

# IOWA BIRD LIFE

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE

## IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

VOL. V

SEPTEMBER, 1935

NO. 3



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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union was organized at Ames, Iowa, February 28, 1923, for the study and protection of native birds and to promote fraternal relations among Iowa bird students.

The central design of the Union's official seal is the Eastern Goldfinch, designated State Bird of Iowa in 1933.

Publications of the Union: Mimeographed letters, 1923-1928; 'The Bulletin,' 1929-1930; 'Iowa Bird Life,' beginning 1931.

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES:** In Iowa, \$1.00 a year. Outside of Iowa, 50c a year. Special rate for all libraries, public or college, 50c a year. Single copies 15c each. (Keep the Editor informed of your correct address.)

EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION OFFICE  
WINTHROP, IOWA

## BRENTON'S SLOUGH, A WATERFOWL BREEDING AREA

By KATE E. LA MAR

The Des Moines Audubon Society, which was organized for the purpose of studying birds and promoting conservation, has started one of its most interesting projects—the establishment of a waterfowl breeding area at Brenton's Slough, 18 miles northwest of Des Moines, in Polk County, Iowa. J. N. Darling, Chief of the U. S. Biological Survey, believes that destruction of breeding grounds is one of the chief causes of the decrease in the numbers of waterfowl.

During the spring and fall migration of waterfowl and shore birds, members of the Des Moines Audubon Society have taken trips to places such as Long Pond near Yale, Little Wall Lake north of Ames, and Brenton's Slough. These field trips have been taken for several years, and when the lakes were being drained by tile and droughts, the question "What can we do about it?" was heard over and over. Members of the legislative bodies, the Fish and Game Commission, as well as others, were beset with queries as to how these last few lakes and sloughs near Des Moines might be preserved for resting and nesting places for ducks, geese and shore birds. A satisfactory answer was not given. The land was prohibitive in price for a small group or even the State and Federal authorities to buy. Owners of the places did not care to give them away, and some did not even care to preserve them.

The program of the joint meeting of the Iowa and Nebraska Ornithologists' Unions at Sioux City in May interested us a great deal, especially Logan J. Bennett's talk on "Waterfowl Management in the Prairie Region." Mr. Bennett, thoroughly imbued with the problem from field studies made in all parts of Iowa, made the statement: "If the season is closed in September, 1935, for the shooting of waterfowl, as the National Audubon Society and sportsmen's clubs recommend, the ducks would not be saved." Stopping of the slaughter is not entirely the remedy to keep the birds from becoming extinct. Game birds and shore birds that nest in Iowa have been and are being exterminated by the factors of depleted nesting cover and food supply rather than by hunters. Ducks nest around the margins of lakes and sloughs in the tall dried grasses of the previous year. When stock graze over these areas the nests are trampled and the grasses are cropped too closely to furnish necessary cover for the birds. Therefore, the eggs are not hatched or the young are destroyed. Mr. Bennett said that many small groups could help to keep or even bring back natural waterfowl breeding areas. He stated that suitable meadows, now grazed to the water's edge, might be saved if the sportsmen's clubs, Izaak Walton Leagues, and Audubon Societies would sponsor the work. If the land were not for sale, the group could secure permits from the owner and put a fence around the margin of the lake. By placing the fence from 14 to 40 feet from the shoreline the cover would be sufficient for the birds to nest and to rear their young. If stock were watered at the lake, lanes on several sides leading to the water would solve the problem for the owner.

The writer, knowing the desires of the Des Moines Audubon Society and now hearing a possible way to accomplish more conservation work, thought the facts over and talked with the members of the Conservation Committee. Plans for fencing Brenton's Slough were discussed. It was unanimously agreed to appropriate funds in the treasury for this purpose. Mr. Bennett with members of the Conservation Committee went to see Brenton's Slough, and the place was approved for

a wildfowl breeding area. After interviewing the owner, Clyde Brenton, the permit was granted to fence as much of the territory as desired. Twenty acres were chosen for the tract to be fenced. The fencing was done under the direction of Mr. Bennett, with the F. E. R. A. furnishing the labor and the Des Moines Audubon Society paying for all materials.

It seems a small beginning, but important. The Ingersoll Gun Club has had a cabin on the hill overlooking the Brenton's Slough lake for several years. The fact that sportsmen have always sponsored game areas is known, and now that conservation groups and sportsmen are uniting their efforts, more will be accomplished in the field of preserving the waterfowl areas.

The Des Moines Audubon Society is now studying the area with the following points in mind: (1) What migratory waterfowls stop to rest and, later, which ones nest? (2) What upland game birds and marsh birds come to nest in the area? (3) What plant life serves as cover and which plants furnish food? (4) What plants will appear next year and in later years that are not there at present? (some seeds have been known to lie dormant 20 to 40 years). (5) What mammals and reptiles are there and do they increase or decrease? (6) What predators are present and what is their effect? Intensive study of this area may aid in clearing ecological and conservation problems in this community.

The birds for which the area may serve as a resting and nesting habitat arrive early in the spring. The partial list given below is from notes taken on previous spring migrations. The asterisk is used to denote species which might nest in the region.

Pied-billed Grebe	*Sora Rail
Great Blue Heron	American Golden Plover
Black-crowned Night Heron	*Wilson's Snipe
White-fronted Goose	Spotted Sandpiper
Snow Goose	Greater Yellow-legs
Blue Goose	Lesser Yellow-legs
*Mallard	Pectoral Sandpiper
*Pintail	Least Sandpiper
Green-winged Teal	Semi-palmated Sandpiper
*Blue-winged Teal	Hudsonian Godwit
Ring-necked Duck	*Wilson's Phalarope
Scaup Duck	Common Tern
*Virginia Rail	*Black Tern

Other birds observed since the fencing or during late June and early July:

Least Bittern	Crow
Marsh Hawk	Black-capped Chickadee
Bob-white	Marsh Wrens
American Coot	Robin
Florida Gallinule	Northern Yellow-throat
Killdeer	Western Meadowlark
Least Tern	Yellow-headed Blackbird
Mourning Dove	Red-winged Blackbird
Northern Flicker	Dickeissel
Prairie Horned Lark	Goldfinch
Barn Swallow	Field Sparrow

The summer flora list includes the following plants: Iris, oxalis, lambs-quarter, small ragweed, tall meadow rue, goldenrod, slough grass, duck weed, hemp, asters, thoroughwort, sedges, groundcherry, scouring rushes, small red haw, vervain, evening primrose, wild onion, horse weed, horsemint, St. John's wort, wild rice, cattail, milkweed, ironweed, arrow leaf, vetchling, pennyroyal, prairie larkspur, small honey locust tree.

## DISTINCTIVE PLACES IN IOWA FOR BIRD STUDY

By PHILIP A. DU MONT

In order to fully appreciate the beauties of Iowa and at the same time to observe some of the rarer or distinctly regional species of birds, auto trips should be planned to include some or all of the following localities.

The valley of the Upper Iowa River in Winneshiek County is a region of outstanding interest. The auto trip may be planned from Decorah northwest to Bluffton and Kendallville by way of "Casey's Spring." This is a distance of about 15 miles. It is in this locality that the distinctly Transition fauna and flora are to be found in Iowa. Dr. Paul Bartsch reported ('Iowa Ornithologist,' III, pp. 51-61) on the summer birds of this area, the former Oneota Valley. A large nesting colony of Cliff Swallows is to be found at Bluffton, the nests being plastered on the face of the rock cliff. The Ruffed Grouse and Pileated Woodpecker are still found in this region, but somewhat more frequently farther east in Allamakee County.



A SCENE NEAR DECORAH

This is in the Oneota Valley, a part of the region known as "The Switzerland of Iowa."

Some of the most distinctive tracts of native prairie are to be found in Grant Township of northwestern Kossuth County, south of Tuttle Lake in Emmet County, northwest of Estherville in Emmet County, and west of Lake Okoboji along the Little Sioux River in Dickinson County. The opportunity to still see the vanishing prairie flowers is well worth the trip.

To be certain of observing the Arkansas Kingbird, Burrowing Owl, Upland Plover, and possibly the Lark Bunting, an auto trip should be made to the Gitchie Manitou State Park in the extreme northwest corner of Iowa. This park, three miles north and seven miles west of Larchwood, Lyon County, consists of a prairie tract with a rock-bound pool nestled among the outcropping of Sioux quartzite. This dull red rock is the oldest to be found in Iowa.

The rugged wind-blown hills of southwestern Iowa, near the Missouri River, are best appreciated in Waubonsie State Park, five miles northwest of Hamburg, Fremont County. Many of the typical Carolinian species are found in these wooded hills.



WAUBONSIE

Located on the summits of the Missouri River bluffs in Fremont County, this State Park is one of narrow ridges and deep valleys.

Undoubtedly, one of the best localities in which to study migrant waterfowl and shore birds is in the vicinity of Ruthven, in Clay and Palo Alto Counties. Water birds are especially numerous on Round Lake, a State Fish and Game Refuge of 450 acres, and shore birds were seen to best advantage on the shores of Lost Island Lake during the past two years. This is likewise one of the best areas for the study of breeding water birds. The Ruddy Duck, Redhead, Forster's Tern and Wilson's Phalarope have all been found nesting here recently. There is unquestionably a greater concentration of migrant shore birds on the shores of Spirit Lake, Dickinson County, than in any other



ROUND LAKE

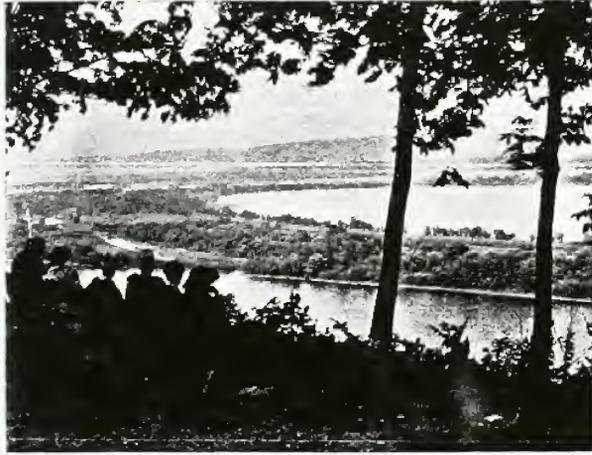
"Water birds are especially numerous on Round Lake, a State Fish and Game Refuge of 450 acres . . . . ."

locality in the state. The Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Northern Phalarope and both species of Godwit were seen here in 1934.

The Green Bay Bottoms in southeastern Iowa are rapidly becoming another of the best localities in the state for water birds of all sorts. It is located between Burlington and Fort Madison in Lee County, and lies south of the Skunk River. Since the completion of the Keokuk dam this drainage district of 13,000 acres has been partially protected from high water in the Mississippi River by a levee on three sides. Pumping was necessary to offset seepage, and when these pumping operations were discontinued three years ago about five or six thousand acres became permanently flooded. The writer found the Double-crested Cormorant nesting here in 1934. As many as 10,000 Cormorants have been seen during spring migration. A flock of 35 American Egrets spent the late spring and summer on the Bottoms and by September their numbers had increased to over 300. Actually this is one of the most important resting and feeding places for waterfowl along the length of the Mississippi River as it borders Iowa.

Trips to these localities will add immeasurably to your appreciation of Iowa, and undoubtedly will result in some valuable bird records from these rather distant points.

(The illustrations accompanying this article are published through courtesy of Iowa State Conservation Commission).



"THE HEIGHTS" AT MCGREGOR

Overlooking the Mississippi River—the home of the American School of Wild Life Protection—a region of great scenic beauty and filled with ornithological possibilities.

## PRIVATE BIRD COLLECTIONS IN IOWA

By PHILIP A. DU MONT

During the last three years the writer has examined several very interesting private collections of birds in Iowa. With the kind permission of the owners, these collections are here briefly described.

### THE ALLERT COLLECTION AT GIARD

The bird collection of Oscar P. Allert unquestionably forms one of the most important small teaching museums in Iowa. Located as it is, in Giard, six miles west of McGregor, Clayton County, this museum ably supplements the bird collections at Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, and the Bert Heald Bailey Museum at Coe College, Cedar

Rapids. Together, these three represent practically the only teaching museums which are readily available to the public in northeastern Iowa.

The Allert collection contains 785 specimens of birds, of which half are mounted and the remainder are study skins. This material has been accumulated between 1923 and 1935. Most of the specimens were collected by Mr. Allert in Clayton County. However, approximately 100 birds are from elsewhere, about 60 being from Delos Hatch of Oakfield, Wisconsin, and the remainder from the Southwest or the west coast. The Hatch collection consists almost entirely of mounted specimens of waterfowl and marsh birds secured as early as 1884, but principally between 1898 and 1901 on the Horican Marsh.

The mounted specimens are arranged systematically and are contained in upright display cases. These dust-proof cases are sufficiently light weight to allow them to be easily carried from the residence in case of fire.

An entire case is devoted to the owls of Iowa, one to the hawks, three to waterfowl, and in a similar manner all of the birds distinctive to Iowa, particularly the northeast portion, are thus displayed. The study skins consist of material necessary to help in solving Iowa problems of subspecificity and distribution. All specimens are labelled with complete data.

The collection contains two Cerulean, a Cape May and two Bay-breasted Warblers, two Philadelphia Vireos, a Pine Siskin, a Snow Bunting, and a male White-winged Crossbill, the latter being taken November 22, 1926. There are two Goshawks, a Pileated Woodpecker, a female Western Red-tailed Hawk which was taken October 12, 1927, and a Montana Horned Owl, taken October 28, 1926. All specimens of Cowbird appeared to be *ater*, all Grinnell's water-thrushes proved to be *notabilis*, and the Great Blue Herons are *herodias*. A single specimen of Western Field Sparrow was taken at Giard, October 15, 1931. An immature specimen of Glossy Ibis was taken at McGregor during September, 1905, and probably is *guarauna*.

This collection was first examined by the writer on August 6, 1932, but since then several visits have been made and specimens borrowed for study purposes.

#### THE BLUM COLLECTION NEAR TERRIL

A collection of 74 mounted birds is contained in the home of Clifford Blum, three miles south and one-half mile east of Terril, Dickinson County. All of these birds were secured locally since 1930, either on the Blum farm in Dickinson County or just across the line south in Clay County. These specimens, all of which were mounted by Mr. Blum, form a display in one room of the residence. While none of the birds have labels attached, a complete written record has been preserved of the unusual specimens.

An adult Swainson's Hawk was secured two and one-half miles south of Terril, April 21, 1931. An American Rough-legged Hawk was taken August 16, 1931, in Clay County. The collection contains three Eastern Red-tailed Hawks, one of which is an adult, and three Krider's Hawks, all in first or second year plumage. An adult male Scarlet Tanager was found dead in Dickinson County, May 10, 1933, following some local snow flurries. A Blue Goose was secured near Lost Island Lake, an American Golden-eye was taken in Dickinson County, and a female Red-breasted Merganser was collected locally. A fully plumaged Golden Plover was secured southeast of Terril, May 4, 1933. The 19 specimens of Ring-necked Pheasant display the great individual variation that occurs in this species.

#### THE REMER COLLECTION AT LE MARS

A small private collection of Iowa birds assembled by Otto W. Remer of Le Mars is contained in the Remer residence. These 51 mounted

specimens represent material from Plymouth, Woodbury and Monona Counties personally secured by Mr. Remer or donated to him locally. Most of the specimens were taken between 1910 and 1920. The mounting was done by commercial taxidermists, especially by A. J. Anderson of Sioux City. Most of the birds are contained in a large upright display case built into one end of the room. The specimens have suffered somewhat from dust and insects. None of the specimens has any data attached, the memory of Mr. Remer being the only source for such information.

A Kentucky Warbler, caught in Le Mars about May 28, 1916, is probably of chief interest. The bird is reported to have been discovered inside the local heating plant that cold morning. A female Surf Scoter was taken at Blue Lake, Monona County, November 16, 1919. There is a Krider's Hawk, also Goshawk, Montana Horned Owl, two Bohemian Waxwings and a Magpie.

#### THE TENNANT COLLECTION AT ARNOLDS PARK

The Harry B. Tennant bird collection consists primarily of water-birds, hawks and owls secured in the lake region of northwestern Iowa. This collection is composed of approximately 300 birds, all of which were mounted by Mr. Tennant. Part of these birds are displayed in a newly constructed curio museum at Arnolds Park, while the remainder are stored in the Tennant residence and the sheds nearby.

This material consists of the larger species killed by Mr. Tennant in Dickinson County and along the Gulf Coast, and also unusual birds taken locally which were donated by interested individuals. None of these specimens has written data attached, although Mr. Tennant has been able to supply some approximation from memory.

Representatives of practically all species of Iowa ducks are contained in the collection. There are two White-winged Scoters, an adult male Surf Scoter which was killed on Spirit Lake in 1929, two Old-squaws, and a male Mallard and Pintail hybrid. There are two Prairie Falcons, both taken at Lake Okoboji; one was taken during "duck shooting time" about 1927, the other in the fall of 1925. A specimen of Duck Hawk was secured in 1931. There is a single Saw-whet Owl, a Krider's Hawk, two Golden Plovers and six Horned Owls. Three of these are the Montana Horned Owl (*occidentalis*), while the remainder are the Great Horned Owl. A specimen of Glossy Ibis in juvenile plumage, probably *guaranna*, was secured at Lake Okoboji about 1917.

#### THE WELLENDORF COLLECTION AT ALGONA

A private collection of approximately 37 mounted specimens of birds is contained in the home of Lloyd Wellendorf at Algona. These birds, all Iowa specimens, were either secured by Mr. Wellendorf or were brought to him by individuals who had found them dead. All were procured in Kossuth or Emmet County. The accumulation of these birds extended from 1920 to 1932. The mounting of the specimens was done by commercial taxidermists.

A female Surf Scoter is of special interest. It was taken on High Lake, Emmet County, about 1928. There is a Horned Grebe in winter plumage which was taken in Kossuth County. A Horned Owl in the collection is practically intermediate between *virginianus* and *occidentalis*. It was secured during winter time. A Prairie Sharp-tailed Grouse was collected in Kossuth County about 1924 from a flock of 400. It is of interest in this connection that Dennis H. Goeders of Algona reported seeing flocks of Sharp-tailed Grouse near Luverne, Kossuth County, in 1930 or 1931.

A male Lesser Scaup Duck, having a purplish gloss to the feathers of the head, has a bill measuring one inch in width and a wing measuring 8.20 inches. A Lesser Loon in spring plumage has a bill 2.90 inches

in length. A male Red-legged Black Duck is of large size, but has an unstreaked throat and mottling on the breast suggestive of *tristis*.

Possibly the most unusual specimen in the Wellendorf collection is a male Mallard and Pintail hybrid. Nearly equal numbers of diagnostic features of both species are retained.

## GENERAL NOTES

**The Bobolink in Western Iowa.**—The return of the Bobolink as a nesting bird in various parts of western Iowa was almost as welcome as the return of normal precipitation to the same area. In going over the area in question the writer found Bobolinks spending the summer in various places where they had not been found for years. The splendid growth of meadow grasses was the main factor in holding the birds in this area. The southernmost nesting birds were found below Sioux City on what are locally called the Hornick Bottoms. Some numbers of the birds were found in western Lyon County.—WM. YOUNG-WORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

**Mourning Dove Reports.**—A condensed report of the replies received from President Hendrickson's letter to all Iowa members regarding the abundance of Mourning Doves and the desirability of opening the shooting season thereon, is as follows:

Total number of replies received.....	31
Number reporting an increase in number of doves.....	10
Number reporting a decrease in number of doves.....	5
Number reporting no change in number of doves.....	12
Number not reporting on abundance.....	4

Of the 31 reports received, 28 reporters were opposed to an open season, and 3 favored it, although one of these specified "moderate shooting." Nearly all stated that they were "opposed to an open season in 1935 or any other year." One report, which was in favor of an open season, showed that there were 2.6 doves per mile by count and estimate. Another report, which was opposed to the open season, showed that there were counted 31 doves on a drive of 230 miles, or .135 birds per mile. Another report showed 19 doves counted on a drive of 50 miles, or .38 birds per mile. The last two reports were actual counts and not estimates. The reports represented 20 counties of Iowa and covered practically every section of the state. The members of the Des Moines Audubon Society reported together, and theirs is counted as one report in the summary.

The sentiments expressed in the letters were very interesting, but the letters are too long to be quoted here. I quote from one: "I do not approve of the new game bird status of the Mourning Dove. I strongly disapprove of it. It is another thorn in my flesh. That lovely and lovable bird is a farm and family ornament. Where I was brought up (Iowa), any man killing doves as game would have been jeered at. The mother of our family forbade the molestation of doves. How can any man with sand in his craw come down to the potting of doves for 'sport'? The scarcity of real game is no adequate excuse. A big-game hunter might as well come down to the hunting of chipmunks as a sport in the open."

At the request of Iowa hunters, the State Conservation Commission made an inquiry into the abundance of Mourning Doves in relation to opening the shooting season. The collective opinion of the members of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union was solicited as an aid in the decision. As this issue of 'Iowa Bird Life' goes to press it is not known what action the Commission will take in the matter.—WALTER M. ROSENE, Ogden, Iowa.

**A Pigeon's Nest of Metal.**—A recent acquisition of the natural history museum of the Historical, Memorial and Art Department of Iowa, Des Moines, is a domestic pigeon's nest made entirely of hair pins and safety pins. It was found in 1915 by the late Dr. M. Nelson Voldeng, on the roof of one of the main buildings of the Cherokee State Hospital, while Dr. Voldeng was superintendent of that institution. Two eggs were found in the nest but only one has been preserved. The slate shingle was taken up with the nest intact so the nest is now exactly as it was when found. I think it is not uncommon for birds, particularly pigeons, to use nails, wire, and other small metal objects in conjunction with the usual nesting materials, but I believe that this particular nest is unique because it is made entirely of metal. The coincidence of its having been built on the roof of a hospital used for the care of mental patients also may give it some popular claim to distinction.—JAMES R. HARLAN, Des Moines, Iowa.

**Lack of Migrating Ducks in Northwest Iowa during Spring of 1935.**—A waterfowl survey which was recently completed in northwest Iowa by the writer shows how low the breeding stock of wild ducks is becoming in the central prairie states. The area covered by the survey included 44 lakes and sloughs in the northwest corner of the state. These lakes still contain water, but there are dozens of dry lake beds also to be found in this area. These latter are worthless to waterfowl and are being pastured.

Accurate counts were made of the numbers of the different species of ducks. Some of the ducks are becoming so scarce that the very absence of the birds was a conspicuous feature of many of the sloughs visited. For example, only three Buffle-head Ducks were seen. The ranks of the Gadwall are very much depleted and only 75 of these big dark-colored ducks were found. Only 51 of the little Ruddy Ducks were reported during the survey.

The pond ducks were found in the following numbers: Pintail, 3,790; Mallard, 2,554; Baldpate, 1,035; Shoveller, 767; Blue-winged Teal, 332; and Green-winged Teal, 104. The diving ducks are decreasing even faster than the pond ducks. The only species found in any numbers was the Lesser Scaup Duck, with 6,410 birds being seen. The Canvasback, the hunter's favorite, mustered 817 birds; 917 Redheads and 582 Ring-necked Ducks were reported. Even the despised fish ducks are becoming scarce, with only 36 American Mergansers, 20 Hooded Mergansers, and 2 Red-breasted Mergansers being seen. The Coot or Mud-hen is also falling off in numbers, and although 13,900 were seen, that was not very many for northwest Iowa during the spring migration.

The spring and fall flight of the wild duck soon will be only a pleasant memory unless a halt is made in the killing of ducks. This halt must be made in order to allow the United States Biological Survey time to purchase and set up inviolate nesting grounds in the Northwest and to allow the birds to stage a come-back. The prolonged drought probably has been the biggest immediate factor in the sadly depleted flocks of waterfowl, but even with several years of favorable weather for nesting ducks, these birds can never be hunted again unless the sportsmen of the country forego the pleasure of duck-hunting for the next few years.

The survey revealed that there were 17,495 wild ducks on these various lakes in northwest Iowa at present. During peak hunting years a million or two ducks a year were taken by Iowa hunters. The comparison of figures brings home the realization that the hunters must live up to their sporting ideals and give the few remaining wild ducks a chance.—WM. YOUNG WORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

**Albinism Among Birds.**—It was my opportunity, during the summer and fall of 1934, to observe several birds having the strange coloration known as albinism. The first was a House Sparrow, seen in July among a flock of about 50 of its kind. In this specimen the tail, upper tail coverts, rump, and secondary wing feathers were all pure white. In other respects its coloration was that of a normal House Sparrow. It mingled with the flock as one of them. Another albinistic House Sparrow was seen in August. This individual was colored very nearly like the first one, except that the tail, instead of being all white, had a few white feathers on each side like a junco or Vesper Sparrow, while the upper tail coverts, rump, and secondary wing feathers were all white as in the first bird.

A Bronzed Grackle, seen in September at the home of a friend who provides baths and drinking fountains for the birds, was a strange sight, indeed. It was among a small flock of grackles. The startling, almost garish point of distinction was a snow white band a little over an inch wide which ran across the middle of its tail, parallel with the end of the tail. These birds have a pointed tail (that is, the central feathers are longest), and the tail of this bird, when spread in flight, had the appearance of a large letter V, woven into the tail in white. To add to its fantastic appearance, there was a narrow black stripe near the upper edge and within the white band, running also parallel therewith. Edges of the band and line were wavy, corresponding with the ends of the tail feathers. These rather brilliant markings upon the bird's otherwise somber raiment presented a decidedly odd appearance.—E. D. NAUMAN, Sigourney, Iowa.

**The American Egret and the Little Blue Heron in Iowa.**—During the interval from 1900 to 1932 the American Egret and the Little Blue Heron were of rare occurrence in Iowa. The Egret probably reached its lowest ebb about 1907, the date when plume hunting was finally declared illegal. These birds have since increased on their southern breeding grounds until finally, in 1932, the effect of this increase was noted locally and was exemplified in a post-breeding influx of these birds into Iowa. In the late summer of 1933 this flight was again apparent, but in somewhat reduced numbers. However, there were several reliable reports of the Little Blue Heron during this summer.

In 1934 a number of American Egrets were seen by Deputy Warden W. L. Harvey on the Green Bay Bottoms, in Lee County, during early May. On June 24, 36 of these birds were seen by Harvey and the writer, and 35 were seen on July 29 in the same locality. No evidence of breeding was discovered. By early September the maximum number of Egrets on Green Bay had increased to approximately 300, as reported by Wm. Youngworth, and the Little Blue Herons, all in the white phase, numbered about 100. On October 7, the writer noted five Egrets on Green Bay. A single crippled individual was noted by Lloyd Smith on October 30, and undoubtedly the same bird was seen during November by Youngworth. Unquestionably, the most interesting phase of the 1934 visitation of "white herons" was the late spring appearance of the American Egret and the marked increase in the numbers of the Little Blue Heron.

At the present time, the American Egret is an occasional summer resident and a fairly common late summer visitor in southeastern Iowa, and an uncommon, late summer visitor throughout the rest of the state, principally about the larger waterways or lakes. The Little Blue Heron is an uncommon, late summer visitor in extreme southeastern Iowa, and is somewhat rare throughout the rest of the state.—PHILIP A. DU MONT, Des Moines, Iowa.

**A Highway Bird Census.**—While driving home from the Iowa Ornithologists' Union meeting at Sioux City in May, we (Miss Winifred Gilbert, Robert Porter and the writer) kept a record of the birds seen on or near the highway. The census began at 3:00 P. M., the time we left Sioux City, and continued to 7:00 P. M. when we were at Ackley, Iowa, a distance of approximately 194 miles from our starting point. Darkness prevented our extending the census to Cedar Falls, our destination for the day. U. S. highway No. 20 was followed on the entire trip. Our record follows.

Sparrow Hawk, 3; Ring-necked Pheasant, 11; Killdeer, 3; Franklin's Gull, 12; Mourning Dove, 38; Chimney Swift, 13; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Northern Flicker, 2; Red-headed Woodpecker, 36; Bank Swallow, 8; Barn Swallow, 8; Purple Martin, 2; Blue Jay, 1; Crow, 11; Brown Thrasher, 1; Robin, 22; Migrant Shrike, 3; English Sparrow, 50; Bobolink, 3; Meadowlark (presumably Western), 74; Red-winged Blackbird, 9; Bronzed Grackle, 67; Cowbird, 1; Eastern Goldfinch, 2. Total, 24 species, 381 individuals.—JOHN BLIESE, Waterloo, Iowa.

**The Starling Now in Nearly All Iowa Counties.**—Since the publication of my article in 'Iowa Bird Life' for September, 1934, on Starlings in Iowa, several additional Starling observations have been made so that now the record of first occurrence for each of the 99 Iowa counties is nearly complete. On July 31, 1934, there were nine counties from which there had been no observations reported. In 'Iowa Bird Life' for March, 1935, William Youngworth published first occurrence records for Harrison and O'Brien Counties.

This paper consists of the initial record for Cass, Clarke, Greene, and Mills Counties. In addition, records heretofore unpublished and antedating those believed to have been the earliest occurrences in Mahaska and Van Buren Counties are included.

Four or five Starlings were seen by Wm. Youngworth south of Atlantic, CASS COUNTY, August 19, 1934. Birds were seen in Atlantic by the same observer on October 19, 1934, and one was seen south of there on the same date. Youngworth observed 25 to 30 of these birds near Osceola, CLARKE COUNTY, on October 15, 1934, and three more on October 18.

A flock of between 45 and 50 Starlings was seen by Youngworth near Grand Junction, GREENE COUNTY, on September 30, 1934. Two birds were noted by Youngworth near Hillsdale, MILLS COUNTY, September 27, 1934.

Prof. G. C. Hawks of Penn College, Oskaloosa, observed a flock of 12 Starlings near Stark, MAHASKA COUNTY, during April, 1932. This supersedes the previous earliest record for the county consisting of a flock of 75 birds seen by W. G. DuMont near Rose Hill on May 4, 1933.

Robert Campbell of Mt. Zion, wrote on December 24, 1934, that he had seen two Starlings at Mt. Zion, VAN BUREN COUNTY, on September 26, 1932. The previous earliest report was 100 birds seen by W. N. Keck at Keosauqua during the winter of 1932-'33.

Mrs. Horace Tate of Winterset supplies these additional details concerning the first occurrence of the Starling in MADISON COUNTY. A bird was shot by F. W. Cochran on March 4, 1933, at his home near Macksburg. This was one of a flock which had appeared in February and had stayed in his barn.

During an extensive auto trip during April, 1935, principally in northern Iowa the writer observed Starlings in practically all counties. There undoubtedly were birds breeding in all Iowa counties during 1935.

At the present writing the remaining unreported counties are Buena Vista, Osceola and Lyon.—PHILIP A. DU MONT.

**The Starling in the 97th Iowa County.**—On June 2, 1935, the writer found several pairs of Starlings between Larchwood and Gitchie Manitou State Park, in the extreme northwest corner of LYON COUNTY. This leaves two Iowa counties unreported for in the Starling survey started by Phil DuMont several years ago.—WM. YOUNG WORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

**Wood Warblers and Sparrows in the Vicinity of Ames, Spring of 1935.**—A perusal of Philip A. DuMont's 'Revised List of the Birds of Iowa' (University of Iowa Studies in Natural History, Vol. XV, No. 5), presents many interesting problems to the bird student. For instance, upon noting the rarity of the Yellow-breasted Chat, one decides to look for it and, if the bird is seen, to record the date and the nature of the environment. And one notices that a few observers reported the Clay-colored Sparrow as rare while others report it as common.

Stimulated by such questions the authors decided to take count of the wood warblers and sparrows in the vicinity of Ames during the spring bird study session and to present the figures for permanent record and interpretation. Each of the authors spent from four to six hours weekly in the field from March 30 to June 1, often in pairs. Mr. Ferrier spent more time at the Ledges State Park, the others spent more time in the North and East Woods and adjoining fields of Iowa State College grounds in general bird observation.

An annotated list of wood warblers and sparrows observed follows.

Black and White Warbler, April 22-May 18, 12 seen. Peak, May 11.  
 Prothonotary Warbler, May 18, 2 seen, North Woods, I. S. C.  
 Blue-winged Warbler, May 15-24, 6 seen.  
 Tennessee Warbler, April 20-May 22, 20 seen.  
 Orange-crowned Warbler, April 25-May 25, 17 seen.  
 Nashville Warbler, May 4-24, 35 seen.  
 Northern Parula Warbler, May 22, 7 seen.  
 Eastern Yellow Warbler, April 19-June 1, 52 seen. Peak, May 17.  
 Magnolia Warbler, April 25-May 25, 5 seen.  
 Black-throated Blue Warbler, April 19-24, 2 seen.  
 Myrtle Warbler, April 12-May 3, 101 seen. Peak, April 29.  
 Black-throated Green Warbler, May 3-24, 46 seen. Peak, May 15.  
 Bay-breasted Warbler, May 18-22, 5 seen.  
 Black-poll Warbler, May 25, 3 seen.  
 Northern Pine Warbler, May 25, 1 seen.  
 Oven-bird, May 6-June 1, 47 seen. Peak, May 20.  
 Grinnell's Water-thrush, April 22-May 18, 9 seen.  
 Louisiana Water-thrush, May 4-May 11, 4 seen.  
 Connecticut Warbler, May 24, 1 seen.  
 Mourning Warbler, May 25, 2 seen.  
 Wilson's Warbler, May 18, 1 seen.  
 American Redstart, May 6-June 1, 103 seen. Peak, May 25.  
 Eastern Savannah Sparrow, May 4, 9 seen.  
 Grasshopper Sparrow, May 4, 6 seen.  
 Western Henslow's Sparrow, May 4, 4 seen.  
 Eastern Vesper Sparrow, April 22-June 1, 74 seen. Peak, April 27.  
 Eastern Lark Sparrow, May 4-21, 12 seen.  
 Eastern Chipping Sparrow, April 20-June 1, 45 seen.  
 Clay-colored Sparrow, April 27-May 7, 11 seen.  
 Eastern Field Sparrow, April 19-June 1, 60 seen.  
 White-crowned Sparrow, May 4, 2 seen.  
 White-throated Sparrow, April 27-May 4, 50 seen.  
 Eastern Fox Sparrow, April 19-May 4, 11 seen.  
 Lincoln Sparrow, April 19-May 4, 15 seen.  
 Swamp Sparrow, April 20-May 4, 14 seen.

Song Sparrow, April 19-June 1, 32 seen.

—GEORGE O. HENDRICKSON, BEN E. FERRIER, LEONARD S. PHILLIPS, Iowa State College.

**The 1934-'35 Magpie Invasion Into Iowa.**—The invasion of the Magpie into Iowa during the winter of 1934 and '35, while not as extensive as the 1924 invasion, was sufficiently widespread to warrant the publication of these notes.

The bulk of these reports were secured upon the occasion of a Deputy Game Warden's school held during January, 1935, in Cherokee. Consequently, these data pertain to observations made during November and December, 1934. Whether this actually proved to be the period of greatest Magpie abundance in Iowa or whether the writer failed to secure a comparable number of later reports cannot be said.

Oren Z. Wood of Sheldon reported Magpies present in Lyon, Sioux and O'Brien Counties. Walter W. Trusell of Sioux City had noted them in Plymouth and Woodbury Counties. Trusell saw 25 to 30 two miles south of Brown's Lake, Woodbury County, on October 29, 1934; six or eight on Herbst's farm northwest of Hinton on October 15, 1934; and "quite a few" were reported on the Lantern farm, five miles northwest of Remson, Plymouth County, late in October. J. V. Hodgson of Onawa reported seeing Magpies in Monona and Harrison Counties. John F. Holst, Jr., of Denison noted these birds in Crawford County. C. C. Lille of Lakeview saw several Magpies in Sac, Calhoun and Ida Counties, 12 or more being seen in Sac County. None was reported from either Cherokee or Buena Vista Counties. Three Magpies were seen by A. F. Meier of Spencer in Clay County, and both Meier and Ross W. Moses of Emmetsburg had noted them in Palo Alto County. J. M. Hardman of Spirit Lake reported seeing 12 birds in Dickinson County. Milo C. Young of Estherville noted these birds in Emmet County.

Judge O. S. Thomas of Rock Rapids reported seeing four Magpies northeast of Rock Rapids, Lyon County, on November 12, 1934. Local residents reported that these birds had been present for some time.

The writer observed five birds along the Soldier River, west of Moadale, Harrison County, on November 10, 1934. A single bird was seen flying over Stone Park at Sioux City, December 3, 1934.

A single bird was seen by Logan J. Bennett, between Ogden and Boone in Boone County, during November, 1934.

A Magpie was noted by Charles H. Batton in the Des Moines Water Works Park on December 25, 1934. During the next five weeks one and sometimes two birds were seen in the same locality by various Des Moines bird observers.

Mr. Batton saw one Magpie south of Charles City, Floyd County, on January 3, 1935.

The most easterly record was of a bird seen by Fred Schwob of Des Moines, between West Union and Lansing in Fayette or Allamakee County, on November 17, 1934.

'Iowa Bird Life' for March, 1935, contained records of Magpies in four counties (p. 5).

From these reports we may conclude that during the winter of 1934-'35 the Magpie was a resident in moderate numbers in the northwestern quarter of Iowa, straggling to the southwestern, central and northeastern parts of the state.—PHILIP A. DU MONT.

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A complete set of the Union's original mimeographed letters (1923-1928) is desired by George Seth Guion, 1716 American Bank Bldg., New Orleans, La. He offers to pay a substantial price to anyone who can supply them.

## RECENT BIRD BOOKS

**WILD BIRDS AT HOME.** by Francis Hobart Herrick (D. Appleton-Century Co., New York, 1935; cloth, pp. i-xxii+1-345; price, \$4).

The subject of birds' nesting is one of never-failing interest, and whether or not one has time to make extensive personal observations of nest-building and nest-life, the reading of what others have done in this field furnishes much entertainment and instruction. The present book by Professor Herrick covers this broad field in a very thorough manner, and no person who has studied or plans to study birds' nesting in a serious way will wish to miss reading it.

'The Home Life of Wild Birds,' by the same author, appeared many years ago (two editions, 1901 and 1905)—a noteworthy work on the subject at that time. During intervening years, Professor Herrick has continued his intensive study of the nesting of birds, making many new discoveries and amplifying earlier data. The new book, while following much of the general plan of the other, is entirely revised and rewritten so that it summarizes and brings up to date the author's knowledge of this subject.

Mating, building the nest, and parental care of the young, are the principal points with which the book deals. Beginning with a description of the cycle of reproduction in birds, and the author's various methods of studying life at the nest, the succeeding chapters take up 'Intimate Biographies' of the Robin, Cedar Waxwing, Catbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Cuckoo, Herring Gull and other birds. The chapters on birds' nests and their construction bring out the different locations and methods of nest-building. With such species as the Baltimore Oriole, Barn Swallow and the Vireos, whose nest creations are the result of very intricate processes, a full understanding of their methods has been achieved only through many days of patient observation on the part of the author. All this is set down in interesting detail. We make a guess that very few people have watched, from start to finish, the construction of the Baltimore Oriole's unusual nest. The chapter on 'Development and Care of the Young' covers 50 pages and is very full and complete. Another chapter discusses instinct and behavior in birds. An appendix describes methods and necessary equipment for photographing nesting birds. There are nearly 50 halftone plates, as well as numerous line drawings. Our limited space allows us to review a work of this scope in only a very superficial way; but it is a book both interesting and valuable and we believe no buyer will feel disappointed in possessing it.—F. J. P.

'The Oologist' (Lacon, Ill.) is publishing a series of 'Round Robin Letters' from the pen of E. D. Nauman. These letters were circulated among a group of Iowa bird students during the years 1923-1932. Containing an abundance of observations on the birds about Sigourney, Iowa, as a series the letters are a distinct contribution to the ornithology of southeastern Iowa.

Several prominent members have left Iowa recently. Dr. F. L. R. Roberts has begun work in a hospital at Lincoln, Nebr. His wife, Dr. Mary Price Roberts, has a teaching position at Grand Island, Nebr. Phillip A. DuMont, formerly connected with the Iowa Fish and Game Commission, joined the staff of the U. S. Biological Survey and early in the summer began work in Oregon. Logan J. Bennett, also lately with the Iowa Fish and Game Commission, is now with the U. S. Biological Survey and is stationed in Minnesota. Two other members, W. F. Kubichek and Walter W. Bennett, have been with the Survey since last year.

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