

May 2022 eBird Summary
Very Unusual and Rare Sightings
by Carol VanOeveren

The following is an overview of the very unusual and rare eBird sightings for May 2022 for Allegan, Kent, Muskegon and Ottawa counties. This report does not include rare birds that are flyovers, unchaseable, on inaccessible private property and those with sketchy details.

Near normal temperatures and occasional rain started off the first week of the month. The 6th began a slow warm up from the 60s, into the 70s and then 80s with an extended stretch of unseasonably warm, pleasant weather with little rain through the 15th. A strong cold front returned us to reality and normal temps in the 60s and low 70s with occasional rain through the 19th. Temps rose into the 80s on the 20th before another strong cold front and some thunderstorms brought us back below normal into the 60s and occasional rain again for the next week. A warming trend and pleasant weather arrived just in time for Memorial Day weekend and into the high 80s Memorial Day and the 31st.

Shorebirds for April and May: Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Black-bellied and American-Golden plover, Killdeer, Semipalmated Plover, Upland Sandpiper, Whimbrel, Hudsonian and Marbled godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Dunlin, Least Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Long- and Short-billed dowitchers, American Woodcock, Wilson's Snipe, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Willet, Greater Yellowlegs, Wilson's Phalarope (notables for May listed below).

Migrants initially were slow to move through, but traffic picked up significantly by the 8th and 9th and exploded on the 10th coinciding with the big warm-up and favorable southerly winds. There were not only lots of species, but also many individuals of those species reported and that included warblers. In addition to the eighteen warbler species noted last month, the following were seen in May: Worm-eating (see below), Golden-winged (see below), Connecticut (see below), Mourning, Kentucky (see below), Hooded, Cape May, Cerulean (see below), Magnolia, Bay-breasted, Chestnut-sided, Blackpoll, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-throated (see below), Prairie (see below), Canada and Wilson's. This brought the total to 35 species plus two Brewster's hybrids. Also, five Yellow-breasted Chats and three White-eyed Vireos were seen (see below).

According to BirdCast an estimated peak of 690+ million birds were in flight over the US the night of May 8-9 and 536+ million the night of May 9-10 (Michigan was likely one of the prime locations on the 10th judged by the checklists submitted to eBird), and like numbers continued especially in the Midwest each night through the 14th. A link to this useful migration tool has been available since its inception on the GRAC website Bird Sightings page. BirdCast now offers a dashboard tool to view migrant information for your own county.

Two examples of good warbler counts on May 9: Becky Kuhn at Dolan Nature Sanctuary in Kent Co observed 15 species and 58 individuals. Visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S109442056> to view the entire checklist; at Mt Pisgah dune boardwalk/Lake Macatawa campground Mark Parker tallied 12 species and 42 individuals including eight gorgeous Blackburnian (one of my favorites!). Visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S109446606> to view the entire checklist with photos. **May 10, three of the many extensive checklists submitted to eBird:** David and Michael Lautenbach birded Plaster Creek Trail in SE Grand Rapids and tallied 16 warbler species with 59 individuals including two Cerulean. Visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S109533887> to view the 51-species checklist. Carl and Judi Manning observed 19 warbler species with 57 individuals including two Golden-winged at Mt Pisgah dune boardwalk/Lake Macatawa campground. Visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S109556376> to view the 62-species checklist with photos. A morning migration watch at Saugatuck Dunes SP was very eventful for Rick Brigham, Tim Cornish, Will Keller, Nick Preville, Caleb Putnam and Chace Scholten with a total of 101 species and over 3,000 individuals observed in approximately 7 1/2 hrs. Realize that the majority of all species were seen and ID'd in flight. Visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S109572942> to view Rick's checklist. Checklists on succeeding days from appropriate locations were similar or better than those from the 9th and 10th. Two examples are Craig Kingma's 56-species list including 16 warbler species with photos at Ottawa Sands Co Park and Bailey Mitchell and Alyssa Pyman's 83-species list also with 16 warbler species at Muskegon State Park Lost Lake Trail both on May 11. Visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S109663014> and <https://ebird.org/checklist/S109669143> respectively to view the checklists. Visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S110757371> to view Bailey Mitchell's very diverse checklist of 72 species at Muskegon SGA, Lane's Landing later in the month on May 20 including 15 warbler species.

Hotspots for warblers and other migrants in the four-county area were too numerous to mention this year and even included people's yards.

Notables for the month: A good count of 15 **Trumpeter Swans** still hanging around Pine Creek Impoundment in Allegan Co May 1. Nineteen **Horned Grebes** at Reeds Lake May 1. Up to two **Eared Grebes** continued at the Wastewater – known location and a **Horned Grebe** there mid-month, one (Jim Markham) at Reeds Lake May 24 – unusual location. At least one **EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE** continued at Ravenna Feed and Grain area in Muskegon Co through the month – known location. A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** at Allegan SGA 44th St wetland May 3 – first report. A **Black-billed Cuckoo** at Dolan NS in Kent Co May 7 – first report. An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** at Port Sheldon NA West Loop in Ottawa Co May 5 – first report. A **YELLOW RAIL** continued since late Apr at Upper Macatawa NA 84th Ave access in Ottawa Co May 9. Up to six **Common Gallinule** continued at Grand Haven SGA Bruce Bayou 129th Ave access – known location, two at 144th Ave boat launch in Ottawa Co May 1, two continued since Apr at Lions Park in Whitehall – known location, one continued at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing May 23. A **BLACK-NECKED STILT** (unknown initial observer) at the Wastewater May 15-16 and May 20-22 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S110323572> to view Bailey Mitchell's photos). Two **AMERICAN AVOCETS** (Lyle Hamilton/Scott Jennex/Tom Pavlik/Mary Trombley) at the Wastewater May 6. Two **Black-bellied Plover** continued since Apr at 92nd St/Patterson Ave SE flooded field in Kent Co May 2. A **WHIMBREL** (Bailey Mitchell/Alyssa Pyman) at the Wastewater May 15. A **HUDSONIAN GODWIT** (Valerie Gebert/Sean Bachman and others) at the Wastewater May 17. A **MARbled GODWIT** (Carl/Judi Manning/several other observers) along New Holland St btw 96th/104th Ave in Ottawa Co May 13-15 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S109866764> to view Mannings/L Garris/E Gustafson's photos), one (W Kaempfer/M James) at the Wastewater May 28. Up to eight **Ruddy Turnstones** at the Wastewater May 20-25, one at Holland SP May 23-26. **47 Dunlin** at the Wastewater May 20. Up to twelve **White-rumped Sandpipers** at the Wastewater May 15-31, one at 114th Ave wet field in Allegan Co May 21, one along New Holland St btw 96th/104th Ave in Ottawa Co May 27. Five **Short-billed Dowitchers** (Lonny Garris) at a pond at a residence along Barry St W of 88th Ave in Ottawa Co May 4, three (Jeff Slaughter) along New Holland St btw 88th and 96th St in Ottawa Co May 4 (likely part of group observed by Lonny earlier in day; locations nearby), **78** (Jason Carlson) at the Wastewater May 14 (took off giving tu-tu-tu calls) and up to 24 May 15-19, one (Curtis Dykstra) along New Holland St btw 96th/104th Ave in Ottawa Co May 15-21, three (Tim Cornish) at 118th Ave/23rd St fields in Allegan Co May 21, one (Nick Preville) at GVSU

campus Allendale May 23. A **WILLET** at Harbor Island in Grand Haven May 1. Two **Wilson's Phalarope** (Lonny Garris) along New Holland St btw 96th/104th Ave in Ottawa Co May 6-7, two continued at the Wastewater May 28. A **LAUGHING GULL** (Will Keller) at Holland SP May 12. A **FRANKLIN'S GULL** (Ethan Urban) at the Wastewater May 17-19. Up to two **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** continued at the Wastewater May 6, two at Harbor Island Grand Haven May 3. A **Glaucous Gull** continued at the Wastewater May 1, one at 2nd St/120th Ave in Allegan Co May 7. A **BLACK TERN** (Joseph Finkbeiner) at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing May 8, one (Steve Minard/Becky Kuhn) at Reeds Lake May 11 and 20. Ten **American White Pelicans** (Jasmine Mancuso) at Dune Harbor Park in Muskegon Co May 14, eight (several observers) on Grand River near Martinique Island in Ottawa Co May 14. Two **American Bitterns** continued at Upper Macatawa NA 84th Ave access in Ottawa Co – known location, one at Harbor Island May 5, one continued at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing May 21 – known location. A **Least Bittern** at Reeds Lake May 11-13, one at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing May 12-24, two along Power Line Rd (runs NE from Causeway) in Muskegon May 15. A **CATTLE EGRET** (Cindy Dobrez/Curtis Dykstra) along 172nd Ave N of Hayes St (near the Shape Corp and LIGHT Corp) in Ottawa Co May 1-7 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S108658758> to view photo) – on May 1 one observer noted the bird was foraging alongside the road and then decided to fly into the bed of a red pickup truck parked nearby to rest, two (Chip Francke) at Harbor Island May 10. A **Black-crowned Night-Heron** continued since Apr at Harbor Island in Grand Haven May 8, one at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing May 15 and 21, one at Dermo Bayou in Ottawa Co May 21, one at Millennium Park May 26. A **NORTHERN GOSHAWK** (Daniel Bernard Apr 29) at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing continued May 2 (Bailey Mitchell), one probable (Ken Bishop) at Allegan SGA Swan Creek 116th Ave to Swan Creek Pond area May 22. One **Rough-legged Hawk** along 52nd St E of Kraft Ave SE in Kent Co May 29 – late. A **Short-eared Owl** continued at the Gerald R Ford Int'l Airport Kraft Ave access May 4. A mega-rare **LEWIS'S WOODPECKER** (Ric Pedler) in the Kathryn St/Wilfred St/Jensen Rd neighborhood in Muskegon May 16-26 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S110421288> to view Jim Markham's photos) – first Muskegon Co record and first ever in the Lower Peninsula. An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at Plaster Creek Trl 28th St SE to Division Ave May 10 – first report, one at Trendway Corp Quincy St near Holland May 12, one at Crockery Creek NA in Ottawa Co May 12, one at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing May 22-24, one at Plainfield Cemetery in Belmont May 30. An **Eastern Wood-Pewee** along Luce St W of Kenowa Ave SW in Ottawa Co May 2 – first report, early. A **WHITE-EYED VIREO** (a super excited Andrew Staufer) at Millennium Park May 5 (visit

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S109052782> to view photos), one (Lonny Garris) at Upper Macatawa NA 84th Ave access in Ottawa Co May 10-14 and 19, one (Aaron Klanderma) at Outdoor Discovery Center in Allegan Co May 14-15. A **Winter Wren** along Summit Ave NE near Stegman Creek N of Rockford May 27 – late, but have been known to nest in the four-county area. A **NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD** continued since late Apr at Holland SP campground May 2, one (Kevin Wistrom) at the Wastewater May 8, one (Will Keller/Caleb Putnam) at Saugatuck Dunes SP May 10, one (Mark Boehler) at Pine Creek Impoundment in Allegan Co May 14, one (Karl Sineath) at Ottawa Sands Co Park May 31. Good **Purple Finch** migration; still around near end of month. A couple of reports of straggling **WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS** in Kent (Cascade Hills CC) and Ottawa (Georgetown Twp) cos in early May, two (Craig Kingma) at Hager Park in Ottawa Co May 15 – very late. **Pine Siskins** still reported coming to feeders. **Sparrows:** a **LARK** (Patricia Patterson) at Porter Hills Green House Homes (part of Porter Hills retirement community) on East Paris Ave SE in Kent Co May 2-3 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S108747714> to view Felix Perdue's photos) – first Kent Co record. A **Clay-colored** at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing May 1-2 – first report, one at Muskegon SGA Headquarters May 10, one at Cooper-VanWieren Park May 14. An **American Tree** at Huff Park May 4 – late. A **Dark-eyed Junco** at Pine Creek Impoundment in Allegan Co May 14 – late. A **Henslow's** along 52nd St E of Kraft Ave SE in Kent Co May 1-27 – known location, up to four at Allegan SGA Todd Farm throughout the month – known location, one (Jim Markham) along 128th Ave N of Stanton St in Ottawa Co May 21-28. A **YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT** (Bailey Mitchell/Alyssa Pyman) at Hoffmaster SP in Muskegon Co May 8, one (Beth Miller) at Patterson Park in Muskegon Co May 14, three (Chace Scholten) at Outdoor Discovery Center in Allegan Co May 15 and up to two May 17-29. A female **YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD** (Christy Buitendorp Bellaoud) at Harbor Island in Grand Haven May 7-8 and May 17. A good count of 50+ **Bobolinks** at Allegan SGA Todd Farm May 19 – known breeding location. A **Rusty Blackbird** at the Wastewater May 19 – late. Nine **Brewer's Blackbirds** at Maplewood Park near Jenison May 6 and up to four continued May 15, two at the Wastewater May 24-25. **Warblers of interest:** A **WORM-EATING** one (Jennifer/Geoff Hoffman) at Lester Lake area in Allegan Co May 14 -15 – first report, one (Mark Boehler) at Rabbit River Preserve in Allegan Co May 15 and 21 – these are both new locations, at least two (Ken Bishop) at the usual location at Allegan SGA Swan Creek 116th Ave to Swan Creek Pond area May 22-31 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S111024300> to view Ken's photos). Two **Louisiana Waterthrush** continued since Apr at Aman Park in Ottawa Co – known location, one at Muskegon SP Lost Lake Trl May 1, one continued at Allegan SGA Swan Creek at 116th

Ave May 28 – known location, one at Plaster Creek Park in Kent Co May 11. A **Golden-winged** at Stu Visser Trails in Ottawa Co May 8 – first report; seen in many appropriate locations in all four counties through late mid-month with a high count of three at Muskegon SP Lost Lake Trl May 11. Four **Prothonotary** at Armintout-Millbocker Preserve in Allegan Co May 5, three at Millennium Park May 11, three at Stu Visser Trails in Ottawa Co May 13, six along Indian Mounds Dr SW (Kent Trails) May 16 and eight appeared to be on territory there May 19, at least one at other appropriate habitats. A **CONNECTICUT** (Chace Scholten) at Kalamazoo River Old New Richmond Bridge May 15 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S110290613> to view photo), one (Jeff/Eric Slaughter) at Mt Pisgah dune boardwalk/Lake Macatawa CG May 20. A **KENTUCKY** (Mark Parker) at Harbor Island in Grand Haven May 6 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S109108615> to view photos), one (Emily Tornga) at Hofma Preserve in Ottawa Co May 11, one (Mark Parker) at Mt Pisgah dune boardwalk/Lake Macatawa CG May 11. Three **Cerulean** at Allegan SGA Pipeline Landing May 9 – known location and present at other known locations in Allegan SGA, two at Plaster Creek Trl in SE Grand Rapids May 10, one at Reeds Lake May 11, one at Rogue River SGA Clear Lake access trl in Kent Co May 14, up to three at Muskegon SGA Headquarters May 14 and 24-25 and two at Lane’s Landing May 21, one at Aman Park May 24-31. Large influx of 30 **Palm** at Hofma Preserve in Ottawa Co and 50 (very conservative) at Muskegon SP Snug Harbor Marsh May 1 likely downed by previous night’s rain. A **YELLOW-THROATED** (Ed DeVries) at a residence S of Holland in Allegan Co May 8 (very brief visit), one (Tricia Boot) at Millennium Park Trestle Trail ponds May 10. A **PRAIRIE** (Eddie Bullinger/John Fleming) at Stu Visser Trails in Ottawa Co May 1-7 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S108600997> to view Eric Gustafson’s photos), one (Cindy Dobrez) at East Grand River Park in Ottawa Co May 10, one (Joel Betts) at Saugatuck Dunes SP Natural Area May 30-31 – known location. A female **SUMMER TANAGER** (Caleb Putnam/Julie Pedreros/Tomas Pedreros) at a residence on Gentian Dr SE in Kentwood May 2 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S108764056> to view photo) – rare for Kent Co. Up to three **Dickcissels** at the Wastewater May 14-31 – first report that was not a flyby, known location.

To read more about the April and May mega-rarities, visit the GRAC website “Hall of Fame” page at http://graud.org/rare_birds.html and scroll down.

Note: The ibis that was associating with the White-faced Ibis at Muskegon SGA, Lane’s Landing on Apr 28 was confirmed as a Glossy.