currently has a term limit of two consecutive two year terms. Due to the inconvenience and inefficiency of changing account signers, bank resolutions, etc. upon a change in Treasurer, Article IV will be changed to eliminate the term limits of this officer.

If anyone is interested in receiving a copy of the complete Constitution and By-laws, please contact me at 968-8128. ♡

Janet Neilson

Vivian Liddell

The Thursday Birders of the Kyrle Bolt era have lost another friend, Janet Neilson, who died Sunday, January 3, 1999. Janet was the wife of the late Dr. Arthur W. Neilson. She graduated from Washington University with a Library Science major and a Botany minor. She was employed by St. Louis Public Library and a past president of The Wednesday Club, a member and officer of the St. Louis Poetry Center, and also a member of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society. She was a St. Luke's Hospital volunteer, recently honored for 15,000 hours of service, and an officer of the St. Luke's Hospital Auxiliary, a member of Delta Gamma Sorority and she volunteered at their Shining Light Tree Lot. She was a published and prize-winning poet and was a T. S. Eliot Society member.

I was an honored recipient of her charming *Mom's Book* of poetry. As to be expected, many of the poems are about birds. For example:

The Black-throated Green

All warblers of the flyway
Migrate through my apple tree
In May. I saw him then,
And again in Michigan
At nesting time.
As he sang from the treetop
Plaintively,
"Easy--by--the--sea"
And loved his melody.

I say along with her poem "Eleanor,"

It would have pleased you to be told
We cared. I hope you know
That I regret your going.

Contributions may be made to:
The St. Louis Poetry Center
Janet Neilson Tribute

c/o 6349 Alexander
St. Louis MO 63105

or Webster Groves Nature Study Society
Janet Neilson Tribute
c/o Randy Korotev, Treasurer
800 Oakbrook Ln.
St. Louis MO 63132 ~

Year Lists of Birds Seen in the St. Louis Area

Connie Alwood	273
Kent Lannert.....	268
George & Terry Barker....	257
Jackie Chain.....	256
Rose Ann Bodman	251
Dick Coles	240
Paul Bauer	228
John Loomis	228
Dottie Herweg.....	226
Jeannie Moe.....	225
John Solodar	222
Diane Benjamin.....	221
Lloyd Barber	209
Margo Holsen.....	208
Dick Coles' list for all US/Canada; i.e., ABA	429

Bird of the Year

Diane Benjamin

My Bird of the Year is the Carolina Chickadee! I took Dick Coles' class at Tyson, and this was the first bird I ever held in my hand and banded. It was a feisty little bird, kind of like sticking your hand in a tumbling dryer and grabbing a warm Kleenex, impaled with toothpicks. It jumped around in my hand a lot. They're a little more active than some other birds. Even though the next morning I had a rash from head to toe, it was worth it! ~

News from the MBRC

Bill Rowe

The Missouri Bird Records Committee has completed its annual report covering October 1, 1997, to September 30, 1998. This report will be printed in the March issue of *The Bluebird*, but it is also available for viewing on the web site of the Audubon Society of Missouri, at <http://mobirds.mig.missouri.edu>. The Committee finalized 78 records, with 59 accepted and 19 not accepted (acceptance rate 76%). One species, Curlew Sandpiper, was a new species for the state of Missouri, bringing our grand total state list to 416, of which 397 are fully accepted and 19 are hypothetical.

Relatively few records in this report pertain to the St. Louis area; of those that do, a majority were accepted, including records of Red-necked Grebe, Black-legged Kittiwake, Anna's Hummingbird, Varied Thrush, and White-winged Crossbill. Of the three that were not accepted, two were recent (a Yellow Rail reported from Riverlands and a Christmas Count Brewer's Blackbird record) and one was an earlier record of a Ruff, from the summer of 1995. Since this oddly-plumaged shorebird was seen by many observers, and its rejection may affect some people's state lists or life lists, it may be helpful to recap what happened. Basically, the record sparked a lot of debate on the Committee, and it went through two rounds of voting before finally being sent to nationally-known shorebird authority Dennis Paulson (author of *Shorebirds of the Pacific Northwest*). He examined the evidence, which included an excellent drawing, and decided that he could not support the identification as a Ruff. His best guess, instead, was that it had been an unusual-looking Pectoral Sandpiper.

For the benefit of those who remember the bird, here is a summary of the points Paulson made:

1. To have the black area on the underparts that this bird had—surmised by some to be remnants of breeding plumage—it would have had to be a male; yet the bird was much too small for a male Ruff, being described as only slightly larger than nearby Pectorals. Male Ruffs are considerably larger than male Pectorals, weighing twice as much; this is as great as the difference between Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs.
2. The supercilium was too long and conspicuous for a Ruff in any plumage.
3. Ruffs do not have the very dark lores that this bird had.
4. This bird had a considerable primary projection past the tertials; Ruffs have virtually none. Paulson did not think that every detail matched a typical Pectoral either, but he surmised that it might have been a male Pectoral with oil or feather damage or something else causing the blackish color on the underparts. At any rate, upon perusing his comments, the Committee saw plenty of grounds for doubt that it really was a Ruff and voted not to accept. Observers who studied the bird themselves are, of course, free to use their own judgment about listing it. And if additional notes or photographs that weren't originally submitted should ever come to light, it is always possible to send the record through again, since the rules allow for resubmission of any record if there is new information that might change things.

It may also be worth noting that nearly all of the "biggest" bird records of the '90's at St. Louis—the species that were a first state record or a first modern area record—have been fully accepted by the Committee. These include Neotropic Cormorant (area), frigatebird sp.(area; almost certainly Magnificent), Garganey (state), Long-billed Curlew (area),

Glaucous-winged Gull (state), Ross's Gull (state), Anna's Hummingbird (area), and Sprague's Pipit (area). The only exceptions are a couple of one-time observations of hard-to-identify species that could not be relocated or photographed.

Finally, the newly-revised Missouri bird checklist is in press at this writing and will be available soon from the Treasurer of the Audubon Society of Missouri. ∞

Extra: Ornithology Meeting: Special Video On Warblers

Paul Bauer

A special meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 29, 1999 at Powder Valley Nature Center Auditorium; 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. The main feature of this program should appeal to all birders. To be shown is *Watching Warblers: A Video Guide to the Warblers of Eastern North America*, filmed by Michael Male with sound recorded by Judy Fieth. The timing for this program is just when the major numbers of warblers arrive here, and only ten days before Big Day!!

This video was described in detail with rave reviews in a recent issue of *Birder's World*. The text in the ABA catalog says in part: "Certainly the best video we have observed on any one group of birds, and absolutely unparalleled on the group of eastern North American wood warblers. The visual and auditory review of species... is a *must* for birders each spring as we prepare for the new birding year."

This program is jointly promoted by the St. Louis Audubon Society and WGNSS in cooperation with Powder Valley. In addition to the 60-minute video, there will also a 15-minute slide presentation for new birders to show a few "book" maps, and bird photos to illustrate a several of the best nearby locations to find these migrants.

The auditorium is limited to 200 persons, and this program will be announced in the MDC April newsletter: *Making Tracks*. It is free and open to the public. However **reservations are required**; call 314/301-1500 on or after April 15, 1999. Make a note on you calendar now. ∞

Revised St. Louis Area Bird Book Now Available

Paul Bauer

Birds of the St. Louis Area: Where and When to Find Them, has been revised and reprinted. Copies are now available in the St. Louis area from all local Wild Bird Centers, Wild Bird Unlimited, Wildbird Marketplace (and other similar stores), the Missouri Botanical Garden Bookstore, and Shaw Arboretum Shop. By mail the book is available as catalog #308 from the American Birding Association (ABA); call 1-800/634-7736. You may charge it to a credit card.

This new edition has about 80 revisions made to the text and maps. Also we added four new birding locations and revised directions and instructions for several others, so the total birding locations described now exceed 125 places. Numerous revisions were necessary to the 17 colored maps to fit the revised directions.

If possible revisions were made in the existing text space, but when necessary the longer changes were added to an appendix, which has 10 additional pages. The book now totals 202 pages.

The appendix includes the above mentioned corrections and additions to birding locations, changes in AOU species names, significant new bird records, general lodging information for visitors, and a checklist of 357 species of birds seen the St. Louis area since 1940.

The individual species reviews now total 380 species that have ever been reported in

our area. Nine new species were added in this revision. See the new book to find out which ones! The colored seasonal occurrence bar graphs provide detailed visual information on what birds should be expected, and how common they are for each 10 day period during the year. Best of all the book has a spiral binding so it can lay open on the front seat of your car, or on a window sill at home.

So if you have *any* interest in birds, where to find birds, when specific birds should be expected in this area, and the historic records of rare bird sightings around St. Louis, make it a point to buy this beautiful book *soon*. If you have questions, call Paul Bauer at 314/921-3972. ∞

January Birding Report

Jim Ziebol & Yvonne Homeyer
Pied-billed Grebes were reported from Riverlands, Horseshoe Lake, and Busch (m. ob.) and a Homed Grebe was seen at Ellis Bay/Riverlands on 1/11 (CM). Four Double-crested Cormorants were at Horseshoe on 1/10 (FH) and one was observed at Riverlands (WK). An icy winter storm on the second froze area lakes, forcing many waterbirds to the Mississippi River or to the south. Twenty-six Great Blue Herons were at Canteen Lake/Horseshoe on 1/13 (DBz). During the week of 1/10, a Tundra Swan (JS) and a Mute Swan (KL) were briefly seen at Riverlands. Two Tundras were observed at Riverlands on 1/24 (BR, G&TB). A Ross' Goose was located at Baldwin Lake on 1/16 (G&Th). At the Hwy. 143 marsh, two Wood Ducks were seen on 1/14 (FH) and 2 Green-winged Teal on 1/16 (RB). At Horseshoe, Gadwall and Pintail were observed on 1/land 2 Black Ducks on 1/24 (FH). Northern Shovelers were first reported on 1/13 with Canvasbacks, Ring-necked Ducks, and others in an open area of Canteen Lake/Horseshoe (DBz). Hundreds

of Canada Geese and Mallards were feeding in the fields off Schoolhouse Road that day. High counts include 8 duck species on 1/4 at Riverlands with Hooded Merganser and Greater Scaup seen (CA, MT). Over 1000 Canvasbacks and Goldeneyes were estimated at Riverlands on 1/7 (BR). Twenty-two Hooded Mergansers and 400+ Common Mergansers were along Layton Road/Horseshoe on 1/24 (FH). A Barrow's Goldeneye was quite a surprise on 1/24 (BR). This hotlined bird has not appeared in the St. Louis area in over 20 years. On the same day, Dave Becher found a White-winged Scoter at Riverlands, producing the second hotline. A very rare **Harlequin Duck** was hotlined from Lincoln Shields/Riverlands on 1/30 by Steve Dilks. The last record was 1884! A Ruddy Duck was found at Alton Barge on 1/25 (FH) and a Bufflehead appeared at Riverlands on 1/24 (G&TB). The Hwy. 143 marsh contained 2 Snipe on 1/1 (CA) and 1 Snipe on 1/4 (MT). The pair survived the storms and were still present on 1/14 (FH) and 17 were counted on 1/16 (RB). Woodcocks were seen and heard on Mark Peters' property in Jefferson County on 1/28; this is the first year Woodcocks have arrived so early.

Thirteen N. Harriers, including 3 males, were observed on 1/4 at Riverlands, an extraordinary number for a single location (KL, CA). Sharp-shinned Hawks were found at Horseshoe on 1/1 (FH) and at Busch on 1/26 (JMo). An adult Cooper's Hawk with a distended crop was seen at Jim Ziebol's house on 1/6. The only N. Goshawk for the month was found at Riverlands on 1/12 (JMo and m. ob.). A Red-shouldered Hawk was located on 1/23 at Busch (TBr) and another was seen at Horseshoe on 1/24 (FH). A Krider's Hawk was observed at the Borrow Pit on 1/1 (FH) and one at Busch on 1/23 (TBr). A dark-phase Rough-legged Hawk was present on 1/4 at Riverlands (MT) and 2 light-phase

birds were seen at Heron Pond and Teal Pond/Riverlands on 1/6 (JMo, m. ob.) Peregrine Falcons were observed at Riverlands on 1/19 (JMo) and on 1/26 (G&TB). A Bonaparte's Gull was reported from Riverlands on 1/10 (KL) and even more unusual were 3 at the Borrow Pit on 1/24 (FH). The first Thayer's Gull of the year, a first-winter bird, was seen at the landfill near the Borrow Pit on 1/1 (FH). A first-year Glaucous Gull was located at Lincoln Shields/Riverlands on 1/4 and 2 first-years were seen at the Borrow Pit on 1/25 (KL, CA). Dan Kassebaum hotlined an adult Glaucous Gull, an adult Thayer's, a first-winter Iceland and a first-winter Great Black-backed Gull on 1/4 from the Riverlands dam. Two first-year Thayer's, an adult Lesser Black-backed, and a first-year Glaucous were also found there on 1/7 (BR, m. ob). On 1/10, an adult Thayer's with 2 subadults, an adult Iceland, a first-winter Iceland, and a third-year Lesser Black-backed Gull were observed at Riverlands (LW, RK). Thayer's is making a good showing so far in 1999. Thirty-six Turkeys were seen at Horseshoe on 1/1 (FH).

Short-eared Owls have been present at Riverlands since October. Three owls were cruising the fields on 1/4 (KL, CA). A Screech Owl was heard on 1/15 at the University City home of Wilma Kennell, who hears them regularly. A Long-eared Owl was closely observed at Horseshoe on 1/24 (FH) and another on 1/25 (KL, CA). A Barred Owl was chased by crows in Tower Grove Park on 1/18 (RB). Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were reported from several neighborhoods: University City, 12/31 to 1/4 (WK), Ballwin on 1/4 (Peggy Leonard), Crestwood on 12/27 (DBz), and a regular at the Rock Hill home of Larry Wells. Forty-five Horned Larks were counted near Horseshoe on 1/6 (FH). Several Hermit Thrush were still being seen, including one

at Busch on 1/26 (JMo) and several in Jefferson County (MP). The numbers of Hermit Thrush this winter, plus the Eastern Phoebes that have been reported, reflect the extremely warm conditions of November and early December. A Brown Thrasher was seen at a feeder on Layton Rd/Horseshoe on 1/1 (FH, m. ob.) and another was seen in University City on 12/22 (WK). Golden-crowned Kinglets and Yellow-rumped Warblers were reported throughout the area in January. Brown Creeper has been another regular visitor at the Wells' home in Rock Hill (L&MW). Eight species of sparrows were found at Riverlands on 1/4 (MT) and hundreds of American Tree and many Eurasian Tree was also observed (CA). The icy storm of Jan. 2 pushed many sparrows to suburban feeders: American Tree and Fox were seen in Fenton at the home of David Rabena and at the home of Wilma Kennell in U. City, and American Tree and Song at the Ballwin home of Peggy Leonard. A female Oregon Junco was mixed in the sparrows at the Wells' home in Rock Hill. A feeder in Elsau, Illinois, produced one Pine Siskin on 1/10 (KL). Lapland Longspurs were seen by many at the Riverlands' headquarters for about a week starting on 1/5. Fifteen others were seen in West Alton on 1/6 (JMo) and still others were seen on Red School Road (G&TB). On 1/9, a Snow Bunting was found at Riverlands' headquarters (RB, JC) and 2 were seen the following day (m. ob.).

Carlyle Lake Report (Dan Kassebaum): On 1/9, in spite of the ice and snow, LeConte's Sparrows were still present at the North Allen Branch access. On 1/15, many Loggerhead Shrikes were seen near the lake in Clinton County. On 1/23, 5 coyotes were observed out on the frozen lake attempting to sneak up on a flock of Canada Geese. On 1/28, 5 Trumpeter Swans were killed near the Patoka access; US Fish & Wildlife are investigating. On 1/30, many waterfowl

were using the flooded fields of Santa Fe Bottoms including Wood Ducks, Green-winged Teal, Widgeons, Pintails, Black Ducks, Canvasbacks, Redhead, Ring-necked Ducks, Bufflehead, and others. A flock of 1500 Rusty Blackbirds was also seen.

Comments: Fifteen Trumpeter Swans were seen at Riverlands on 1/24 (CM). The Budgerigar that was in a sparrow flock in South St. Louis since August finally disappeared in mid-December. In response to inquiries about the Ringed-turtle Dove population in South St. Louis, several small flocks are regularly seen at feeders. The ABA does not consider these birds countable. Cooper's Hawks, and to a lesser extent Sharp-shins, are becoming as common in urban and suburban areas of St. Louis as in wooded areas, apparently finding pigeons, starlings and the like an abundant food source. Michelle Wells photographed a Cooper's at her feeder in Rock Hill and Wilma Kennell observed a Sharp-shinned Hawk at her feeder in U. City. Another birder relates that during the 1960's, 8 Harris's Sparrows were possible at Busch in a single day, when multiflora rose was more common; 2 in one day were possible as late as the 80's. A suggestion from *Field Notes* (an ABA/Audubon Society journal compiling birding records for N. America) is to carefully separate the *tundrius* Peregrines (migratory) from the locally released Peregrines. *Tundrius* are a beautiful powder blue above and fairly light below; the released one are dark overall. Young *tundrius* are pale-headed and both young and adult have a thin moustachial stripe. They typically migrate late April to mid-May and late September to mid-October.

Dave Jones, a lifelong member of WGNSS and a world-class birder, passed away in late January after a long illness. He was truly a birding scholar and assisted in identifying the Slaty-backed Gull in 1984.

PS: Be on the lookout and report albino or partial-albino Red-tailed Hawks. There is a gentleman in the area that is studying them. He would like a phot if you can get it. He'd also like locations and times. Report to Jim Ziebol, 781-7372.

Contributors: Connie Alwood, George & Terry Barker, David Becher, Tory Berger, Rose Ann Bodman, Dennis Bozzay, Jackie Chain, Frank Holmes, Dan Kassebaum, Wilma Kennell, Randy Korotev, Kent Lannert, Jim & Charlene Malone, Jeannie Moe, Mark Peters, Bill Rowe, John Solodar, Mike Treffert, Larry & Michelle Wells, and (m. ob.) many observers. ~

Bird Song Class at Flo Valley CC

"Introduction to Missouri Bird Song" class will be offered at the St. Louis Community College/Florissant Valley this spring. This time, it will be a four-part class running from March 24—April 7, in the classroom. A field trip will be at Busch Conservation Area, St. Charles Co., on April 17 to apply your newly learned skills.

Spring is the best time to hear the birds in their vocal glory. Come and learn the basic songs of the warblers and other passerines that breed or migrate through Missouri with the use of mnemonics and other "tricks of the trade." Last spring, were you frustrated by being able to only hear the birds and not see them in the overgrown trees and bushes? Time to learn just what those little buggers were that were taunting you incessantly from their protective cover.

To register call SLCC-Flo Valley 314/595-4444. For more information about the class call Jim Malone at 314/536-1119.

Upcoming SLAS/WGNSS Birding

Jim Malone

In the next few months, St. Louis Audubon Society (SLAS) and WGNSS will be offering regular bird walks at Horseshoe Lake (February 20th, 9 AM), Busch C.A. (March 6, 8 AM), and Castlewood State Park (April 25th, 8 AM) but we also have some very special events!

On March 21st we will be trying our first Sparrow Round-up at Horseshoe Lake, Illinois. We tried to time this event to coincide with the spring migration of sparrows through the area. If the sparrow gods are with us, we could see Swamp, Song, Savannah, American Tree, Field, Vesper, LeConte's, White-throated, White-crowned, and Eurasian Tree Sparrows as we work our way through and the fields near Horseshoe Lake.

April 10 Bill Rowe will be leading us on a trip to see Greater Prairie Chickens in Central Missouri. Bill plans to take us to established Prairie Chicken leks at High Lonesome Prairie. We will then travel to Mora Conservation Area, Eagle Bluffs, and Bradford farms before returning to St. Louis. Possible birds on this trip include Henslow's and LeConte's Sparrows, Smith's Longspur, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, and Upland Sandpiper. To limit the impact of our viewing on this fragile population of birds, we will be limiting numbers on this trip to 20-25 people, so we ask all interested parties to contact Jim Malone at 536-1119 for information, or send \$5 to reserve a space and get an information packet. This should be a great trip!

The final special birding outing of this period is our annual Woodcock walk and Owl Prowl at Busch Conservation area in St. Charles county Missouri. We will meet at the Hampton Lake parking lot at 7 PM, and car pool from there to where the Woodcock's are displaying. In previous Woodcock walks we have seen the

Woodcock courting flights each year, as well as Barred Owls, Great Horned Owls, Common Loons, and lots of other great birds. Come out and join us for this unique experience.

As always, on these walks our aim is for every participant to see each bird. We welcome birders of all experience levels and would love for you to join us! ~

Job Announcement Audubon Missouri

The National Audubon Society, one of the nation's leading conservation organizations, is seeking a director for Audubon Missouri, a new state office. The director will be the chief executive officer for Audubon within Missouri and responsible for the organization's overall performance in that state. The director will be an employee of the National Audubon Society, will be accountable to the membership of the state of Missouri, and coordinate with the Board of Directors of Audubon Missouri on policy and program implementation issues.

The Director will be responsible for the growth and development, management, and integration of all Audubon programs within Missouri including: wildlife policy, habitat management and restoration, water quality issues, management of National Audubon sanctuaries and centers, environmental education, private landowner outreach, government affairs, implementation of the Important Bird Areas program, Audubon Campaigns, science, communication, media relations and fundraising.

This position requires a proven commitment to conservation, a high level of professional experience in wildlife conservation, public lands management, private landowner outreach, and solid fundraising experience. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, computer literacy, and

experience working with volunteers of a non-profit organization are essential.

We offer a competitive salary and benefits package. For confidential consideration, send resume indicating salary requirements to: Glenn Olson, Field Director, National Audubon Society, 555 Audubon Place, Sacramento, CA 95825. Equal Opportunity Employer. Minorities are encouraged to apply. ~

Flora of MO, Vol. 1 available

The first volume of the revised edition of Steyermark's *Flora of Missouri*, by George Yatskievych, will be available for sale on about 25 February. This ca. 1000 page book, published by the Missouri Department of Conservation in collaboration with the Missouri Botanical Garden, will contain treatments of about 800 species of ferns, fern allies, conifers, and monocots growing outside of cultivation in the state, as well as a lengthy group of introductory chapters. Copies of this hard cover book will be available for \$38 at the MBG Garden Gate Shop, Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center, and other MDC offices around the state. WGNSS members are also invited to a program and book signing on 2 March (7:30 PM, Ridgway Center, MBG), when George will present a program to the Missouri Native Plant Society chapter entitled, "The Flora of Missouri Project, From Abutilon to Zygophyllaceae." Copies of *The Flora* will be available. ~

our website

<http://levee.wustl.edu/~rlk/wgnss/>

Styron nature line

Call 935-8432 for a summary of the latest bird sightings in the St. Louis area. Please report any unusual birds to Connie Alwood, 524-8111. ~



Next Deadline: March 5

Uh-oh! Next month *also* starts on a Monday so we have the **earliest possible deadline!** Submissions—handwritten, typed, IBM or Mac to: Anne McCormack, 587 Andrews, St. Louis MO 63122. Computer wizards: Thanks for sending a printout along with your disk.

Last minute change? Short article? Call me at 965-8091, voice mail 965-7205 or e-mail: **finearts@mail.stjosephacad.com**

1998-9 WGNSS Board

President: Sue Gustafson, 9007 N. Swan Circle, St. Louis MO 63144, 968-8128.

1st Vice Pres: Doug Corbett, 702 C Overlook Cir. Dr., Manchester MO 63021, 861-2829.

2nd Vice Pres: Vicki Flier, 18 Algonquin Wood, St. Louis MO 63122, 968-9166

Treasurer: Randy Korotev, 800 Oakbrook Ln., St. Louis MO 63132, 993-0055.

Secretary: Dora Gianoulakis, 44 Clearview Park, St. Louis MO 63138, 741-8425.

Editor: Anne McCormack, 587 Andrews, St. Louis MO 63122-5722, 965-8091.

Membership: Linda Virga, 9734 Antonia Dr., St. Louis MO 63123, 544-3313.

Ornithology: David Becher, 12829 Mariners Pt Ct., St. Louis MO 63141, 576-1146.

Ornithology: Kevin Renick PO Box 31785, St. Louis MO 63131, 918-1085.

Botany: Fr. James Sullivan, 124 Holy Family Church Rd., New Haven MO 63068, 573-459-6441.

Entomology: Marshall Magner, 516 Bacon Ave, Webster Groves MO 63119, 961-4588.

Environmental Education: Dick Coles, 11 Hickory Ln., Eureka MO 63025, 938-5271.

Conservation: Yvonne Homeyer, 1508 Oriole Ln., St. Louis MO 63144 963-7750. ∞

Member at Large: John Molyneaux, 7822 Garden Ave., St. Louis MO 63119, 961-5181.

Member at Large: Tom O’Gorman, 465 N. Geyer, St. Louis MO 63122, 821-8079.

Member at Large: Ginnie Young, 1306 S. Geyer, St. Louis MO 63122, 822-9006.

Sigma Xi Seminars

Sigma Xi Science Seminars are co-sponsored by the St. Louis Zoo and the Academy of Science, on Wed. evenings, 7:30–9 PM, at the Living World, on the north side of the zoo. Free parking available in north lot. All events are free. More info, call 768-5466 or 533-8083.

March 10: “Paddlefish: Biology of a Freshwater Whale,” by Dr. Lon Wilkens, UMSL. ∞

internet address

<http://levee.wustl.edu/~rlk/wgnss/>

Copyright Statement

All articles in *Nature Notes* are printed with the author’s permission. Persons or organizations wishing to reprint articles should obtain the author’s permission and list credit to *Nature Notes*, Webster Groves Nature Study Society. Contact the editor. ∞

Webster Groves Nature Study Society

Meetings

Wednesday, March 3

7:15-8:30 PM Board meets at Kirkwood Library on Jefferson in Kirkwd. All members welcome.

Friday, March 12

WGNSS general membership meeting, 8 PM at the St. Louis Co. Library HQ on Lindbergh. Tim Morrison will present a slide show on the Audubon Field Ecology Camp in Wyoming.

Entomology

Sunday, February 20

7-9 PM at Magner's, 516 Bacon Ave. Webster Groves MO (961-4588). Rich Thoma will present a program on "Insect Adaptations to the Desert."

Sunday, March 21

7-9 PM at Magner's. Ted Macrae will present a program on "Rain Forest Natural History." No doubt there will be some reference to insects. Please note change of date to the third Sunday.

Conservation

Sundays, March 21 & April 18

4:00 PM at Yvonne Homeyer's, 1508 Oriole Lane in Brentwood (963-7750). Any interested member is welcome.

Botany

Beginners welcome. Bring lunch, weather gear.

Thursdays in Feb. & March

Field trips usually meet at 9:30 AM; trip is normally 3-5 hr. plus travel time. Led by Fr. James Sullivan. Call Catherine Filla, 481-5298, after 5 PM Wed. for location.

Birding

Open to all. Call David Becher 576-1146.

Thursdays in Feb. & March

8:30 AM West County shopping center, south lower lot behind Penney's, lamp post #1.

Sat. Feb. 27, March 13, 20, 27, April 3

8:00 AM West County. See above.

Saturday Feb. 20

9:00 AM WGNSS/SLAS trip to Horseshoe Lake State Park; meet at headquarters. For more information: Jim Malone, 314/536-1119.

Birding cont.

Saturday March 6

8:00 AM WGNSS/SLAS Busch Conservation Area; meet at Hampton Lake parking lot, left of the entrance. Call Jim Malone, above.

Sunday March 21

8:00 AM WGNSS/SLAS Horseshoe Lk; 1st Annual Sparrow Roundup. Meet in main parking area. Bring lunch. More info: J Malone, above.

Sunday, March 28:

4:00 PM Get-together at the Flier's, 18 Algonquin Woods in Glendale, off Berry Rd., south of Manchester. Kevin Renick will review spring bird song—thrushes, vireos and, yes, warblers. Call Kevin for more info: 918-1085.

Saturday April 10

8:00 AM Busch Wildlife Area. Meet at Hampton Lake. Bring lunch.

Saturday April 17

8:00 AM Tower Grove Park. Meet at first picnic area past stables on right. Bring lunch.

Saturday April 24

8:00 AM Gray Summit Arboretum. Meet at entrance to Brush Creek Trail. Day spent walking. Bring a lunch you can carry.

Thursday April 29

7-8:30 PM Powder Valley Auditorium. Presenting *A Video Guide to the Warblers of Eastern North America*. Reservations are required: call 314-301-1500 on or after April 15.

Saturday May 1

7:30 AM Meet at West County. See above.

Saturday May 8

Big Day!

Saturday May 15

7:30 AM Castlewood State Park. Meet near boat launch. Bring lunch.


Saturday May 22

7:30 AM Meet at West County. See above.

NatureNotes deadline March 5

join wgnss!

Send \$15 yearly dues to Randy Korotev, 800 Oakbrook Ln., St. Louis MO 63132.

 Webster Groves
Nature Study Society
PO Box 190065
St. Louis MO 63119

Non-profit Org.
US Postage Paid
St. Louis MO
Permit #690

address correction requested

PATRICIA MC CORMICK
1338 EAGLEBROOK CT
MANCHESTER MO 63021

63021X7549 32



ebster



roves



ature



tudy



ociety

WGNSS: PO Box 190065, St. Louis MO 63119
<http://levee.wustl.edu/~rlk/wgnss/>
President: Sue Gustafson, 9007 N. Swan Circle, St. Louis MO 63144
1st Vice Pres: Doug Corbett, 702 C Overlook Dr., Manchester MO 63021
2nd Vice Pres: Vicki Flier, 18 Algonquin Wood, St. Louis MO 63122
Treasurer: Randy Korotev, 800 Oakbrook Ln., St. Louis MO 63132
Secretary: Dora Gianoulakis, 44 Clearview Park, St. Louis MO 63138
Editor: Anne McCormack, 587 Andrews, St. Louis MO 63122
Membership: Linda Virga, 9734 Antonia Dr., St. Louis MO 63123

The objectives of the society are: To stimulate interest in nature study on the part of adults and children; to cooperate with other organizations in nature study; to encourage amateur research in the natural sciences; to promote conservation of wildlife and natural beauty. Open to all with an interest in nature.

established in 1920