

Birding Reports (April 2012)

April 30, 2012 — The Snowgoose is still being seen at the Rice Lake/Lowell WMA on Co Rd 11 (4 weeks in a row!). Others in this location include adult Bald Eagle, Common Loon pair, Ring-neck Duck, Mallard, Woodduck and Trumpeter Swan. On Co Rd 13 at Guida Lake, Trumpeter Swan and a pair of Common Loons were spotted. One new arrival this week includes Purple Martins in the Brainerd area. Common Loons are now using the nesting platform found at North Long Lake just north of Brainerd. Happy Birding!

April 24, 2012 — Last week's cool and wet weather really slowed new arrivals to the area. For the past few weeks, I have been updating the status of the single Snow Goose that has been seen at Rice Lake/Lowell WMA located on Co Rd 11. This spot continues to be very good birding spot. Recent sightings include: Adult Bald Eagle, Loon pair, Mallards, Woodducks, Blue-winged Teal, Trumpeter Swans, Hooded Mergansers, Ring-neck Ducks (60) Phoebe and Song Sparrow. Ospreys can be seen at nesting platforms throughout the area. Last week saw a Cooper's Hawk watching my feeders and heard a Barred Owl calling. Bluebirds, Tree Swallows, Woodducks, and Chickadees are starting nests now. Both Yellow-rumped Warbler and Ruby-crowned Kinglets are more numerous as they continue to move through. Happy Birding!

April 17, 2012 — A good location to view a good variety continues to be the Lowell/Rice Lake WMA on Co Rd 11. Recently spotted at this location were: Turkey Vulture, Trumpeter Swans, Ring-necked Ducks, Blue-winged Teal, Mallards, Canada Goose (nesting) Woodducks, Song Sparrow, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Robbins, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Flicker, Phoebe, Pied-billed Grebe, Snowgoose, Bufflehead and Hooded Merganser. The Uncommon snow goose was relocated and appears to be doing ok here for now. This is a bird that can be difficult to find along the grassy shoreline. Also along Co Rd 11, two adults Osprey were seen at the Osprey platform this week at the nest. In most cases, the males tend to arrive before females. A few birds found at the Chiarella FMA (on County Road 4, just north of Breezy Point) include Barred Owl (that started calling behind the pine plantation just before dusk), Ruffed grouse and Yellow-rumped Warbler. Near Breezy Point Resort, a Turkey Vulture was in a tree sunning his outstretched wings. Some new arrivals from this past week include Red-shouldered Hawk, Coopers Hawk, Pied Billed Grebe and Yellow-rumped Warbler (female). Lots of Blackbirds are moving through along lakes and wetlands, along with some Fox Sparrows, Juncos and Song Sparrows. Birds that visiting the feeders are molting into their summer plumage — a good example is the American Goldfinch. Happy Birding!

April 9, 2012 — While visiting the Lowell/Rice Lake WMA located on Co Rd 11, a blue-phase snow goose was spotted. This is a very unusual bird for the area -- mostly found in western Minnesota during migration. Also at Rice Lake, the following birds were noted: one Common Loon, Ring-neck ducks, Woodducks, Mallards, 1 pair of Trumpeter Swans, Song Sparrow and one goose already nesting. Osprey's are now at the nesting platforms in the area. Additional new arrivals this week include: Yellow-rumped Warbler, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Veery and Belted Kingfisher. With the cooler weather and below freezing temps forecasted to the start week, migration will slow down a bit. Happy Birding!

April 2, 2012 — At the Lowell/Rice Lake WMA on Co Rd 11, the following waterfowl were seen: Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Ring-neck, Mallard and Hooded Merganser. Common Loons are now arriving, too, nearly 3 weeks earlier than last year. Northern Flickers, Osprey, Brown-headed Cowbirds, white-throated Sparrows are some of the other new arrivals to the area. Happy Birding!

— Judd Brink, bird guide/owner, [MN Backyard Birds](#) & [BirdsoftheByway.com](#)