

Indiana Audubon Society
CARDINAL

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In this issue...

FIELD TRIP UPDATES • NEW OUTREACH COORDINATOR • BIRDING TRAIL SPOTLIGHT • SOLAR PLANS AT MARY GRAY • THE COMMON YELLOWTHROAT • MEET A MEMBER • SOCIETY NEWS & MORE!

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The Cardinal Newsletter is a bi-monthly publication of the Indiana Audubon Society. Its purpose is to share stories and conversations so that members and the birding community beyond can stay meaningfully connected both to birds and to the people dedicated to their protection.



Cover Photo: PALM WARBLER (John Lindsey)

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UPCOMING TRIPS & EVENTS

Join Indiana Audubon for an assortment of field trips and workshops being offered this spring and Summer.

Additional events are listed on the website. Many fill early, so sign up now!

- April 4** Central IN **Lye Creek Burn Field Trip** [Crawfordsville, IN] **CANCELLED**
 - April 11** Southeast IL **Prairie Chicken Field Trips** [Newton, IL] **POSTPONED**
 - April 18** South TX **Texas Rio Grande Valley Birding Tour** [Harlingen, TX] **POSTPONED**
 - May 2** Southeast IL **May 2 IAS Spring Gathering 2020** [Crawfordsville, IN] **CANCELLED**
 - May 8** Southern IN **Goose Pond Weekend Birding Trip 2020** [Linton, IN] **TRIP FULL**
 - May 14** Northern IN **Indiana Dunes Birding Festival 2020** [Porter, IN]
 - June 4** Central IN **Indiana Master Naturalist Workshop** [Crawfordsville, IN]
 - June 6** Southern IN **Falling Springs Breeding Birds** [French Lick, IN] **TRIP FULL**
 - June 10** South America **Indiana Audubon Ecuador Tour** [Ecuador, Quito] **TRIP FULL**
 - Aug 8** Central IN **Hummingbird Migration Celebration** [Connersville, IN]
- Like every organization, business, and agency that organizes events, we've all been faced with how to take the appropriate measures and response with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) on our various operations and activities.
- After consultation with our various partnering agencies and organizations Indiana Audubon (IAS) is cancelling all field trips through May 2. From there, IAS will evaluate the current status and issue cancellations as guidelines warrant.



Indiana Audubon Heading to Thailand in 2021

In early 2021, Indiana Audubon will host the next in a series of great international birding adventures! For sheer diversity of birds in a short trip, it's hard to beat Thailand. Thailand is one of Asia's most appealing destinations; it boasts excellent infrastructure, some of the most popular cuisine in the region, and an ancient and fascinating Buddhist culture. And that's not to mention the birds! Thailand is a country where massive bird lists can be amassed if all its varied regions are visited. The mountains of the north, the parks of the central part of the country, and the Thai Peninsula, which connects with Malaysia, are all distinct areas with their own unique bird populations. In order to keep the tour to a reasonable length and cost, it will focus on central and northern Thailand (the peninsula is largely similar, birdwise, to Peninsula Malaysia and, to some degree, Borneo; those species are perhaps better covered on a later trip to those areas).

- DAY 1: Arrival in Bangkok, nearby airport hotel.
- DAY 2: Laem Pak Bia and Phak Thale shorebirds
- DAY 3: Laem Pak Bia to Kaeng Krachen
- DAY 4: Kaeng Krachen National Park
- DAY 5: Kaeng Krachen National Park
- DAY 6: Khao Yai National Park
- DAY 7: Khail Yail National Park
- DAY 8: Chiang Mai/Doi Inthanon National Park
- DAY 9: Chiang Mai/Doi Inthanon National Park
- DAY 10: Chiang Mai/Doi Inthanon National Park
- DAY 11: Doi Inthanon National Park, fly to Bangkok
- DAY 12: Departure from Bangkok



Prices based on double occupancy are: IAS members: \$5,529 per person. Non-members: \$5,629 per person. Single supplement: \$485. Visit indianaaudubon.org/events to learn more before this trip fills up!

Indiana Audubon Shifts Towards Global Big Day

By Matt Kalwasinski, IAS Global Big Day Coordinator



After careful thought and discussion, Indiana Audubon has decided to end the annual Big May Day Bird Count, held on the second Saturday in May. Over the last 27 years, the count has averaged less than 50% participation of counties submitting data, and individual participation has seen a steady decline.

Another key aspect of this decision concerns the data that is collected. With the emergence and rapid popularity growth of eBird, it became clear that the data collected from the Big May Day count was serving no long-term purpose. IAS is a strong supporter of citizen science, and has made the decision to put its full support behind the eBird/Cornell Lab Global Big Day. Over the five-year history of this event, Indiana has ranked an average of 23rd in the United States with an average of 224 species seen. IAS is confident that, with your help, those numbers can be improved.

cont. from page 2

Here is how it will work: Once the official 2020 count date is announced (the count expected to be held on May 2), IAS will encourage all birders in Indiana to count birds that day and submit their checklists via eBird. The Society still hopes that individual counties will coordinate their efforts on the count day, and that some birders will make an effort to bird in underrepresented counties from year to year. We will no longer compete just within each county, but on a global stage to promote bird conservation and Indiana's place for amazing birds in migration. IAS will still create a summary based upon the data, showing how Indiana compares to other states, and comparing our own efforts from year to year.

We hope that you understand and accept this change, and we look forward to doing our part for citizen science. Thank you for supporting the Indiana Audubon Society.

Adopt a Shrike Continues in 2020

Help save the shrike! Indiana Audubon, in partnership with the Indiana DNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife and the Loggerhead Shrike Working Group have teamed up to help provide shrubs for shrikes in the Adopt a Shrike program.

The Loggerhead Shrike is a state endangered species that has experienced precipitous declines in recent years. In the late 1980s, Indiana's Loggerhead Shrike population consisted of nearly one hundred breeding pairs. Ongoing monitoring efforts now identify fewer than ten breeding pairs annually in the entire state. Habitat loss due to changes in land use is likely a contributing factor, as much of the grassland habitat in their historical range has been developed or converted to large-scale agriculture.

Remaining shrike breeding pairs now tend to occupy small farms with overgrazed pasture, barbed wire fences, and bushes for nesting. Overgrazed pastures produce bare ground, which provides ideal hunting conditions for shrikes, but little in the way of nesting trees or shrubs. The DNR's current efforts are working to provide shrike nesting habitat by focusing on nest bushes and shrubs along fencerows. In helping with this initiative, IAS and the Division of Fish and Wildlife non-game program are teaming up for the Adopt a Shrike program. Donors will receive a special adoption certificate highlighting the shrike research and conservation being done, an annual report detailing all the year's shrike banding efforts, and a commemorative "Never met a shrike I didn't like" T-shirt. Each adoption is \$50 and can be purchased through the IAS online store. Visit indianaudubon.org/adopt-a-shrike to learn more.



NEWS

MARY GRAY BIRD SANCTUARY

Solar Challenge

IAS's Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary has been offered a significant donation towards the installation of a 10-kilowatt photo-voltaic system on the property's maintenance shed. The Illinois donor is willing to cover about half the costs of the \$60,000 system, which will significantly decrease the electrical costs incurred by MGBS. The system is projected to pay for itself (\$30k) in ten years and have a warranted lifespan of 25 years. More significantly, since coal would no longer need to be burned to generate electricity at the Sanctuary, the system will augment the IAS & MGBS missions to safeguard the natural environment by saving approximately 750,000 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions over its lifespan. The project will also contribute educational value to schools and other visitors to Mary Gray.

Would you like to participate directly in this project? Mary Gray needs to raise \$30,000 to cover its portion. If you have been looking for another way to combat the continuing climate change challenge, here it is!

Please send donations to: Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary (solar)

Carl Wilms, Res. Co-Manager
Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary
3499 S Bird Sanctuary Rd
Connersville, IN 47331



THANK YOU

MGBS DONATION REVIEW

Donations Received by the Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary

Total Donations for 2019: **\$12,457.50**

Memorial Donations

cont.

In Memory of Gene Yates
William Benner
Robert Bricker
Containerkraft, Inc.
Jonathan Cook
Craig & Marsha Dunkin
J.P. Kane & Co., LLC
Barbara & David Kiphart
Stephen & Candy Short

Jane Marie Hackman
In Memory of Shirley Keller
Karen Henman
In Memory of Steven Lauderdale
Rebecca Daugherty
Honor of Charlie Keller
Margaret & Robert Schwarz
Pamela & Calvin Teeter
Mary Ann Zaban
In Memory of Rod Scheele

Unassigned Donations

cont.

Undesignated Donations
ALPHA Associate Chapter
(Connersville, IN)
City of Connersville
Connersville Middle School
William Cummings & Family
Fayette County Foundation
Louise Fessenden
Ronald & Jonita Fields
First Choice Seeds
Mark & Joyce Denzler
Brad & Holly Hanauer

Rita King
Allen T. King
Katherine Kubicek
Robert & Mary Ann Layman
Richard Myers
Vick & Marge Riemenschneider
Margarete & Robert Schwarz
Sharon & Charles Sorenson
Lawrence & Rebecca Theller
Lyman & Christina Thompson
Tri Kappa (Connersville, IN)



INDIANA BIRDING TRAIL HIGHLIGHT

INDIANA DUNES NATIONAL PARK

BY BRAD BUMGARDNER

Indiana Dunes National Park hugs 15 miles of the southern shore of Lake Michigan and surrounds the Indiana Dunes State Park. Taken together, the "Indiana Dunes" are both the state's largest tourist attraction and one of its best birding destinations. The 15,000 acre national park contains 50 miles of trails running through a diverse array of habitats. More than 350 bird species have been found in the Indiana Dunes area. The Indiana Dunes National Park is more fragmented than other national parks, and is often identified by the many named units that make it up. The best areas for birding include Beverly Shores, Heron Rookery, Cowles Bog, and West Beach.

Beverly Shores features a long drive and associated hiking trail through the extensive wetlands that sit behind the dunes (known as the Great Marsh). Many birders do a slow roll down Beverly Drive, looking and listening, or hike the Great Marsh trail for wetland birds. The high dunes along this stretch are good for Whip-poor-wills in the summer. The beach lots at Lakeview and Dunbar can provide good scanning points in the fall and winter for loons, scoters, and grebes out on the Big Lake. In winter, Beverly Drive can be a reliable spot to find Northern Shrikes.

The Heron Rookery is no longer home to a colony of breeding herons, but is still a great spring birding destination. The rich forestland features a great spring wildflower bloom, and often hosts the first migrating songbirds, from April kinglets, Winter Wrens and waterthrushes to May warblers, thrushes, and vireos. Two parking lots cap the ends of the rookery's linear hiking trail.

The Cowles Bog area is not only the site of early ecological work by Henry Cowles, but an outstanding forest and swamp habitat. A 2.5-mile trail circles the swamp and can produce high numbers of migrants in the spring and fall. Many rarities have been found here, including Kirtland's Warbler and Western Kingbird. For those wanting a longer walk, the trails continue to the beach through upland oak savanna habitats.

Some of the best intact dune and swale habitat can be found at **West Beach**. As the park's primary beach area, summer crowds can be heavy, but spring, fall, and winter birding can be productive. The "pinery" area along the succession trail can host winter finches and Long-eared Owls. On the southern portion, Long Lake is worth a scan for waterfowl and shorebirds when the water levels are low. The little bluestem prairie areas can shelter fall sparrows, including Swamp, White-crowned, and LeConte's Sparrow.



Blackburnian Warbler

TIMING

Typical Time to Bird

Site: 1-2 Hours

Best Time to Bird:

Indiana Dunes is truly a four-season park. Each season offers a different variety of birds and locations within the park to find them.

Hours:

Regular park hours are dawn to dusk in most lots.

GETTING THERE

Address:

1215 N SR 49
Porter, IN 46304

Directions:

State Road 49 is the most common access route from I-94 and I-80/90. US 12 and 20 also traverse the park east/west.

SITE LOGISTICS

Admission: FREE

Ownership:
National Park Service

Accessibility:

The Great Marsh trail features a short paved wheelchair-accessible trail to an overlook of the marsh from the north parking lot.

Restrictions:

During busy summer periods, the park can be crowded with hikers and campers, including summer weekend lines to get into the park.

PARK & STAY

Parking:

Parking can be found throughout the park in many lots.

Nearby Amenities:

The park has ample restrooms throughout, and modern facilities can be found at the state park nature center, as well as by the beach. Food, lodging, and gas can be found three miles south in Chester-ton.

CONTACT INFO

Website:

nps.gov/indu

Phone Number:

(219) 395-1882

eBird Hotspot Link:

Beverly Shores:
ebird.org/hotspot/L356
175, Heron Rookery:
ebird.org/hotspot/L152
749, Cowles Bog:
ebird.org/hotspot/L152
744, West Beach:
ebird.org/hotspot/L353
993





WELCOME

new outreach coordinator
Sam Warren

Hi! I'm Sam Warren, the new Outreach & Education Specialist with Indiana Audubon. I am very excited to have the opportunity to work with such a great, conservation minded organization with some awesome members! I just moved to Indiana this March and am excited to check out the area (and the birds, of course).

I grew up in Central Minnesota and went to undergrad at Bemidji State University. It's way up North in MN and it gets so cold there, that you can actually park on the lake to get to campus during the winter. I majored in Biology, with a Wildlife Management emphasis and shared my knowledge at the local Boys & Girls Club as a STEM Coordinator. This is when I realized that while I loved being outdoors and doing research, I had more of an excitement and passion about sharing it with others!

I participated in study abroad programs both in Thailand and East Africa, where I was able to get some really terrific wildlife experiences! I went on many birding safaris through the Serengeti and other national parks, and I have witnessed a trapping and collaring of a wild tiger. If you have the opportunity, I highly recommend checking out Thailand's jungles... perhaps on the 2021 Audubon trip! I also had the opportunity to complete research in Kenya that focused on potential livestock effects on gazelle within wildlife sanctuaries.

I went on to get a Master's in Agroecology (aka sustainable agriculture) from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. My thesis research focused on grassland bird species abundance on grazed public lands in central Wisconsin. I was particularly looking at species usage between rotationally grazed, continuously grazed, and non-grazed systems within a wildlife management area.

Most recently, I have been in Iowa working as a county 4-H program coordinator. My favorite parts were planning the county fair and creating a Nature Club that hosted various outdoor events and programs.

I've been a little bit of everywhere and done a little bit of everything, it seems. Here are some fun bird-related facts about me so I don't bore you with more of my life story:

Favorite Bird Species/Group: Kingfishers- because they are beautiful, fun to band, and have superb fishing abilities.

Favorite Birding Region: Serengeti National Park, Tanzania or Daintree Rainforest, Queensland.

Bucket List Species: Cassowary and puffins (when they're not at the zoo)

Dream Birding Destination: Antarctica for the penguins or somewhere in the Amazon because I love rainforests/jungles and there are so many endemic species hidden in the trees.

Favorite Non-Avian Animal: Wolves and river otters.

I love talking about anything wildlife and/or travel related! When I'm not nerding out about nature, you can usually find me reading a mystery or sci-fi novel, cooking new recipes, or hanging with my family.

I'm excited to be joining the Indiana Audubon team and can't wait to meet the larger community of birders! Please stop and say hi if you see me at events or reach out anytime at swarren@indianaaudubon.org.



meet a
MEMBER
Brent Drinkut



Q Tell us a little about yourself? Where do you live? Family? Education background?

I'm from Indianapolis, where I live with my wife, Emily, and our spoiled dog, Landry. I have a degree in Forestry from Purdue University but worked as a print photojournalist for 11 years before accepting my current position with the DNR.

Q What got you interested in photographing nature and birds?

I've always had an interest in nature and often bring my camera along while hiking. While living in Oregon several years ago, I remember seeing a Lazuli Bunting for the first time and wondering what it was. From that sighting, my interest was piqued. Coincidentally, I photographed a guided hike with the Salem Audubon Society soon after for the local newspaper. Being out with the group and seeing birds that we didn't have in Indiana brought it full circle for me. I'm not the best or most knowledgeable birder, but I'll get there... eventually.

Q You get to do some interesting work and travel for the DNR as their videographer, visiting great sites. What's your favorite part of the job?

There are picturesque places in all 92 counties in Indiana. I love exploring the state and capturing a variety of landscapes to help people understand that we have more than flat land and agriculture. Getting outside the office most days of the week is something I don't take for granted!

Q You had an epic Long-eared Owl photo? How was that experience?

Owls are some of my favorite birds. In this case, I had a tip that they were in the area so I was prepared and hoping to catch a lucky break. When I finally spotted the owl, it was just staring right back at me. I took it in for a moment, snapped a few photos and moved on. It's best not to disturb them for too long so it was a short experience, but one that was meaningful.



Long-eared Owl • Brent Drinkut

A DECADE OF BIRDING

A Brief Review of Indiana Birding from 2010-2019 (plus rare bird predictions for the next decade!)

by Nick Keihl

The anticipation of an exciting new bird and the real possibility of finding something unexpected is what drives many birders into the field week after week. It's why we set our alarms for 5am during migration, and why we diligently check the same local hotspots repeatedly throughout the year. With the start of a new decade comes a chance to look back at how birding (and the birds themselves) has changed over the past 10 years, as well as an opportunity to consider what new developments might be in store for the future. A brief check of websites, blogs, or social media on New Year's Eve makes it clear that birdwatchers love to reflect on moments in the field, special birds, and meeting year-end goals. While this annual cycle is a fun exercise,

long-term developments can be more difficult to summarize, and one can get lost in the details unless examining with a wider lens. This article will summarize some of the major events and changes in Indiana birding during the 2010-2019 decade and will end with a prediction of rare birds we could see in the next.

The past decade has seen numerous developments in how birders communicate, keep track of sightings, and decide where to go birding. While eBird technically got its start in 2002, it wasn't until several years later that the masses got on board. This citizen science project has utterly transformed the way many of us plan for birding trips, organize lists, and learn about bird status and distribution. Ebird usage skyrocketed from 18 million observations in 2010 to more than 140 million in 2019. But what good is a neat bird observation if it's never shared with anyone? Communication between birders is an essential and enjoyable component of the hobby, and in the last decade, social media has become an important outlet for all things birding. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and others have become the new platform for rare bird alerts, photo sharing, ID discussions, and simply connecting with others who share a love of nature. At the same time, listservs are seeing much less activity than they did prior to 2010. In the realm of hardware advances, digital cameras have come a long way since 2010, and even budget-conscious birders can now afford cameras with impressive zoom and picture quality. Birding with a camera is easier than ever, and has facilitated documentation of a large number of Indiana rarities since the decade began. At the time of this writing, mirrorless cameras are becoming a hot commodity for nature photographers. Will that trend continue for the rest of the 2020s?

While we still can't predict exactly when and where a rare bird might show up, the last 10 years have seen incredible developments in bird tracking on a larger scale. NEXRAD, or next generation radar, can detect large groups of flying birds, such as nocturnal migrants or flocks returning to a roost. While basic weather data is still useful to the well-equipped birder, we can now check radar and associated BirdCast reports to find out how much turnover is likely, or which spring and fall mornings are likely to have the biggest influx of migrants. All this is only scratching the surface of changes the birding world has undergone since 2010, and there are many others that could be featured here, from sound recording equipment to new field guides and birding apps. What would you add to the list?



American White Pelicans



Bird Migration On Radar

Indiana's birding community and birding technology have certainly undergone changes in the last decade, but what about the birds themselves? A bird species' range and population can shift over time, and even a period of just 10 years can be enough for people to notice. For example, since 2010, Trumpeter Swan numbers in Indiana have risen substantially due to the success of the upper midwest breeding population. In 2010, they were reported from just seven Indiana counties, compared to 35 counties in 2019, with suspected breeding in at least one location. American White Pelicans were formerly rare in the state, being seen reliably at just a couple of locations in 2010. Now, flocks of several hundred are not uncommon throughout southwest Indiana, and smaller numbers are regularly seen during migration at many large



Blue Grosbeak

bodies of water around the state. While pelicans have moved into our state from the west, several other species have been marching north. In the last 10 years, Blue Grosbeaks have become increasingly common in central and southern Indiana, and now breed throughout the state, though less common in the northern third. Indiana's first record of Neotropic Cormorant came in 2011 at Goose Pond, and since then it has been an annual visitor, with records as far north as Lake Michigan. Similarly, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck has only been recorded in the state within the last 20 years, but is now expected in spring and summer, and a pair has nested in Posey County for the past two years! Other southern species that have been gradually becoming more abundant in Indiana include Black-necked Stilt, Mississippi Kite, Lesser Black-backed Gull, and Fish Crow. While a decade is not always enough time to detect gradual population declines, the Ruffed Grouse is an example of a bird that's become increasingly scarce in Indiana. Numerous grassland and open country birds face severe declines continent-wide, although properties like Goose Pond FWA and reclaimed strip mines in southwest Indiana may help buffer the impact locally.

In addition to subtle trends in status and distribution, Indiana has seen a number of noteworthy rarities in the period of 2010-2019, including 15 species added to the state checklist. Among the more surprising records was a Spotted Redshank in Greene County and Great Kiskadee in Noble

County (2018/2019). This decade also saw the first modern record of Common Raven for Indiana, and impressive irruptions of winter finches (2012/2013) and Snowy Owls (multiple winters). Thinking about some of the incredible rarities that have shown up in our state makes avid birders wonder "What could be next?" Nearly a decade ago, IAS Executive Director Brad Bumgardner wrote an article addressing that question, and narrowed down the possibilities to a list of ten. Based on a tally of votes from Indiana birders, the top ten included (in descending order): Ash-throated Flycatcher, Anhinga, Mottled Duck, Neotropic Cormorant, Sprague's Pipit, Glaucous-winged Gull,



Black-throated Sparrow, Lewis's Woodpecker, Boreal Owl, and Calliope Hummingbird. You can read the full article in the August 2010 issue of the Indiana Audubon Quarterly. Since Brad wrote his article, birders have in fact recorded Mottled Duck, Neotropic Cormorant, and Calliope Hummingbird in Indiana. Notably, as of January 2020, Calliope Hummingbird has two records and Neotropic Cormorant has a staggering 20!

If there's anything that this list shows us, it's that rare birds are rare (shocking!) and predicting what will be next is nearly impossible. Will Neotropic Cormorant continue to be recorded with increasing frequency? Will an Anhinga finally be spotted soaring over a southern Indiana wetland? And when are we going to get that Ash-throated Flycatcher that people have been talking about for years? Check back in 2030, and hopefully we will have an answer to some of those questions!

To wrap up the theme of rare birds, I thought I would develop my own list of 10 species currently unrecorded in Indiana that I predict will be the next to appear on our state list. We've averaged close to two new birds per year since 2000, but finding something new obviously becomes more difficult as the list grows.



In no particular order, **here are my predictions for the next 10 new bird species to be recorded in Indiana:**

Anhinga. While rightly associated with the Deep South, this striking relative of the cormorant is regularly seen as far north as Tennessee and Virginia. Though two separate individuals have been seen just over the Ohio River in Kentucky, and multiple pairs now breed in Illinois, Indiana has yet to record one. Wetlands and swampy wooded areas in southern Indiana would be natural places to look.

Lewis's Woodpecker. Another bird that makes the list for a second time. A distinctive migratory woodpecker of open forests and parks, this species could potentially make an appearance just about anywhere in the state. Vagrants have been spotted in eastern North America in every season, but late fall through winter sees the most records.

Violet-green Swallow. It would take a careful eye to pick out a Violet-green among a mixed flock of swallows. Most Eastern records are of singles in spring or fall, presumably migrating with more expected species like Barn and Tree Swallow.

Glaucous-winged Gull. Gulls in general have a tendency to wander, and this West Coast species has been recorded in numerous interior states, including both Michigan and Illinois. Perhaps the most difficult part of identifying a wayward Glaucous-winged is ruling out Herring or Western Gull influence. Glaucous-winged x Herring hybrids have been seen on the Great Lakes.

Plumbeous Vireo. This is a bird that could appear in a migrant flock just about anywhere in Indiana. The Plumbeous Vireo is a member of the "Solitary Vireo" complex and is a common breeder in the Intermountain West, being found as far east as the Black Hills. It presents a difficult ID challenge, especially since its close relative the Cassin's Vireo (also a potential vagrant) would need to be ruled out.

Ash-throated Flycatcher. Long expected in Indiana, this smaller and paler cousin of the familiar Great-crested Flycatcher show up annually on the east coast. They must occasionally pass through Indiana on their way, but actually finding one has proven more difficult than originally suspected.

Tropical Kingbird. This large and often vocal flycatcher is similar in general appearance to several other species, and voice along with good photos would be key to getting a record accepted. Though restricted to south Texas and Arizona as breeders in the U.S., Tropical Kingbird is one of the most widespread and common neotropical birds, and its vagrancy pattern makes it possible just about anywhere in eastern North America. Late fall is perhaps the most likely window. Though many western records undoubtedly come from Mexico, there is some evidence that others might be austral migrant overshoots a la Fork-tailed Flycatcher.

White Wagtail. This is a wildcard bird. With multiple accepted records in Michigan and several others on the East Coast, this primarily Eurasian breeder could find its way onto rocky portions of the Indiana lakefront.

Common Eider. This would be another one to look for on Lake Michigan. A small influx of birds into the western Great Lakes in 2014/2015 failed to produce our state's first.

Tufted Duck. Vagrant Tufted Ducks, of which quite a few records exist for surrounding states, invariably join flocks of scaup and Ring-necked Ducks. The lakefront would be an obvious place to look, but any body of water that attracts good numbers of diving ducks could potentially get one. The adult males are easiest to identify with their namesake tufted heads, but Indiana birders should familiarize themselves with both sexes to be prepared.

There are many other species that could have made the list, and if past predictions can be used as evidence, I'm guessing the next new bird will be one that I narrowly left off! Honorable mentions might include Clark's Grebe, Sprague's Pipit, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Garganey, Clark's Nutcracker, Black-throated Sparrow, Allen's Hummingbird, Ivory Gull, and Gray Flycatcher. There's no sense in waiting around for someone else to find one of these. Study up on ID of potential rarities, grab your binoculars, and get out there prepared to find the unexpected!

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