

SPRING ARRIVAL and DEPARTURE DATES FOR SONGBIRDS in the LANSING AREA



image by John Parke

This is a compendium of information collected by many observers regarding the arrival and departure dates of migratory Passerines (songbirds) into and through the Lansing vicinity. This area has recently been informally designated as the Capital Area and includes Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties and the Maple River SGA (which has units in Gratiot, Clinton, and Ionia counties).

References used are listed below. More data points could have been garnered by combing through back issues of the *Jack-Pine Warbler* and *Michigan Birds and Natural History*, published by the Michigan Audubon Society. The date range for the information covers roughly from 1945 to the present.

Spring arrival dates for these species are highly weather dependent and can vary widely from year to year, hence the average week of arrival is shown in the third column. The average week of arrival was derived solely from information presented in the work of McWhirter and Beaver. In the years since, if all available observations were re-tabulated, it's likely some of the average weeks of arrival would be shifted to one week earlier.

Dates of arrival can be obscured by individuals or flocks spending the winter in the area. For some of the species below, it was deemed impossible to make a clean separation between wintering birds and the arrival of the migratory portion of the population. Departure dates are likewise obscured by birds or flocks lingering into summer or staying the summer. Departure dates for species routinely staying in the area to breed are not given here.

As usual, the author hopes to edify and satisfy the interested and curious with this compilation. Also, per usual, this is considered a group collaboration, so corrections and additions are welcome.

Olive-sided Flycatcher	16 May to 12 June	3rd week of May	
Eastern Wood-Pewee	19 April thru summer	1st week of May	
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	04 May to 01 June	3rd week of May	
Acadian Flycatcher	06 May thru summer	3rd week of May	
Alder Flycatcher	15 May thru summer	3rd week of May	very local breeder
Willow Flycatcher	10 May thru summer	3rd week of May	
Least Flycatcher	26 April thru summer	1st week of May	
Eastern Phoebe	16 March thru summer	1st week of April	
Great Crested Flycatcher	26 April thru summer	1st week of May.	
Eastern Kingbird	14 April thru summer	1st week of May.	
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	10 June 1996		rare in Michigan

White-eyed Vireo	27 April thru summer		rare in summer (breeds?)
Yellow-throated Vireo	25 April thru summer	1st week of May	
Blue-headed Vireo	20 April to 02 June	1st week of May	very rare in summer
Warbling Vireo	27 April thru summer	1st week of May	
Philadelphia Vireo	29 April to 31 May	3rd week of May	
Red-eyed Vireo	19, 26 April thru summer	2nd week of May	
Horned Lark		3 rd week of February	winters
Purple Martin	01 April thru summer	2nd week of April	very local breeder
Tree Swallow	18 March thru summer	2nd week of April	
N. Rough-winged Swallow	04 April thru summer	3rd week of April	
Bank Swallow	19 April thru summer	4th week of April	
Cliff Swallow	23 April thru summer	1st week of May	uncommon local breeder
Barn Swallow	02 April thru summer	3rd week of April	
House Wren	18 April thru summer	4th week of April	
Winter Wren	15 March to 10 May	1st week of April	rare in winter, one in June
Sedge Wren	24 April thru summer	2nd week of May	
Marsh Wren	05 May thru summer	2nd week of May	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	20 March to 06 June		uncommon in winter
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	30 March to 29 May	2nd week of April	very rare in winter
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	11 April thru summer	4th week of April	
Eastern Bluebird	migrants in March	1st week of March	regular in winter
Veery	27 April thru summer	1st week of May	
Gray-cheeked Thrush	18 April to 02 June	1st week of May	
Swainson's Thrush	19 April to 06 June	1st week of May	
Hermit Thrush	22 March to 24 May	2nd week of April	rarely winters thru
Wood Thrush	15 April thru summer	4th week of April	
American Robin	migrants in March	2nd week of March	regular in winter
Gray Catbird	19 April thru summer	1st week of May	
Brown Thrasher	04 April thru summer	3rd week of April	1-2 winter most years
American Pipit	19 March to 19 May	2nd week of April	



Blue-winged Warbler	26 April thru summer	1st week of May	
Golden-winged Warbler	03 May to ???	1st Week of May	no longer breeds in area
Tennessee Warbler	30 April to 05 June	1st week of May	
Orange-crowned Warbler	22 April to 27 May	1st week of May	
Nashville Warbler	11 April to 06 June	4th week of April	

Northern Parula	01 May to 27 May	1st week of May	
Yellow Warbler	17 April thru summer	4th week of April	
Chestnut-sided Warbler	26 April thru summer	1st week of May	rare breeder
Magnolia Warbler	17 April to 04 June	2nd week of May	
Cape May Warbler	01 May to 01 June	1st week of May	
Black-throat Blue Warbler	01 May to 04 June	1st week of May	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	28 March to 25 May	1st week of April	sometimes winters
Blk-throat Green Warbler	18 April to 03 June	4th week of April	very rare in summer
Blackburnian Warbler	30 April to 16 June	1st week of May	very rare in summer
Pine Warbler	13 April thru summer	3rd week of April	uncommon in summer
Kirtland's Warbler	22 May 2008		very rare in area
Prairie Warbler	05 May to 17 May		rare in spring
Palm Warbler	19 April to 29 May	4th week of April	
Bay-breasted Warbler	04 May to 03 June	2nd week of May	
Blackpoll Warbler	04 May to 04 June	2nd week of May	
Cerulean Warbler	22 April thru summer	2nd week of May	rare, local breeder
Black-and-white Warbler	12 April thru summer	1st week of May	uncommon breeder
American Redstart	16, 25 April thru summer	1st week of May	
Prothonotary Warbler	05 May thru summer	2nd week of May	uncommon local breeder
Worm-eating Warbler	07 May to 25 May		rare in spring
Ovenbird	18 April thru summer	4th week of April	
Northern Waterthrush	19 April to 30 May	1st week of May	rare(?) breeder
Louisiana Waterthrush	12 April to 12 June	1st week of May	very rare breeder
Kentucky Warbler	26 April to 18 May		rare in spring
Connecticut Warbler	08, 18 May to 04 June	3rd week of May	
Mourning Warbler	14 May thru summer	3rd week of May	rare breeder
Common Yellowthroat	23 April thru summer	4th week of April	
Hooded Warbler	20 April to 12 June		uncommon in summer
Wilson's Warbler	04 May to 02 June	2nd week of May	
Canada Warbler	02 May to 06 June	2nd week of May	very rare in summer
Yellow-breasted Chat	04 May to 18 July	2nd week of May	rare breeder
Eastern Towhee		4th week of March	uncommon in winter
Chipping Sparrow	19,30 March thru summer	3rd week of April	
Clay-colored Sparrow	03 May to 09 June, 20 July		rare in summer
Field Sparrow	25 March thru summer	2nd week of April	
Vesper Sparrow	15 March thru summer	1st week of April	rare in winter
Lark Sparrow	16 May 1971		very rare
Savannah Sparrow	26 March thru summer	3rd week of April	
Grasshopper Sparrow	21 April thru summer	1st week of May	
Henslow's Sparrow	22 April thru summer	4th week of April	now rare breeder
Fox Sparrow	05 March to 08 May	1st week of April	rare in winter, summer
Lincoln's Sparrow	26 April to 30 May	1st week of May	
Swamp Sparrow	28 March thru summer	2nd week of April	rare in winter
White-throated Sparrow	to 22 May	3rd week of April	uncommon in winter
White-crowned Sparrow	02 April to 24 May	1st week of May	rare in winter
Summer Tanager	02 May to 10 May		very rare in spring
Scarlet Tanager	11 April thru summer	2nd week of May	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	17 April thru summer	1st week of May	

Blue Grosbeak	10 May 1997		rare in state
Indigo Bunting	10, 30 April thru summer	2nd week of May	
Dickcissel	20 May to 25 July		irregular breeder
Bobolink	18 April thru summer	1st week of May	
Red-winged Blackbird	20 January thru summer	1st week of March	sometimes winters
Eastern Meadowlark	27 February thru summer	2nd week of March	rare in winter
Western Meadowlark	08 April thru summer		very rare breeder
Yellow-headed Blackbird	21 April to 15 May		rare in area
Rusty Blackbird	09 March to 02 May	4th week of March	very rare in winter
Brewer's Blackbird	27 March, 10 April to 08 May		uncommon in area
Common Grackle	02 March thru summer	1st week of March	uncommon in winter
Brown-headed Cowbird		1st week of March	uncommon in winter
Orchard Oriole	30 April thru summer	2nd week of May	uncommon breeder
Baltimore Oriole	17 April thru summer	1st week of May	

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Birds of the Capital Count Area with Seasonal and Historical Analyses by D.W. McWhirter and D.L. Beaver (1977). Biological Series Vol. 5, No 4 of Publications of The Museum, Michigan State University.

Capital Count Area Bird Observations for 1976 compiled by D.W. McWhirter (1977). Local print and distribution.

Capital Area Audubon Society Bird Observation Report 1984 compiled by A. Hancock, L. Laylin, B. Staples, J. Pavlik (1985). Local print and distribution.

Capital Area Audubon Society Bird Observation Report for 1985 compiled by J. Pavlik (1986). Local print and distribution.

Lansing Area Bird Observation Report 1986 compiled by J. Pavlik(?) (1987). Local print and distribution.

The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Michigan by R. Brewer, G.A. McPeck, R.J. Adams, Jr. (1991). Michigan State University Press.

Birds of the Lansing Area, An Annotated Checklist by D.W. McWhirter (1997). Local print and distribution.

Capital Area Birding Year – 2008 compiled by D.W. McWhirter (2009). Computer file distributed locally via e-mail.

Capital Area Birding Year – 2009 (thru June) compiled by D.W. McWhirter (2009). Computer file distributed locally via e-mail.

Personal unpublished records of various local observers.