

INDIANA DUNES BIRD REPORT: SPRING 2011

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March was cool (1°F below normal in Chicago) and precipitation was near average.

April weather was also cool and rainy (precipitation 1.2 inches of precipitation above average); however, one spectacular day did occur 10 April when temperatures reached a record 82°F (26° above normal) in the Dunes. This cold, damp weather retarded foliage development; by 1 May few, if any, of the Dunes area trees were fully leafed.

When May arrived the weather switched directly into summer mode, bringing exceptionally warm temperatures (it reached 90° on the 10th). However, as often occurs, the weather soured significantly just in time for the May Day Count. Monthly temperatures were 0.8°F below normal and precipitation was a soggy 8.89 inches above average.

The 2011 spring flight was characterized by cool and unusually wet weather. High precipitation affected a number of species, especially shorebirds, by inundating McCool Basin (our prime shorebird site) and dispersing the birds across flooded fields throughout the state.

May Day Count: The 2011 count was on 14 May, a cold, wet, foggy, and windy day. The high temperature recorded on my SUV thermometer was 47°F, which is some 22 degrees below the normal high. The weather made birding difficult and quite depressing, as it followed several mid-80° days. Despite inclement conditions, the Porter Co team put together a list of 160 species.

Rarities: This spring's lakefront rarities included: Ross's Goose, Swainson's Hawk, Marbled Godwit, Purple Sandpiper, and "Lawrence's" Warbler.

Longshore Flights: It was a good spring for longshore flights; indeed the Grube IIIa magnitude placed six 2011 flights in the top 20 of all time. The best of these occurred 7 May when the fourth best flight (among the top 20) occurred. Noteworthy aspects of this flight included 128 Eastern Kingbirds, 2280 Blue Jays, 20 Nashville Warblers, 1090 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 77 Palm Warblers, and 30 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks.

The Green Tower Site: As the location of the previous tall green water tank has become one of the most popular Dunes S.P. birding locations

(especially for lake, hawk, and longshore flight watches), it has been designated as a specific site in the database.

Weirdest Occurrence: Brad Bumgardner described this event as follows: "The oddity of the day was a Cerulean Warbler near the Wilson Shelter singing a dead on golden-winged impersonation. We watched it in front of us at eye level for nearly 5 minutes, never deviating from the "bee bzzz bzzz bzzz" call. I captured some quick video that recorded the sound and attached it as an mp3 if you want to hear it. I also photographed the Cerulean Warbler, he looks quite pure." See John Cassady's photo of this bird on page 8.

The table below summarizes the 2011 spring flight by bird groups using the Migration Index (MI- definition appended). It suggests that once again passerines generally fared better than non-passerines. Among the groups gulls and shorebirds staged feeble flights; the best numbers were logged for swallows and thrushes.

Group	MI/species	Group	MI/species
Ducks	-0.11	Flycatchers	+0.18
Loons/Grebes	-0.10	Vireos	+0.04
Herons	+0.15	Swallows	+0.33
Raptors	+0.13	Wrens	-0.04
Shorebirds	-0.19	Thrushes	+0.23
Gulls	-0.32	Warblers	+0.16
Terns	+0.08	Sparrows	-0.08

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SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Greater White-fronted Goose:- Two accompanied the 800+ Canada Geese at Striebel Pond on 1 Mar (KJB).

Ross's Goose:- One was seen with a Snow Goose in Forsythe Park 20 Apr (C.A. Marsh). This is the lakefront's first April, and latest spring, record. It lingered until 29 Apr (C.A. Marsh).



Ross's Goose and Ring-billed Gull at Hammond's Forsythe Park on 23 April 2011. The gull provides a good measure of size. This Ross's Goose frequented the park and adjacent Wolf Lake about ten days and provided the lakefront's latest ever spring record (photo by KJB).

Cackling Goose:- One was observed among the 800+ Canada Geese at Striebel Pond on 1 Mar (KJB).

DUCKS

The lakefront experienced a below average spring for ducks with a mean MI/species of -0.11 . Several sea ducks and the American Black Duck made the weakest showings. Moderately robust Shoveler and Ring-necked Duck flights provided the strongest spring numbers.

American Black Duck:- Only two reports for the spring season (TYM=17).

Harlequin Duck:- The wintering adult male was seen at Whihala Beach on 12 Mar (Michael Topp), but was not reported thereafter.

Surf Scoter:- An ad. male at Michigan City Harbor on 5 Mar (Leland Shaum et al.), provided the season's only report (TYM=8.8).

Black Scoter:- For the second consecutive spring this sea duck was not reported on the lakefront (TYM=2.6).

Long-tailed Duck:- Brad Bumgardner logged the spring's only Long-tailed, a male, off the Green Tower site on 9 Apr (TYM=15.5).

LOONS-GREBES

This group fared poorly with an average MI/species of -0.10 . This low value resulted from the absence of both Red-necked and Eared Grebes, plus a very poor Common Loon flight. However, a fine Red-throated Loon flight mitigated the negative impact.

Red-throated Loon:- Most impressive, especially for this late date, was a flight of (43) at the Green Tower site on 30 Apr (J.J. McCoy et al.). This is the state's fifth largest flight. For the season 178 were reported, which far exceeds the TYM of 35.5.

Common Loon:- This diver made a poor showing on the lakefront with only 80 reported (TYM=284). The season's largest tally was (31) off the Green Tower site on 3 Apr (Brad Bumgardner).

American White Pelican:- According to Jean Rudd, on 18 Apr National Lakeshore interpreter Sue Bennett observed (2) on the Beverly Shores pond at Broadway and Beverly Drive. A singleton flew past the Green Tower site on 24 Apr (B.J. Grube).

Double-crested Cormorant:- J.J. McCoy discovered a new nesting colony in Gary, between Georgia Street and Martin Luther King Drive (just s. of I-80/94). Some 19 active nests, along with a similar number of Great Blue Heron nests, were counted on 27 May.

HERONS

Despite missing Cattle Egret this group fared well with an average MI/species of 0.15. Eight other members of this group, including Snowy Egret and Little Blue Heron, were recorded.

Least Bittern:- This species returned to Grant St. wetland again this year; (3) were observed there on 28 May (L.S. Hinchman, J.J. McCoy, S.R. Bagby, J.K. Cassady, & KJB).

Snowy Egret:- On 21 May J.J. McCoy found (1) in the Gary wetland on Georgia Street (TYM=0.85).

Little Blue Heron:- This small heron has recently become difficult to find on the lakefront. Thus, (2) adults found in the Hammond Sanctuary 11 May was noteworthy (L.W. Sterrenburg & Amy Kearns). L.S. Hinchman also saw two adults in Michigan City on 23 May (TYM=0.46).

Black-crowned Night-Heron:- A record spring occurred on the lakefront with 294 reported (TYM=93.4). The first spring report came from Striebel Pond where S.R. Bagby found an adult on 4 Apr. The season's highlight took place 12 May when a DNR survey of the East Chicago Lakefront yielded an amazing (260) nests (J.S. Castrale et al.).

DIURNAL RAPTORS

The spring raptor flight was the best in recent years with 15 species, including Goshawk and Swainson's, reported. The average MI/species was +0.13.

The 887 hawks logged on this year's watches constitute the largest spring flight since 2004; however, this total remains well below the TYM of 1218 birds. The 2011 flight was characterized by excellent diversity; the season's roster included all the regulars, plus Goshawk, Swainson's Hawk, and Golden Eagle. The season's best day occurred on the 30 April when 247 raptors were counted.

One unusual aspect of the 2011 flight was low Red-tailed Hawk numbers. This year Red-taileds comprised only 24% of the entire flight, whereas, over the past two decades the mean percentage of this common raptor was 35%. Indeed, for only the second time in 23 years fewer Red-taileds were

recorded than Sharp-shinned Hawks.

SUMMARY 2011 DUNES HAWK-WATCHES 01 March – 11 May 20-year Mean inside “()”			
Total	Species	Total	Species
55	Turkey Vulture (88)	213	Red-tailed (434)
26	Osprey (13)	8	Rough-legged (7)
4	Bald Eagle (4)	23	Buteo sp. (40)
59	N. Harriers (65)	2	Golden Eagle (1)
306	Sharp-shinned (283)	55	Am. Kestrel (65)
63	Cooper's (47)	10	Merlin (4)
1	N. Goshawk (1)	4	Peregrine (3)
1	Accipiter sp. (8)	1	Falcon sp. (2)
23	Red-shouldered (60)	1	Swainson's
32	Broad-winged (84)	887	TOTAL (1218)

Major contributors to this year's total included: S.R. Bagby, Brad Bumgardner, J.K. Cassady, B.J. Grube, P.B. Grube, L.S. Hinchman, J.C. Kendall, J.J. McCoy, R.J. Pals, and KJB.

Osprey:- The 26 birds tallied at the hawk watches constituted the best count since 61 were recorded during 1992's record flight.

Northern Goshawk:- During a 9 Apr hawk-watch an immature flew eastward past the Green Tower site (J.C. Kendall, L.S. Hinchman, J.J. McCoy, & KJB). The Goshawk was harassed by a crow, which it dwarfed, and buffy bars were visible on the upper wing coverts.

Swainson's Hawk:- An adult light-morph flew westward over the Green Tower site during a 9 May hawk-watch (KJB & J.C. Kendall).

Golden Eagle:- While waiting in line at the car wash, KJB observed an immature flying westward over Chesterton on 1 Mar and J.J. McCoy saw one (visible from the Green Tower site) on 17 Mar. A sub-adult flew over Dunes S.P. on 30 Apr (J.K. Cassady, L.S. Hinchman, R.J. Pals, & KJB).

Merlin:- The lakefront experienced a record flight this spring with 14 birds reported (TYM=6.6); four of these were logged on the hawk-watches.

Common Moorhen:- It was a good year for this wetland bird. In addition to reports from the

regular sites (west Beverly Shores, Cline Ave. Marsh, and Grant Street wetland), a new site was discovered 14 May when J.J. McCoy found (1) in east Beverly Shores along Lakeshore County Road.

SHOREBIRDS

It was a very poor spring for lakefront shorebirds. Although the average MI/species, a grim -0.19 , was reduced by the absence of American Avocet, Stilt Sandpiper, and Long-billed Dowitcher, many common species also occurred in low numbers. Season highlights included Piping Plovers, Marbled Godwits, plus an entirely unexpected Purple Sandpiper.

American Golden-Plover:- A flyby singleton, sighted at the Green Tower site 30 Apr (J.K. Cassady), provided the season's only report (TYM=12.8).

Piping Plover:- It was an impressive season with three birds reported. National Lakeshore employee Susan MiHalo discovered the first bird at West Beach on 6 May. Subsequently, Michael Topp found (2) at Miller Beach during the Big May Count on the 14th. One of the latter was banded as follows: Left Leg (Orange) - Right Leg (Metallic over light Green). The TYM=0.7.

Willet:- Present in low numbers with only three reported all spring (TYM=8.45).

Marbled Godwit:- A flock of (26), along with one Willet, was on the grass at Forsythe Park 26 Apr (C.A. Marsh). This is the lakefront's largest daily count (TYM=1.7) and Indiana's fourth largest tally.

Sanderling:- Two, present on the Dunes S.P. beach 10 Apr (Brad Bumgardner, B.J. Grube, & P.B. Grube), constituted a new early spring arrival date for Indiana.

White-rumped Sandpiper:- Lakefront birders enjoyed the best flight since 1999, with four birds reported (TYM=1.25). The first bird appeared at McCool Basin 20 May (Penny Starin & J.C. Kendall) and (2) were present the following day (m.ob.). On 22 May B.J. Grube observed a flyby at the Green Tower site in Dunes S.P.

Pectoral Sandpiper:- Acutely scarce on the lakefront with only 63 reported, which is the lowest spring total in four years (TYM=272).

Purple Sandpiper:- Amazingly, one was found on the Hammond Sanctuary beach 14 May (R.J. Sanderson, Ryan Hamilton, & Dave Wantz). This is Indiana's third spring, and first May record.

Stilt Sandpiper:- Not reported on the lakefront this spring (TYM=2.05).

American Woodcock:- A new early arrival date for the lakefront was established 4 Mar when Brad Bumgardner counted six at three Dunes area sites. The previous early date was 5 Mar.

Wilson's Phalarope:- Penny Starin found the season's only bird, an alternate male, at McCool Basin on 24 May (TYM=1.5).

GULLS

For the ninth consecutive year, spring gull numbers were down. The average MI/species was a basement level -0.32 , and seven of the ten species reported had negative MI values. Thayer's was a no-show and Bonaparte's numbers were at the bottom of the species reported (see below). On the positive side two Franklin's Gulls provided the highest spring total since 2001.

Bonaparte's Gull:- Once again this small gull was scarce during the spring flight. Only 14 were reported, a value dwarfed by the TYM of 378.

Laughing Gull:- An alternate adult in Hammond 7 May (J.J. McCoy) provided a rare spring lakefront record for this formerly more common gull (this is only the second spring report in the past five years).

Laughing X Ring-billed Gull hybrid:- Michael Topp obtained an excellent photo (see below) of an adult at Hammond Sanctuary on 5 Mar.

Franklin's Gull:- On 1 May B.J. Grube saw an adult during a longshore flight watch at the Green Tower site. Another was seen at Miller Beach on 14 May (J.J. McCoy).



This alternate-plumed gull, believed to be a Laughing X Ring-billed hybrid, has been observed several times on the Lake County lakefront. Note the banded bill, pale areas in the charcoal hood, and unusually pale legs. This photo was taken on the Hammond Sanctuary Beach 5 Mar by Michael Topp.

Thayer's Gull:- For the first time in five years this Arctic gull was not recorded during the spring flight (TYM=4.3).

Iceland Gull:- Only one spring report: on 5 Mar J.C. Kendall identified a first-cycle bird at the Port of Indiana.

Glaucous Gull:- The spring's latest report involved an adult and a first-cycle bird off the Hammond Marina on 1 Apr (Michael Topp).

TERNs

Thanks to an unusually strong Common Tern movement the lakefront enjoyed the best spring tern flight in seven years. The average MI/species was +0.08 and only the Forster's Tern was in negative territory.

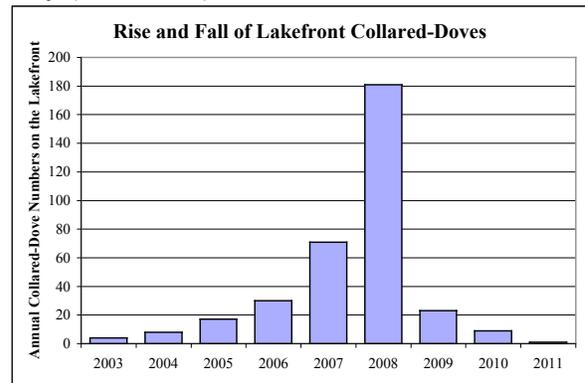
Black Tern:- An alternate-plumed bird was at McCool Basin on 14 May (J.C. Kendall). This observer found (4) more at Wolf Lake the following day.

Common Tern:- A flock of (14) flew past the Green Tower site on 10 May (J.C. Kendall & J.K. Cassady). On 15 May J.C. Kendall counted (233) at four sites, which constitutes the lakefront's highest spring count since 2004.

Forster's Tern:- Only 32 were reported on the lakefront (TYM=48.1) marking the seventh

consecutive spring in which Forster's Terns have appeared in below average numbers.

Eurasian Collared-Dove:- Not reported in the former Whiting-Hammond stronghold this spring, indeed it appears that this population has crashed (see graph). The lakefront's only 2011 report involved a flyby at the Green Tower site on 22 May (B.J. Grube).



Monk Parakeet:- Two were seen at the 112th St. Hammond microwave tower on 7 May. One of these birds was observed carrying nesting material to the tower (J.K. Cassady et al.).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo:- Although good numbers appeared throughout much of the state, lakefront birders found only three birds (TYM=3.2).

Eastern Whip-poor-will:- It was a good spring for this nightjar in the Dunes. The 2011 season total ties the highest spring count since 1989. The peak daily count was (4) at Beverly Shores on 30 Apr (J.K. Cassady).

Snowy Owl:- The winter-period adult female at the Westville Correctional Facility lingered until 11 Mar (Patrick Krueger).

Long-eared Owl:- Michael Topp found one in the Hammond Sanctuary 12 Mar. On 20 Mar an unidentified photographer metaphorically shot (4) in the West Beach pinery, which is that location's highest count in 12 years. Three were still present on 26 Mar (Steve Sass & Brad Bumgardner). One was also in the Hammond Sanctuary on 12 Apr (Amy Kearns).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:- On 5 Apr Brad Bumgardner counted (91) passing birds during a longshore flight at the Green Tower. This total is

exceeded only by the (141) dead birds counted during the infamous 1960 kill on Lake Michigan. A tardy migrant female was in Forsythe Park on 24 May (KJB).

Northern Flicker:- A monstrous longshore flight of (1127) birds was recorded at the Green Tower site on 10 Apr (Brad Bumgardner, B.J. Grube, P.B. Grube, L.S. Hinchman, J.J. McCoy, & KJB). This total almost doubles the state's previous maximum of 600 (recorded at the same site by B.J. Grube on 8 April 2001).

FLYCATCHERS

For the tenth consecutive year spring flycatchers were recorded in positive numbers. This year the average MI/species was +0.18. Only the Wood-Pewee and Acadian Flycatcher had negative MI values and both were only slightly below normal.

Olive-sided Flycatcher:- A nice spring flight of 6 was highlighted by (2) at the Green Tower site on 28 May (J.J. McCoy).

Alder Flycatcher:- A majority of this spring's 10 Alders were in the Hammond Sanctuary 21 May when E.M. Hopkins counted (6).



This unusually photogenic Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was captured (in pixels) at Forsythe Park on 28 May. Note the distinctly greenish back and yellowish eye-ring. Photo by J.K. Cassady.

Northern Shrike:- One at Beverly Shores on 3 Apr (Brad Bumgardner) tied the state's sixth latest departure date.

VIREOS

The vireo flight was near normal with an average MI/species of +0.04.

SWALLOWS

All members of this group had positive MI values, indicating a fine spring migration. The average MI/species was +0.33, which resulted in part from a more diligent effort to tally swallows during longshore flight counts.

Cliff Swallow:- One seen during the 10 Apr longshore flight at the green tower (B.J. Grube) provided the lakefronts second earliest spring record.

Blue Jay:- A record daily count was set during a 10 May longshore flight at the Green Tower site. In 4.25 hours 6230 jays (counted by 10s) were observed flying eastward along the dune crests (J.K. Cassady, J.C. Kendall, Brad Bumgardner, & KJB). Though the pace had slackened, the birds were still streaming past when the counters departed. This tally almost doubles the previous state maximum of 3690.

Golden-crowned Kinglet:- This tiny bird was surprisingly scarce on the lakefront this spring. The 24 reported is the lowest spring total in a decade and was well below the TYM of 66.2.

WRENS

A dearth of Sedge Wrens pummeled the spring wren flight, bringing the average MI/species down to -0.04.

Sedge Wren:- A single migrant in Michigan City's Washington Park provided the lakefront's only spring record (TYM=6.55). This is the lowest spring total since 1994. The bird was seen 27 Apr (KJB).

Marsh Wren:- Once again the Grant Street wetland supports an enormous Marsh Wren population. At that location a fine count of (29) was recorded on 28 May (J.K. Cassady, L.S. Hinchman, and S.R. Bagby). This tally constitutes the lakefront's third highest count.

THRUSHES

It was a fine spring for the thrushes as only the Wood Thrush appeared in below normal numbers. The group's average MI/species was +0.23.

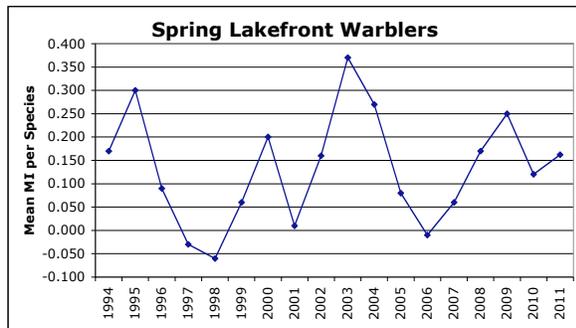
Wood Thrush:- For the season only 44 were reported. This is the lakefront's lowest spring total in more than a decade (TYM=54.6).

American Pipit:- The lakefront's seventh largest count (78) was logged on the McCool Basin mudflats 11 May (J.C. Kendall).

Cedar Waxwing:- Two significant tallies were logged during Green Tower site longshore flights: (2080) were counted by B.J. Grube on 22 May (Indiana's seventh largest count) and (1310) were tallied the previous day (J.K. Cassady et al.).

WARBLERS

The average warbler MI/species was +0.16, which is up slightly from last spring (see below chart). Of the 36 warbler species reported only six had negative MI values. This group was led by the Black-throated Blue, which was reported in the lowest numbers since 2001.



A memorable warbler flight occurred during the 7 May longshore flight at the Green Tower site. Maximum counts among the 13 species reported were (20) Nashvilles, (1090) Yellow-rumps, and (77) Palms. Special highlights included three crisply-fresh Cape May males that S.R. Bagby picked out in the adjacent conifers, two flyby Blackburnians spotted by J.K. Cassady, and a stunning male Parula that John Kaehr saw land in the cottonwood above our heads. Singing Prairie and Pine Warblers were also heard during the watch.

B.J. Grube observed an impressive weather related fallout at Beverly Shores on 26 May. North winds and rain grounded a host of passerines, including: 15 warbler species plus lesser numbers of flycatchers, vireos and thrushes. Peak warbler counts included 87 Redstarts, 22 Wilson's, 17 Canada, 8 Mourning, and 2 Connecticut.

Golden-winged Warbler:- J.J. McCoy counted (4) in east Beverly Shores on 14 May. This total ties the lakefront's second highest daily count.

"Brewster's" Warbler:- On 13 May J.C. Kendall found (1) at Forsythe Park in Hammond.

"Lawrence's" Warbler:- The warbler of the season was photographed by Brad Bumgardner in the Heron Rookery on 2 May (see photo). This handsome male was singing a Blue-winged Song. This is only the fourth Dunes area record and Brad has logged half of them.



The incredibly rare "Lawrence's" Warbler, a Blue-winged X Golden-winged Hybrid, was photographed on 2 May in the IDNL Heron Rookery by Brad Bumgardner. It is one of four that have been reported in the Dunes area in the last 120 years.

Tennessee Warbler:- A male, photographed in the Heron Rookery 14 Apr (Brad Bumgardner), provided the lakefront's second earliest record and tied Indiana's fourth earliest. On the Big May Day Count (14 May) R.J. Pals and Patrick Krueger counted an amazing (56) Tennessees in the High Dunes; this is the second highest daily tally ever for the lakefront. For the season 264 were logged (TYM=93.6), which is also an all-time high.

Black-throated Blue Warbler:- This highly prized warbler was surprisingly scarce throughout the spring. Only 7 were logged for the season (TYM=14.1), which is the lowest total in a decade. Numbers were also down statewide, but that decrease was less pronounced.

Yellow-rumped Warbler:- A state record count was logged 26 Apr during a morning longshore flight at the Green Tower site. Brad Bumgardner conducted a careful count (counting by ones) and tallied a total of (2857) migrants. Yellow-rumpeds began to move at 8:00AM and by 11:00AM the flight had stopped. During the flight peak there was an almost continuous passage of loose flocks of 15-25 birds (Brad Bumgardner & KJB).

Yellow-throated Warbler:- A new daily maximum count was logged 30 Apr when Dan Stoltzfus, John & Elaine Harley, and Gary Keister counted (6) in the Heron Rookery. The previous high was five.



This luminous male Cerulean Warbler sang a Golden-winged-like song. The bird was discovered in Dunes State Park by Brad Bumgardner and could be subsequently relocated by its odd song. This superb photo was taken by J.K. Cassady on 10 May 2011.

Worm-eating Warbler:- Two lakefront reports occurred this spring. On 1 May a window strike occurred at Jean Rudd's house in east Beverly Shores; the bird sat stunned for several minutes before flying away. Michael Topp et al. heard and saw another in the Hammond Sanctuary on 21 May.

Connecticut Warbler:- It was a good spring for this difficult to find warbler with eleven birds, plus another on 1 June (Landon Neumann et al.). The TYM for this secretive warbler is 5.2.

SPARROWS

The absence of Nelson's Sparrow and a surprisingly low White-throated Sparrow count contributed to the a near average MI/species of -0.08.

Chipping Sparrow:- A count of (85) at the Green Tower site on 1 May (B.J. Grube), constituted the lakefront's third largest daily count.

Clay-colored Sparrow:- It was a better than average spring on the lakefront with 6 birds reported (TYM=4.1).

Lark Sparrow:- The sixth Green Tower site record was logged 30 Apr during a longshore flight (B.J. Grube et al.) and a second bird occurred at the same location 5 May (J.J. McCoy et al.).

Henslow's Sparrow:- The season's only report was photographed at Dunes S.P. on 1 May (Brad Bumgardner).

Le Conte's Sparrow:- J.J. McCoy found (1) in the Hammond Sanctuary on 6 May for the season's only report (TYM=1.4).

White-throated Sparrow:- Spring numbers were down significantly. The 295 reported this year is the lowest spring total since 1999 (TYM=812).

Dark-eyed Junco:- A tardy migrant at the Hammond Sanctuary 27 May (Michael Topp) tied Indiana's seventh latest spring date.

Lapland Longspur:- A fine 17 Mar longshore flight at the Green Tower site yielded a lakefront record (2270) birds (J.J. McCoy & B.J. Grube). This tally is also Indiana's fifth largest count. Four alternate-plumed birds at McCool Basin 11 May (J.C. Kendall) tied the lakefront's latest spring record.

Smith's Longspur:- Three flew past the Green Tower site on 30 Apr (J.J. McCoy) to provide the lakefront's 12th record.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak:- Lakefront birders enjoyed a fine spring flight (the second best ever) with 218 birds reported. The peak daily count occurred 7 May when (34) were tallied at three lakefront locations, including (30) at the Green Tower site (J.K. Cassady, S.R. Bagby, L.S. Hinchman, Landon Neumann, and KJB).

Blue Grosbeak:- B.J. Grube observed a first-cycle male during a 22 May longshore flight at the Green Tower site (TYM=0.3), marking the third consecutive spring in which this grosbeak has been reported on the lakefront. The last previous sighting in Dunes S.P. occurred 15 May 1960.

Yellow-headed Blackbird:- This handsome icterid is quite rare in the High Dunes, consequently, an adult male that flew past the Green Tower site on 23 Apr (B.J. Grube & Brad Bumgardner), is most noteworthy. Penny Starin found a second male at McCool Basin on 7 May. Most remarkable was a male and female at Grant St. wetland, on 13 May (J.J. McCoy); the male was still present 1 June (Landon Neumann, Rob Ripma, and Ryan Sanderson), suggesting territorial activity.

Baltimore Oriole:- A 7 May longshore flight at the Green Tower site yielded (239) birds in 2.5 hours. This is the state's third largest count.

Only the complete absence of Redpolls kept this group from having a spectacular spring. Even without Redpolls the average MI/species was +0.03.

Purple Finch:- Counts of (53) on 10 Apr (Brad Bumgardner) and (33) on 30 Apr (B.J. Grube) at the Green Tower site elevated the spring tally to a respectable 123 (TYM=56.8).

Common Redpoll:- For the second consecutive spring Redpolls were not reported anywhere in the state (TYM=20.9). Are Redpolls going the way of Evening Grosbeaks?

Pine Siskin:- Following the meager numbers recorded this past winter, the spring total of 177 was surprisingly large (TYM=55.2). The season's peak count occurred 30 Apr when B.J. Grube logged (25) at the Green Tower site.

WINTER FINCHES

Explanation of abbreviations

Season totals are frequently compared to average seasonal counts in the "Dunes area" (Calumet Region or lakefront) over the past 20 years, including the present year. This value is abbreviated "TYM" for Twenty Year Mean. The term "STYM" refers to the twenty-year mean for the entire state.

The item "MI" is the Migration Index, a parameter calculated by the following relation: $MI = (Total - TYM) / (Total + TYM)$. Here "Total" refers to the total number of individuals, of a given species, reported during the season. If Total = 0, MI is assigned a value of $-\ln(1+TYM)$ with a minimum value of -1.00. MI values provide an assessment of the current migration compared to counts over the past 20 years; positive values indicate a better than average flight, whereas, negative MI's reflect a below normal migration.

In considering the TYM and MI parameters keep in mind that observer effort has not been constant over the twenty-year interval, indeed observer effort has increased markedly over the past decade. This means that negative MI's should be examined closely as they may reflect significant declines.