

**February 2018 eBird Summary**  
***Very Unusual and Rare Sightings***  
by Carol VanOeveren

The following is an overview of the very unusual and rare eBird sightings for February 2018 for Allegan, Kent, Muskegon and Ottawa counties. This report does not include rare birds that are flyovers, unchaseable and those with sketchy details. Rare and unusual eBird sightings are updated daily on the GRAC website.

Arctic air along with lake effect and synoptic snow invaded the area once again the first week of the month. By the 11th about a foot of snow was on the ground in the Grand Rapids area. A mid-month warm up followed with temperatures in the low 60s on the 20th. Periods of heavy rain (two-day total 3.31 inches in Grand Rapids) and rapid snow melt on the 19th and 20th contributed to major flooding in West Michigan. Moderating temperatures and mostly dry conditions followed through the end of the month as flooding receded.

**Snowy Owls** continued to be seen in all four counties. Refer to the “bird sightings” page of the GRAC website for recent locations and the eBird county links for the latest sightings. The winter finch irruption continued. **Thirty Red Crossbills** were observed along the West Loop trail at Port Sheldon Natural Area, Ottawa Co Feb 8 by Carl and Judi Manning. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S42602918> for photos. Eight **Common Redpolls** were observed at Pigeon Creek County Park Feb 12 and 18 along the West Loop trail at Port Sheldon Natural Area Feb 17 both in Ottawa Co and a few reported at some area feeders. **Pine Siskins** continued to be widespread and in good numbers with a high feeder count of 100 Feb 9 at the Mannings’ property in W Ottawa Co.

**The best find** was a first Allegan Co record. Nine **Eurasian Collared-Doves** were spotted sitting in a tree and on wires at a dairy farm (Sue Lynn Farms) along 20th St S of 144th Ave near Dorr by Josh Kamp Feb 23. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S43120550> for Tim Cornish’s photos. Up to seven continued through at least Feb 25 allowing many observations.

Up to eleven **Ross’s Geese** at Allegan SGA Todd Farm Feb 21-22 and one at Coopersville Sewage Ponds Feb 25; sixteen **Greater White-fronted Geese** continued since Jan 25 at Coopersville Sewage Ponds Feb 1, up to 13 continued since late Jan at Allegan SGA Todd Farm Feb 22, four continued since Jan at Muskegon Wastewater Feb 27, up to 13 at S Swanson Rd/Musketawa Trl pothole area in Muskegon Co Feb 22-28 and three at Upper Macatawa Natural Area 84th Ave access in Ottawa Co Feb 27; a **Red-throated Loon** at Port Sheldon Pigeon Lake Feb 8 and at Pigeon River outlet Feb 17; a **Horned Grebe** was spotted in the creek at Pine Creek Park in Ottawa Co Feb 12-24 – unusual location; a **Golden Eagle** continued since late Jan at the Allegan SGA Todd Farm through the month with at least two there Feb 18 and 25; the **Black-legged Kittiwake** first seen Dec 19 at Holland SP/W end of Lake Macatawa continued to winter at this location Feb 25, usually seen near the Eldean Shipyard area. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S42595822> to view Aaron Boone’s gorgeous in-flight photos; a **Brown Thrasher** at Pine Creek Park in Ottawa Co Feb 12; **Yellow-rumped Warblers** continue to winter at Millennium Park and Upper Macatawa Natural Area; and a **Fox Sparrow** at a residence near Cascade in Kent Co Feb 17.

**Correction:** The **Hoary Redpoll** reported at Hoffmaster SP Jan 26 was determined **not** to be that species after the February *Caller* was published.