

IOWA BIRD LIFE

IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION



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IOWA BIRD LIFE

The Iowa Ornithologists' Union, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. Iowa Bird Life and IOU News are quarterly publications of the Union.

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Meet an Iowa Birder: Darwin Koenig

Lee A. Schoenewe



Darwin Koenig

Along about kindergarten, Darwin Koenig exhibited the first inkling of a lifelong interest in birds. He remembers seeing a set of the Arm and Hammer Baking Soda bird cards and being intrigued (Figure 1). Those cards have become collectible today, but the admonition on the back of each card still rings true, “For the good of all, do not destroy the birds.”

The “Useful Birds of America” depicted on those cards became a regular and important part of Darwin’s farm life as he grew up in northeastern Iowa. By the time he was in junior high school he had a pair of binoculars and was making observations in the field. As he became more involved with the Iowa Ornithologists’ Union, field work would come to have a very different connotation than it did for him on the farm.

Born in Decorah on 29 April 1946, Darwin participated in his first Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in 1960 at age 14. Three years later, he started compiling both the Decorah and Yellow River CBCs and he

has been organizing and compiling data ever since then for those two count circles. Even as he has traveled, lived, and worked around the state, northeastern Iowa with its birds of woodland habitats has been a place to which he always returns. The birds he came to know as a boy in the woods and fields near his home are still the birds he loves the most.

Darwin’s education and work life also reflect his interest in birds and the natural world. After attending junior college in Ellsworth, Iowa, he went on to get a Bachelor of Science degree in wildlife biology at Utah State University. This was one of the few times in his life he spent away from the state of Iowa — the other, after receiving his degree, was during his service in the United States Army in Vietnam from 1969 to 1971. In 1994, he completed an M.S. through Iowa State University. His graduate degree was obtained over a number of years and involved an ecology emphasis. It was during that graduate work program that he got to know a professor at ISU who also had an interest in birds. Dr. James J. Dinsmore and Darwin became friends.

“As part of the M.S. that Darwin earned from Iowa State,” Dr. Dinsmore said, “he did an analysis of a number of roadside bird counts that were made throughout Iowa in the late 1970s.” He also commented on Darwin’s exhaustive knowledge of Iowa birds and his regular contributions to the Field Reports section of Iowa Bird Life. “Virtually everything he sends in ends up being in the report,” he said. Darwin continues as one of the most consistent and prolific contributors to Iowa field reports, with 76 reports between 1963 and 1999 (Kent 2000).

Earlier when the Department of Natural Resources was known as the Conservation Commission, Darwin began to work for them. It was a good place for someone of his interests to start. He then moved into the County Conservation system and served first in Winneshiek County and then in Poweshiek County. Currently he is Executive Director of the O'Brien County Conservation Board, where he has been for ten years.

Having gotten to know Dean Roosa, Darwin became involved with the initial book, *Iowa Birds*, and was one of the five authors of that work published in 1984. Recognized at that time for extensive field work and contributions to *Iowa Bird Life*, he was especially interested in long-term trends for woodpeckers and raptors based on CBC data. He published CBC data evaluating population trends for hawks in 1975 (Koenig 1975a, b) and for woodpeckers in 1977 (Koenig 1977).

In the book *Iowa Birds*, he dealt with fourteen families of birds covering quite a variety from pheasants to woodpeckers to wrens to starlings. The range demonstrated both his knowledge and his willingness to help get the job done. I am sure no one else really wanted to write about the European Starling!

Darwin was also one of the state's most active participants in the Breeding Bird Atlas (BBA) project, and served on its Steering Committee from 1984 to 1987. His ability to use his stealth and patience to establish proof of nesting was legendary among BBA participants. He was the first in the state's history to find and describe nesting of Yellow-throated Warbler and Northern Parula, and discovered nests of such rare Iowa nesters as Wilson's Phalarope, Acadian Flycatcher, Veery, and Chestnut-sided Warbler. In the credits in *The Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas*, Darwin is recognized as spending over 100 hours on the project. In reality, he probably spent many times that, searching for breeding birds in all corners of the state. Even some of his previous work provided a basis for some of the species accounts, such as his major *Iowa Bird Life* article, "The American Woodcock in Iowa." (Koenig 1976).

Also busy on the local level, he has put together booklets on bird records in Winneshiek County and O'Brien County, and has started a booklet for Poweshiek County. He also has been involved with the mid-winter Iowa Bald Eagle survey by running a route along the Little Sioux River from Peterson to Cherokee for a number of years. It was during that eagle survey this year that I had the chance to interview Darwin and talk about the birds in his life.

One of his areas of avian interest is in the breeding birds of summer, especially the woodland species he got to know in northeastern Iowa. That led to his involvement in two breeding bird surveys. Since moving to northwestern Iowa ten years ago, however, he has

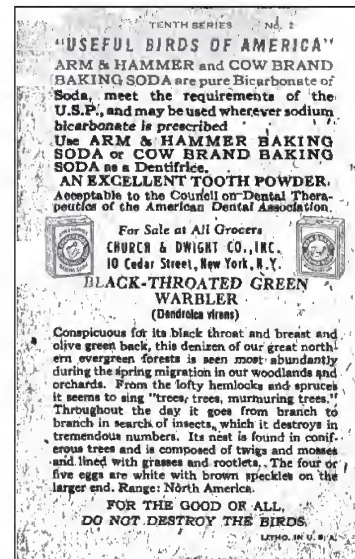


Figure 1. Arm and Hammer Baking Soda bird card that piqued Darwin's childhood interest in birding.

been exposed to more open prairie habitats and western species he had little experience with in eastern Iowa. Mountain Bluebirds, Townsend's Solitaires, and Bohemian Waxwings show up in the cedar trees of the Waterman Creek valley and Darwin has found them. The prairie race of the Merlin is much more regularly seen in O'Brien County than it ever was in northeastern Iowa, according to Darwin, and he notices such things.

With his wife Mona Bond and his family living in Ankeny and his work in Paullina, Darwin travels each weekend to be at home and doesn't get as much birding in these days as he would like. Observations still come as part of his work in county conservation, including the recent Bald Eagle survey he and I completed together. He has a knack for recognizing unusual birds as well as a keen sense for identifying the usual birds at unusual times. I guarantee more is known now about bird life in O'Brien County than was ever known prior to his arrival.

There is one other thing that Darwin has to look forward to at this time in his life. His grandson, Brock, is five years old and already has been given binoculars and a bird book. The rest of us can only hope that this young man will grow to appreciate his grandad for all the good he has done for the "Useful Birds of Iowa" and for everyone who enjoys them.

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Field Reports — Fall 2002

Paul Hertzell

WEATHER

A warm, dry early and mid-summer weather pattern came to an end over much of Iowa in the second half of July and into the month of August of 2002. August temperatures were near normal, and rainfall was sufficient to make it Iowa's wettest month since May 2001. The warmth returned in September with above-average temperatures, including 93-degree readings as late as the 29th, but the surplus of rain ended and the month ended up 2.16 inches short. Lake Rathbun received only 0.33 inch of rain for the month, and the southwestern part of the state remained classified as being in severe drought. Conditions then turned cold with October averaging 6 degrees below normal, making it the 5th coldest in 130 years of record-keeping. Light snow fell across northern Iowa on the 16th, 23rd, and 27th of October. Temperatures continued below normal in November, and already dry conditions became drier. With only 0.19 inch of precipitation, it was the 3rd driest November on record. The wettest spot in the state, Dorchester, received only one-fourth of their normal precipitation amount for November. The season ended calm, cold, and dry.



Paul Hertzell

GENERAL TRENDS

Movements of waterfowl were relatively quiet, except for scoters, which showed up in encouraging numbers. There were more Surf Scoters seen in Iowa this fall than in the last five fall seasons combined. White-winged Scoters were nearly twice the number seen in the last four years combined. Black Scoters arrived early (21 Oct) and often, with the most since 1994. Yet, with dry conditions in many places, shorebirds were scarce, and did not stay anywhere long. Except briefly at Red Rock Reservoir, there were no large concentrations, and no reports of casual or accidental species.

Raptors made a good showing this fall in Iowa. The Hitchcock N.A. hawk watch in the Loess Hills of Pottawattamie County set record high totals for both eagles; Cooper's, Broad-winged, and Swainson's hawks; and American Kestrel. In Marshall County, hawk watchers at Grammar Grove also counted record numbers of both eagles and Cooper's Hawk, plus Peregrine Falcon, Mississippi Kite, and Turkey Vulture. No less than three Ferruginous Hawks (classified accidental) were documented in the state, and photos of a Crested Caracara were submitted to the Records Committee.

The Eurasian Collared-Dove continues to establish itself across the state, and new pockets of birds are being found in all parts of the state, sometimes in association with other doves. This summer, one spent two months in the company of a White-winged Dove, and in the fall, another kept company with a Ringed Turtle-Dove in Mason City.

Some passerines were early this fall, but far more lingered late, especially flycatchers, with record late dates for Alder Flycatcher and Eastern Phoebe, and 3rd-latest dates for

Eastern Wood Pewee and Western Kingbird. Thrushes were also found record late with a Veery on 3 Oct, and a Wood Thrush on 26 Oct. In addition, Connecticut Warbler, Mourning Warbler, and Yellow-breasted Chat were recorded unusually late.

UNUSUAL SPECIES

There were 10 reports of casual/accidental species during the fall 2002 season. The only accidental waterfowl was a Brant (*Branta bernicla hrota*) in Tama County. Really rare raptors were Black Vulture, three Ferruginous Hawks, and a Crested Caracara. The nearly-regular Black-headed Gull at Spirit Lake appeared again in September, and a California Gull was reported from the same location. A *Selasphorus* hummingbird spent a month at a feeder in Ames, and a potential first fall record of a Chestnut-collared Longspur was reported from Cerro Gordo County in the north.

SPECIES DATA

All CAPS = Casual or Accidental species.

* = documented.

Pacific Loon: A single bird was found and documented by BE on 3 Nov at Big Creek SP in Polk Co.

Common Loon: Early arrivals showed up in the third week of October, with 3 on 16 Oct at Lake Manawa in Pottawattamie Co. (L&BP) and 5 on 20 Oct at Clear Lake in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH). Numbers were steady through the end of the season, with a high count of 55 on 1 Nov at Red Rock Res. in Marion Co. (AB).

Pied-billed Grebe: Most: 428 counted on 20 Sep at Lake Manawa in Pottawattamie Co. (L&BP). Last: 1 on 1 Nov in Appanoose Co. (RC).

Horned Grebe: First few: 6 on 25 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (L&BP), 9 on 27 Oct in Polk Co. (BE), and 1 each in Dickinson Co. (DH) and Poweshiek Co. (MPr) on 28 Oct. Most: 11 on Red Rock Res. in Marion Co. on 1 Nov (AB) and 10 on Saylorville Res. in Polk Co. on 28 Oct (JJJ).

Red-necked Grebe: No reports.

Eared Grebe: Last few were 1 on 3 Nov in Dickinson Co. (ET), 3 on 4 Nov in Appanoose Co. (AB), and 2 on 10 Nov in Harrison Co. (AB).

Western Grebe: There were 13 distinct reports of from 1 to 3 birds scattered across nine counties. The last few were on Saylorville Res. from 19 Nov to 29 Nov (RC, JG, AB). 1 was still at Red Rock Res. in Marion Co. on 23 Nov (RIA, PHA).

American White Pelican: Some peak counts were 4,500 on 8 Sep at Coralville Res. in Johnson Co. (MCD), 4,000 on 15 Sep at Saylorville Res. in Polk Co. (JJJ), another 4,500 on 27 Sep at Runnells WA in Polk Co. (AB), and 3,937 on 4 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (MO). 6 were still at Rathbun in Appanoose Co. on 26 Nov (TJ), and 1 was at Sandbar L. in Dickinson Co. on 30 Nov (LAS).

Double-crested Cormorant: The largest concentrations occurred in mid-October, with 7,357 counted at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. on 12 Oct (MO), and 3,650 at Rathbun in Appanoose Co. on 16 Oct (AB). There were still 3 birds on Saylorville Res. in Polk Co. on 29 Nov (BE, RC) and 3 at Hallett's Quarry in Story Co. on 30 Nov (WO).

American Bittern: Ten reports from eight counties, including 3 seen on 18 Aug at Dunbar Sl. in Greene Co. (JG). Last: 1 on 20 Oct in Warren Co. (AJ).

Least Bittern: All: 2–3 on 17–18 Aug at Muskrat Sl. in Jones Co. (MCD, CE), 2 on 24 Aug at Dunbar Sl. in Greene Co. (JG), and 3 on 31 Aug at Long Pond in Guthrie Co. (JJD).

Great Blue Heron: Last two: 1 on 28 Nov in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG) and 1 on 29 Nov in Story Co. (WO).

Great Egret: Some high counts were 155 on 4 Aug in Marion Co. (JS), 128 on 3 Sep in Lucas Co. (AB), and 110 on 4 Aug in Appanoose Co. (TJ), all in the south. The most in the north was 90 at USNWR in Kossuth Co. on 19 Sep (MCK). A few individuals stayed extremely late. 1 was still at DeSoto NWR in Harrison Co. on 23 Nov, 2nd latest (GLV), and 1 found 22 Nov in Polk Co. stayed until 29 Nov, which was record late (JG, BE, DT, RC).

Snowy Egret: Reported from Dickinson, Emmet, Hamilton, Lee, Marion, Polk, and Scott Counties. Most: 8 on 7 Sep in Lee Co. (TJ, RC). Last: 1 on 5 Oct at Little Wall L in Hamilton Co. (WO).

Little Blue Heron: There were four reports of single birds: An immature on 9 Aug at Credit Island in Scott Co. (PVN), another immature at Runnells WA in Marion/Polk Co.s on 10 Aug (JG, RIA, PHA), an adult in Warren Co. on 12 Aug (JS), and another adult at Credit Island in Scott Co. from 17 Aug to 5 Sep (MCD, JLF).

Cattle Egret: The twelve reports from ten counties were of singles or very small groups. The last few were all in the north: 1 on 6 Oct in Clay Co. (ET), 1 on 6 Oct in Buena Vista Co. (ET), and 1 on 18 Oct in Kossuth Co. (MCK).

Green Heron: Last three: on 29 Sep one each in Johnson Co. (CE) and Pottawattamie Co. (MO), and on 5 Oct one at Little Wall Lake in Hamilton Co. (WO).

Black-crowned Night Heron: Last two: singles found 3 Nov in Appanoose Co. (TJ) and 5 Nov in Hardin Co. (MPr). None of the 15 reports exceeded 3 birds.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron: One report: T. Johnson found one on 3 Aug at Dean Wetlands in Appanoose Co.

White-faced Ibis: A single adult bird on 6–8 Sep in Mahaska Co. was studied closely enough to see the red iris (MCD*, R&K Beard). Only rarely has a fall adult been seen well enough to separate it from Glossy Ibis. The date given is 2nd latest for a fall Ibis identified to species.

Ibis species: First: 4 birds on 10 Aug at Sandhill Lake in Woodbury Co. (BFH). Last: 2 birds at the same place on 3 Oct (GLV, BFH). All others were singles: 15 Aug in Appanoose Co. (RC), 18 Aug in Greene Co. (JG), and 19 Sep in Appanoose Co. (TJ).

BLACK VULTURE: A third-state-record bird gave a good, prolonged look to two experienced hawk watchers on 22 Sep at the Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. (MO*).

Turkey Vulture: The largest movements were in the first week of October with 140 counted by MCK on 1 Oct in Kossuth Co., and 146 counted at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. on 4 Oct (MO). The Hitchcock season total was down from previous years, but eastern hawk watchers at Grammar Grove in Marshall Co. set a new season high total with 438 fall observations (BPr).

Greater White-fronted Goose: First: 9 on 5 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH), followed by two sightings on 12 Oct: 100 in Pottawattamie Co. (MO) and 75 in Warren Co. (JS). The largest flight was 490 counted on 26 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (MO). Last: 1 on 19 Nov in Woodbury Co. (BFH).

Snow Goose: Six scattered reports of single birds preceded the major flights that began in late October and early November. 12,000 were counted at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. on 1 Nov. At the end of the month, there were still 850 in Wayne Co. on 27 Nov (AB).

Ross's Goose: There were 12 distinct reports of from 1 to 4 birds from 8 counties. First: 1 on 26 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (MO). Last: 1 on 25 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG).

BRANT: A single *Branta bernicla hrota* that first came to the attention of field reporters in December was originally found in Tama Co. on 19 Oct (MS*). It spent the month of November at Union Grove SP where eventually it was seen and photographed by many.

Mute Swan: A bird of uncertain origin was in Decorah, Winneshiek Co. on 28–29 Nov (DC). Another, at USNWR for most of the fall season is presumed to have escaped from a local farm pond where one disappeared at about the same time as its arrival at the south pool.

Trumpeter Swan: There were two reports of unmarked birds: 3 were at Jester Park in Polk Co. on 18 Aug (BE), and 1 was at USNWR in Kossuth Co. on 13 Nov (MCK). The DNR has ceased efforts to identify all offspring of released birds in Iowa.

Tundra Swan: First: 14 on 24 Oct at USNWR in Kossuth Co. (MCK). Along the Mississippi River in Allamakee Co., numbers built to a peak of about 3,000 on 16 Nov (PH). Last in the north were 2 adults and 3 juveniles at Spirit Lake in Dickinson Co. on 30 Nov (LAS).

Gadwall: 1,100 were counted by RC on 26 Oct in Appanoose Co.

American Wigeon: A group of 133 were at Runnells WA in Marion Co. on 8 Nov. (AB).

American Black Duck: Two abnormally early (or inexplicably late) birds were in Lucas Co. on 7 Aug (RC, TJ). The next bird was not found until 4 Oct in Marion Co. (AB). Most: 22 in a mixed group of waterfowl on the Mississippi River in Allamakee Co. on Nov 16 (PH).

Mallard: The largest concentration was 8,000 birds on 29 Nov in Polk Co. (RC).

Blue-winged Teal: Last: 1 on 28 Oct in Union Co. (AB).

Cinnamon Teal: No reports.

Northern Pintail: Reported from 11 Sep in Polk Co. (JJD) through the end of the season.

Green-winged Teal: 8,500 were counted on 4 Nov in Marion Co. (AB).

Canvasback: 6 found 10 Oct at Cardinal Marsh in Winneshiek Co. were at an unusual location (DC). By 8 Nov there were 3,000 at Pool #13 in Clinton Co. (PVN).

Ring-necked Duck: 880 were at Runnells WA on 8 Nov (AB).

Greater Scaup: All reports were from the month of November: 1 on 11 Nov was in Marion Co. (AB), 16 on 25 Nov at Spirit Lake built to 32 by the end of the month (ET, LAS), 2 were in Polk Co. on 29 Nov (BE), and 2 were at Clear Lake in Cerro Gordo Co. on 29 Nov (PH).

Lesser Scaup: The peak was 1,475 on 11 Nov in Marion Co. (AB). Elsewhere, 500 were found on 31 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (L&BP).

Surf Scoter: 25 birds were more than the last five fall seasons combined. They were scattered among 12 reports, beginning with an impressive 8 birds found on 25 Oct at Badger Creek in Madison Co. (RIA, PHA), and followed by 2 in Dickinson Co. (LAS) and 1 in Story Co. (JJD) on 26 Oct. Reports also came from Allamakee, Black Hawk, Cerro Gordo, Polk, Poweshiek, and Union Counties.

White-winged Scoter: A total of nine reports was double the average over the last 12 fall seasons. The first few were 2 immatures on 14 Oct at Lock & Dam 14 in Scott Co. (SF), 2 on 22 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (L&BP), and 2 on 26 Oct in Marion Co. (AB). High counts were 5 on 3 Nov in Polk Co. (BE), and 4 on 31 Oct in Story Co. (JJD, WO). Also reported from Dickinson Co. (ET, LAS).

Black Scoter: All: 2 on 21 Oct at L. Manawa in Pottawattamie Co. (L&BP) were the 3rd earliest on record, and 2 were at the same location on 15 Nov; then 2 at Spirit Lake in Dickinson Co. on 26 Oct (LAS), and 1 again on 16 Nov (ET), and 1 on 17 Nov in Scott Co. (MCD).

Long-tailed Duck: All: 2 on 9 Nov in Allamakee Co. (MPr), 3 on 28–29 Nov in Dickinson Co. (LAS, ET), 2 on 23 Nov in Clinton Co. (PVN), and 1 on 28–29 Nov in Appanoose Co. (TJ, RC, AB).

Bufflehead: First: 1 on 29 Oct in Allamakee Co. (FL), then 7 on 31 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (L&BP). There were no reports of more than 35 birds.

Common Goldeneye: Singles appeared on 31 Oct in Decatur Co. (AB), and 3 Nov in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH). Most: 150 on 25 Nov at Port Neal in Woodbury Co. (BFH).

Hooded Merganser: The largest concentration was up to 148 below the Saylorville dam in Polk Co. from 28–29 Nov (BE, AB, DT).

Common Merganser: A female found on 3 Sep in Hardin Co. may have been an exceptionally late (spring/summer) bird. The first fall arrivals appeared on 7 Nov in Story Co. (WO), with a peak of 1,150 on 28 Nov at Red Rock Res. in Marion Co. (AB).

Red-breasted Merganser: On the same day, 31 Oct, the first birds returned with 25 in Pottawattamie (L&BP) and 1 in Hardin Co. (JJD). Most: 60 at Red Rock Res. in Marion Co. on 12 Nov (AB).

Ruddy Duck: Three broods found at the Colo Ponds in Story Co. on 11 Aug suggest nesting may have occurred in the central part of the state. Peak counts occurred two months later with 2,400 on 26 Oct at Red Rock Res. in Marion Co. (AB), and 1,491 on 27 Oct at Saylorville Res. in Polk Co. (BE).

Osprey: It was a good season for Osprey, with repeated reports coming from fifteen widely scattered counties along Iowa's major waterways. BPr reported a season total of 21 birds for the Grammar Grove hawk watcher consortium in Marshall Co., and AB reported the same number of observations over the season at Red Rock Res. in Marion/Polk Co.s. Peak counts occurred in mid-September with 8 on 14 Sep at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. (MO) and 9 on 15 Sep at Grammar Grove (BPr). 3 birds coexisted at Clear Lake in Cerro Gordo Co. from 5 Oct until about the end of the month (PH).

Mississippi Kite: The Iowa flight took place during the last three weeks in September. 15 individuals were counted over the fall season at the Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co., with the first 2 on 8 Sep, and the last on 29 Sep (MO), which was the 2nd latest on record. Elsewhere, at Grammar Grove in Marshall Co., 2 were seen by hawk watchers on 11 Sep (BPr).

Bald Eagle: The resurgence of this species continues, with new season high totals of 787 at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. (MO) and 248 at Grammar Grove in Marshall Co. (BPr). Peak days were 71 on 29 Nov at Hitchcock, and 28 on 6 Nov at Grammar Grove. AB counted 124 in a single farm field in Clayton Co. on 17 Nov.

Northern Harrier: Reported widely, with peaks in the second and third weeks of October: 9 were in Kossuth Co. on 9 Oct (MCK), 13 were counted at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. on 12 Oct (MO), and 6 were found in Johnson Co. on 19 Oct (CE).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: 40% of the flight recorded at Grammar Grove in Marshall Co. took place between 4 Oct and 6 Oct with 306 birds counted in the three-day period (BPr, MPr). The season total of 766 was 1 short of the record. At Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co., 29 Sep was the peak day with 141 birds (MO). MCK counted 50 over Algona skies in Kossuth Co. on 1 Oct.

Cooper's Hawk: The peak day in the west was a month earlier than the peak day in the east: 29 on 15 Sep at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. (MO), and 34 on 12 Oct at Grammar Grove in Marshall Co. (BPr). Grammar Grove set a new season high total of 236, and Hitchcock NA at 199.

Northern Goshawk: All: First was 1 on 3 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG-details), 2 on 4 Oct at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. (MO) was the peak with a season total of 5 birds, 1 on 14–16 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (CJF, RG-details), and possibly the same bird on 13 Nov (PH), and 1 on 25 Nov in Dickinson Co. (ET*).

Red-shouldered Hawk: 7 was the season total at the Grammar Grove hawk watch in Marshall Co. (BPr). Elsewhere: 1 juv on 15 Aug in Appanoose Co. (MCD), 1 on 16 Aug in Clayton Co. (DA), 1 juv on 3 Sep in Lucas Co. (AB), 1 on 6 Nov in Black Hawk Co. (JLF, THK), 2 on 16 Nov in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

Broad-winged Hawk: An impressive flight of 1,300+ in multiple kettles occurred along the Des Moines River on the morning of 15 Sep in Boone Co. and was seen by this reporter and many others. The Grammar Grove peak of 170 occurred on 29 Sep, the same day as the peak count in the west, which was 116 at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. (MO). A week later, THK counted 100+ on 6 Oct in Johnson Co. only four days before the last reported bird in the state on 10 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

Swainson's Hawk: A new season high total of 1,914 birds was recorded by hawk watchers at Hitchcock NA in the Loess Hills of Pottawattamie Co. (MO), but there were only 4 other reports in the state, and no birds were recorded east of Boone Co. in central Iowa where 1 was seen on 15 Sep (MCK, JG). 2 were found on 4 Aug in Kossuth Co. (Mark Lenz fide MCK), 1 in O'Brien Co. (JJD), 1 in Clay Co. (TJ) on 22 Sep., and 1 in Kossuth Co. on 1 Oct (MCK). The peak

flight at HNA was 1,054 on 2 Oct, and the last was 1 on 19 Oct (MO).

Red-tailed Hawk: AB counted 6 Harlan's over the season, and 2 Krider's were in Butler Co. at the same time (RG, MCD, PH). The peak was 296 on 6 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

FERRUGINOUS HAWK: There were three records of this accidental species. The first, seen 31 Oct in Pottawattamie Co., was documented by Hitchcock NA hawk watchers (CK*, JT*). A second was photographed on 13 Nov in Warren Co. (JG*). A third was reported at Big Marsh in Butler Co. in the third week of November, then was refound and documented by four observers on 23 Nov (BPr*, MPPr*, RG*, PH*).

Rough-legged Hawk: The early find was 1 on 4 Oct in Polk Co. (JS). There were reports from twelve widely scattered counties, with a peak of 3 on 6 Nov in Marshall Co. (BPr).

Golden Eagle: New season high totals were set at the hawk watch stations in the west and in the east. Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. recorded 17 individuals (MO) with multiple birds on five different dates, and Grammar Grove in Marshall Co. recorded 8 (BPr). The first few were 1 on 17 Oct at Hitchcock, 1 on 22 Oct in Marion Co. (AB), and 3 on 6 Nov in Marshall Co. (BPr).

CRESTED CARACARA: Spectacular photographs were taken of a bird found feeding along a roadway in Buena Vista Co. on 28 Sep (RL*). The bird flew while being photographed, and did not return. This is the third record of a brief encounter with a Crested Caracara in the upper Midwest in the last eight years (1994 MN, 2000 SD).

American Kestrel: A record 224 were counted by hawk watchers at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co., with a peak of 45 on 4 Oct (MO).

Merlin: First few: 1 on 2 Sep in Winneshiek Co. (DC), 1 on 9 Sep in Kossuth Co. (MCK), 1 on 10 Sep in Cerro Gordo Co. (CJF). 50% of the 28 birds reported were seen 14–19 Sep. The only Nov report was 1 on the 19th in Woodbury Co. (BFH).

Peregrine Falcon: 70% of the 35 reports came in the two-week period 21 Sep–5 Oct. In Marshall Co., Grammar Grove hawk watchers set a new season high total with 14 birds (BPr).

Prairie Falcon: 2 on 12 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. were recorded by hawk watchers (MO–details).

Gray Partridge: The only reports came from Cerro Gordo Co. There were 3 on 8 Sep (CJF), and 3 on 31 Oct (RG). On 2 Nov, 4 apparently confused birds were seen to light in shallow water on Clear Lake, then take flight into a residential neighborhood, with one bird colliding with the gable of a home (PH). The stunned bird was studied at relatively close range with a spotting scope.

Ruffed Grouse: There were three reports from locations in the Yellow River Forest in Allamakee Co.

Northern Bobwhite: Reported from seven counties in the southern half of the state. Most: 19 in Wayne Co. (AB).

Yellow Rail: No reports.

King Rail: No reports.

Virginia Rail: Last: 1 on 9 Oct in Kossuth Co. (MCK).

Sora: Last: 1 on 20 Oct in Woodbury Co. (BFH).

Common Moorhen: No reports.

American Coot: Some high counts were 6,500 at Spirit Lake in Dickinson Co. on 13 Oct (PH), and 4,600 at Saylorville Res. in Polk Co. on 3 Nov (BE).

Sandhill Crane: Reported from six counties. Groups: 17 on 7 Oct and 26 on 7 Nov were in Tama Co. (MPr); 35 were at Cardinal Marsh in Winneshiek Co. on 24 Nov (Larry Reis fide DC).

Black-bellied Plover: First: 2 on 2 Aug in Marion Co. (MPr) and 2 on 3 Aug in Appanoose Co. (TJ). Last: 1 on 20 Nov in Appanoose Co. (AB). No reports involved more than 2 birds.

American Golden Plover: First: 1 on 2–5 Aug in Marion Co. (MPr, AB), then 2 on 12 Aug in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH). Peaks were small with 20 on 9 Sep in Worth Co. (CJF), and 23 on 10 Sep in Marion Co. (AB). Last: 1 on 20 Nov in Appanoose Co. (AB). Nine of eleven reports were in the central corridor of Worth, Cerro Gordo, Polk, Marion, Appanoose Counties.

Semipalmated Plover: First few were 1 on 3 Aug in Polk Co. (BE) and 1 on 4 Aug in Pottawattamie Co. (MO). Then AB counted 101 on 5 Aug at Pinchey Bottoms in Marion Co. Last: 2 on 18 Oct in Lucas Co. (AB).

Piping Plover: There were three reports of single birds: 14 Aug in Polk Co. (AB), 1 Sep in Woodbury Co. (BFH), and 9 Sep in Polk Co. (JG).

American Avocet: First: from 1–7 birds at Jester Park in Polk Co. 5–18 Aug (AB, JJD, BE). Most: 15 on 26 Oct in Woodbury Co. (GLV). Last: 1 at Rathbun in Appanoose Co. on 4 Nov (TJ).

Greater Yellowlegs: Early returns were singles on 5 Aug in Marion Co (AB), 10 Aug in Woodbury Co. (BFH), and 10 Aug in Appanoose Co. (RC). Last: 1 in Lucas Co. on 19 Nov (AB).

Lesser Yellowlegs. First few: 3 on 4 Aug in Pottawattamie Co. (MO), 21 on 5 Aug in Marion Co. (AB), and 1 on 5 Aug in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH). Last: 1 on 6 Nov in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH).

Solitary Sandpiper: Gone by mid-September. Last two: singles on 12 Sep in Tama Co. (MPr) and 19 Sep in Lucas Co. (AB).

Willet: All: 1 on 6 Aug in Story Co. (JJD), 1 on 11 Aug in Appanoose Co. (RC), 1 on 11 Aug in Kossuth Co. (RG), 1 on 14 Aug in Polk Co. (AB), 3 on 18 Aug in Polk Co. (BE), 3 on 2 Sep in Appanoose Co. (RC), and 1 on 6 Sep in Polk Co. (JG).

Spotted Sandpiper: An extremely late bird was found in Allamakee Co. on 17 Nov (AB*), nearly a month after the second-to-last observation. [3rd latest on record].

Upland Sandpiper: All: On 4 Aug., 1 was in Johnson Co. (MCD) and 1 in Kossuth Co. (RG), 1 on 10 Aug was in Pottawattamie Co. (MO), and the last was 1 on 2 Sep in Kossuth Co. (MCK).

Marbled Godwit: All: 1 on 18 Aug at Jester Park in Polk Co. (BE), 1 on 20 Aug at Runnells WA in Polk Co. (AB), and 3 on 7 Sep in Lee Co. (TJ, RC).

Ruddy Turnstone: No reports.

Sanderling: Most were up to 11 at Jester Park in Polk Co. 14-15 Sep (AB, JG, JJD, MPr, RC). Last were 2 on 10 Oct in Clay Co. (DH) and 2 very late in Appanoose Co. on 4 Nov (AB).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: First and most were 108 on 5 Aug in Marion Co. (AB). No birds were found after a group of 8 on 2 Sep in Appanoose Co. (RC).

Western Sandpiper: A single bird on 6 Aug at Pinchey Bottoms in Marion Co. was carefully described. (MPr-details).

Least Sandpiper: Last: singles on 10 Nov in Jasper Co. (JLF), and 15 Nov in Warren Co. (AB).

White-rumped Sandpiper: There was one report of 2 on 10 Aug in Appanoose Co. (RC).

Baird's Sandpiper: Reported in low numbers from only five southern and eastern counties. Last: 1 on 4 Nov in Appanoose Co. (AB) was two months later than the second-to-last report.

Pectoral Sandpiper: The largest concentrations of 500+ individuals were found 5 Aug in Marion Co. (AB), and 11-17 Aug in Appanoose Co. (RC). The last few were 1 on 10 Nov in Jasper Co. (JLF) and 1 on 19-21 Nov in Lucas Co. (AB).

Dunlin: First: 10 on 4 Oct in Appanoose Co. (TJ). Last: 12 on 6 Nov in Boone Co. (JJD). No other reports exceeded those two in count.

Stilt Sandpiper: Most: 95 on 8 Sep in Marion Co. (JS). A late bird found on 2 Oct in Lucas Co. stayed until 22 Oct. (AB).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Up to 12 were in Cerro Gordo Co. during 30 Jul-7 Aug (PH, RG). Another 16 were in Marion Co. on 6 Aug (MPr). Also reported from Appanoose, Emmet, Johnson, Keokuk, Lucas, Polk and Worth Counties. The last were up to 4 at Saylorville Res. in Polk Co. on 15 Sep seen by many.

Short-billed Dowitcher: Reported in small numbers < 13 from 7 Aug in Lucas Co. (RC) until 11 Sep in Marion Co. (MCD) (Figure 1).

Long-billed Dowitcher: The first were 46 on 29 Sep in Warren Co. (JS), 18 days after the last Short-billed Dowitcher. Other reports were from Appanoose, Dickinson, Lucas, Palo Alto, Story and Woodbury Counties. The last few were also in Warren Co.: up to 6 on 1 Nov (JG, JS), and 4 late birds on 15 Nov (AB) (Figure 1).

Wilson's Snipe: First 2 were singles in the deep south: 1 on 11 Aug in Appanoose Co. (RC), and 1 on 25 Aug in Lucas Co. (AB). The high count was a mere 51 on 24 Oct, also in Lucas Co. (AB).

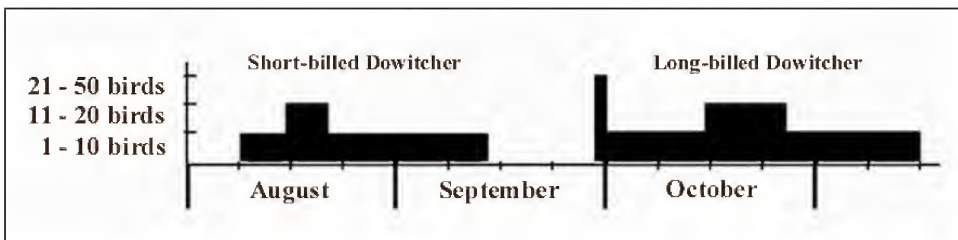


Figure 1. There was no overlap in the observed migration of the two dowitcher species.

American Woodcock: All: 1 seen 13–16 Aug in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG), 1 on 17 Aug in Appanoose Co. (RC), 1 on 6 Sep in Mahaska Co. (MCD), and 1 on 12 Sep in Poweshiek Co. (MPr).

Wilson's Phalarope: Reported from eight counties with a peak on 2 Sep when 20 were in Polk Co. (BE), and 12 were in Appanoose Co. (RC). These 32 birds represented 50% of the total reported. The last few were 2 on 5 Sep in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG), and 2 on 11 Sep in Marion Co. (MCD).

Red-necked Phalarope: All: Up to 5 on 11–14 Aug at Jester Park in Polk Co. (BE, AB), 1 on 17 Aug at Runnells in Polk Co. (AB), 8 on 24 Aug in Hancock Co. (PH), 2 on 27 Aug in Dickinson Co. (LAS), 1 on 11 Sep in Marion Co. (MCD), and 1 on 15 Sep in Polk Co. (AB).

Franklin's Gull: The first were 1,000 encountered on 15 Sep at a Dickinson Co. landfill (MCK). Some big concentrations were 5,000 on 22 Sep in Buena Vista Co. (JJD), 7,900 on 13 Oct in Polk Co. (BE), and ~20,000 on 28 Sep–3 Oct at L Manawa in Pottawattamie Co. (L&BP). There were still 2,000 in Emmet Co. on 7 Nov (DH), and the last were 3 on 20 Nov in Appanoose Co. (AB).

BLACK-HEADED GULL: A single bird in basic plumage was at the north end of Spirit Lake in Dickinson Co. from 14 Sep–10 Nov (LAS*, ET*, PH*).

Bonaparte's Gull: The first bird, carefully studied on 10 Aug in Woodbury Co. (BFH-details), was two months earlier than the next arrivals, which were 1 on 5 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH) and another on 8 Oct in Hamilton Co. (JJD). The largest concentration was 107 on 9 Nov in Marion Co. (AB), and the last were 2 in Jackson Co. through 16 Nov (PVN).

Ring-billed Gull: 10,600 were at Red Rock Res. in Marion Co. on 12 Nov (AB).

CALIFORNIA GULL: A single adult was found at the north end of Spirit Lake in Dickinson Co. on 13 Oct (SP*).

Herring Gull: First: a juvenile on 16 Oct at L Manawa in Pottawattamie Co. (L&BP).

Thayer's Gull: All: 1 adult on 30 Oct at Red Rock Res. in Marion Co. (JLF, AB), 1 juvenile on 20 Nov at Rathbun in Appanoose Co. (AB).

Sabine's Gull: 1 juvenile was at Coralville Res. in Johnson Co. on 21 Sep (CE*, MCD-details, THK, JLF), and another juvenile was at Clear Lake in Cerro Gordo Co. on 21–23 Oct (RG-details, CJF, PH).

Black-legged Kittiwake: An adult was at the Mid-America ponds in Pottawattamie Co. 29–31 Oct (L&BP-details, RIA, PHA).

Caspian Tern: First: 3 on 3 Aug at Jester Park in Polk Co. (BE). Up to 378 were at the same location 11–15 Sep (JJD, AB, JG). Also reported from Black Hawk, Clinton, Hardin, Marion, Pottawattamie, and Story Counties. The last were 1–3 at Red Rock Res. in Marion Co. from 30 Oct–1 Nov (JLF, THK, AB), which was the 2nd latest date on record.

Common Tern: Two reports were accompanied with details: 1 adult on 11 Aug in Story Co. (HZ-details), and another on 8 Oct at Little Wall Lake in Hamilton Co. (JJD-details). Four reports had no details: 20–21 Sep in Marion Co., 4 Oct in Polk Co., 5 Oct in Dickinson Co., and 12 Oct in Pottawattamie Co.

Forster's Tern: Most: 97 on 1 Sep at Saylorville Res. in Polk Co. (BE). Last: 2 on 20 Oct in Woodbury Co. (BFH).

Least Tern: Both adults and juveniles were reported over a brief 9-day period in August. 4 on 9–10 Aug were at Runnells WA in Marion Co. (AB, JG, JS), 4 on 10 Aug were in Appanoose Co. (RC), 1 on 10 Aug was in Woodbury Co. (BFH), up to 4 on 11–17 Aug were at Jester Park in Polk Co. (BE, JG), and 1 on 17 Aug was at Cone Marsh in Louisa Co. (MCD).

Black Tern: The high count was 61 on 23 Aug at the Red Rock Res. marina in Marion Co. (AB). The last was 1 on 13 Oct in Polk Co. (BE), the 2nd latest on record.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE: From 1 to 6 were reported from Boone, Cerro Gordo, Dickinson, Monroe, Marion, Poweshiek and Winnebago Counties. In western Cerro Gordo County, a bird spent the summer in the same rural yard as a White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) and was last seen on 1 Aug (Curt Krieger). In Mason City, another individual spent most of the period 7 Aug–24 Oct in the company of a Ringed Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia risoria*) (RG-details, CJF).

Black-billed Cuckoo: Nine reports, including 4 on 24 Aug in Van Buren Co. (RC). The last was in M. Kenne's backyard in Algona, Kossuth Co., 29 Sep.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Ten reports, including 18 on 24 Aug in Van Buren Co. (RC). Last: 1 on 24 Oct in Des Moines Co. (PL).

Eastern Screech Owl: This common permanent resident is not often reported. ET had a red phase individual in his Dickinson Co. yard 24 Oct. MO reported birds present near Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. throughout the season. AB had 3 calling regularly on visits to Red Rock Res. in Marion Co.

Snowy Owl: No reports.

Long-eared Owl: All: 7 on 23 Nov in Floyd Co. (PH, RG), and 2 on 28 Nov in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH).

Short-eared Owl: All: 1 on 29 Oct and 3 on 21 Nov in Wayne Co. (AB); a Butler County field where 2 were found 23 Nov produced 9 on 25 Nov (CJF, RG, PH); and 1 was in Floyd Co. 23 Nov (PH).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: 1 seen on 17 Nov in Black Hawk Co. may have been present from the beginning of the month (KN).

Common Nighthawk: The last few were 10 on 9 Oct in Marshall Co. (MPr, AB), and 2 on 11 Oct in Clay Co. (LAS). MCK counted 95 on 21 Aug in Kossuth Co., and MO reported 550 on 1 Oct from the hawk watch station at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co.

Whip-poor-will: The most were 7 heard 15 Aug in the vicinity of Hitchcock NA in the Loess Hills of Pottawattamie Co. where they are known to spend the summer (MO). All others: 1 on 17 Aug in Appanoose Co. (RC), 4 singles on 20, 24, 26 Aug and 3 Sep in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH, RG), and a very late bird was heard calling 29 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (Jerry Toll fide MO).

Chimney Swift: Last: 1 on 12 Oct in Marshall Co. (MPr) and 13 on 13 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (MO). The peak was 1,500 on 29 Sep at Hitchcock NA. (MO). In Davenport, on 1 Oct, birds were reported going to roost in a natural tree cavity (fide JJD).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: The last three were all feeder birds: 1 on 14 Oct in Dickinson Co. (ET), 1 on 19 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG), and 1 on 21 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (CJF). DC counted 18 on 29 Aug feeding on jewelweed in Winneshiek Co.

SELASPHORUS HUMMINGBIRD: A female/immature was first noticed on 22 Oct at a feeder in Ames, Story Co. and lingered until 21 Nov (DE*, JJD*). The bird, videotaped by the homeowner, had all the characteristics of a female Rufous/Allen's hummingbird.

Red-headed Woodpecker: 143 were counted on 7 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 15 of 16 birds reported were seen in the 7-day period of 29 Sep–5 Oct. JLF counted 4 on 3 Oct in Johnson Co.

Pileated Woodpecker: Reported in forested areas of six counties that are part of the upper Mississippi River watershed, and no counties that are part of the Missouri River watershed.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: 1 on 2 Aug in Cerro Gordo Co. was 2nd earliest for the fall season (CJF). The next was 16 Aug in Marshall Co, and the last were 3 on 14 Sep at Waubonsie SP in Fremont Co. (L&BP).

Eastern Wood Pewee: Last two: 6 Oct in Appanoose Co. (RC), and 12 Oct in Emmet Co. (DH), which was 3rd latest on record.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: All: 1 on 28 Aug in Marshall Co. (MPr), 1 on 2 Sep in Kossuth Co. (MCK), and 1 on 19 Sep in Poweshiek Co. (MPr).

Acadian Flycatcher: An adult was observed feeding two fledglings on 25 Aug in Warren Co. (JS), which was also the last date the species was recorded.

Alder Flycatcher: One was reported calling on 8 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO-details), which matches the latest date on record.

Willow Flycatcher: 1 on 4 Sep in Linn Co. (MCD) was the only report with details on voice.

Least Flycatcher: 6 on 13 Aug in Kossuth Co. (MCK) was the only report with details on voice.

Empidonax species: A late, silent bird was found on 3 Oct in Story Co. (WO).

Eastern Phoebe: The last three set new 3rd, 2nd, and record late marks: 1 on 10 Nov in Clinton Co. (PVN), 1 on 11 Nov in O'Brien Co. (LAS), and 1 on 17 Nov in Allamakee Co. (CJF-details).

Great Crested Flycatcher: Last: 1 on 11 Sep in Marshall Co. (MPr).

Western Kingbird: 30 were counted on 10 Aug at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. (MO). The last was 1 on 13 Oct in Cherokee Co. (MB), which matches the 3rd latest date on record.

Eastern Kingbird: The two largest counts were 215 on 2 Sep in Dickinson Co. (ET), and 90 on 17 Aug in Appanoose Co. (RC). Last: 1 on 29 Sep in Polk Co. (DT).

Loggerhead Shrike: The last in the north was one on 2 Sep in Dickinson Co. (LAS), 44 days before the first report in the state of Northern Shrike.

Northern Shrike: First two were 1 on 16 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG, PH), and 1 on 18 Oct in Kossuth Co. (MCK). There were eleven distinct reports from eleven different counties.

White-eyed Vireo: All: 1 on 20 Aug in Iowa Co. (MCD), 1 on 22 Aug in Linn Co. (MCD), and 1 on 13 Sep in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG).

Bell's Vireo: All: 1 on 10 Aug at Neal Smith NWR in Jasper Co. (JG), and 1 on 24 Aug in Van Buren Co. (RC).

Yellow-throated Vireo: Ten reports from eight central and eastern counties with the last two on 3 Oct in Johnson Co. (JLF) and Cerro Gordo Co. (RG) [matches 3rd latest on record].

Blue-headed Vireo: First: 27 Aug at Call SP in Kossuth Co. (MCK). Last: 1 on 9 Oct at Parker's Woods in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG).

Warbling Vireo: The last two were on 19 Sep in Lucas Co. (AB), and 20 Sep in Kossuth Co. (MCK).

Philadelphia Vireo: The first returns were 1 on 23 Aug in Marion Co. (AB), and 1 on 25 Aug in Pottawattamie Co. (MO). 6 were counted on 28 Sep in Allamakee Co. (FL, DC), and the last was 1 on 5 Oct in Polk Co. (BE).

Red-eyed Vireo: Last: 1 on 7 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG).

Black-billed Magpie: Up to 20 were seen throughout the month of September at Broken Kettle Grassland in Plymouth Co. (Scott Moats fide JJD).

Horned Lark: A bird in juvenal plumage was seen in Kossuth Co. on the late date of 7 Aug (MCK).

Purple Martin: 641 were counted on 21 Aug in Dickinson Co. (ET), and 300 on 27 Aug in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH). Last: 2 on 14 Aug in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

Tree Swallow: 500 on 20 Sep in Woodbury Co. (GLV) was the high count. Last: 29 in Polk Co. on 4 Nov (AB).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: The only report was a single bird on 24 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

Bank Swallow: The only report was 200 in a single, concentrated flock on 2 Oct at Pinchey Bottoms in Marion Co. (MPr-details), which is also the 2nd latest date on record.

Cliff Swallow: All: 400 on 24 Aug in Greene Co. (JG), and 10 on 26 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

Barn Swallow: Most: 500 on 20 Sep in Woodbury Co. (GLV). Last: 1 on 28 Oct in Union Co. (AB).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: In contrast to last fall, this species was reported only six times: 3 Aug in Polk Co. (BE), 7 Sep in Kossuth Co. (MCK), 14 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO), 25 Sep in Marshall Co. (MPr), 29 Sep in Polk Co. (DT), and 24 Nov in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH).

Brown Creeper: First two were 1 on 24 Sep in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG), and 1 on 2 Oct in Marshall Co. (MPr).

Carolina Wren: 17 reports, mostly from the SE quarter of the state, including 6 on 24 Aug in Van Buren Co. (RC). Three of the reports were from the north: 1 from 20 Aug–15 Oct in Winneshiek Co. (DC), 1 on 27 Aug at Call SP in Kossuth Co. (MCK), and 1 on 28 Sep in Allamakee Co. (DC).

House Wren: Last: 1 on 13 Oct in Polk Co. (BE).

Winter Wren: 7 reports from 28 Sep in Marshall Co. (MPr) to 22 Nov in Woodbury Co. (GLV). RG saw 16 on 3 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co.

Sedge Wren: The last three were 2 on 9 Oct in Kossuth Co. (MCK), and 1 on 13 Oct in Polk Co. (BE).

Marsh Wren: Last: 2 on 16 Oct at Union Hills WMA in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG, PH).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: First: 6 on 27 Sep in Kossuth Co. (MCK). Over 150 were seen on 3 Oct at Parker's Woods in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG, PH).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: First were found in Polk Co. on 15 Sep (CE, MPr). At least 100 were at Parker's Woods in Cerro Gordo Co. on 3 Oct, and again on 9 Oct. (RG, PH).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: All: 3 on Aug 24 in Van Buren Co. (RC), 1 on 7 Sep in Lee Co. (RC), 2 on 9 Sep in Poweshiek Co. (MPr), 1 on 13 Sep in Boone Co. (RG).

Eastern Bluebird: Some high counts were 110 on 3 Nov in Pottawattamie Co. (MO), and 74 on 30 Oct in Marion Co. (AB).

Townsend's Solitaire: No reports.

Veery: There were two reports: 1 on 7 Sep in Lee Co. (RC), and a record-late individual on 3 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG-details).

Gray-cheeked Thrush: All: 1 on 4 Sep in Linn Co (MCD-details), and 1 on 19 Sep in Lucas Co. (AB).

Swainson's Thrush: All: 1 on 2 Sep in Kossuth Co. (MCK), 2 on 3 Sep in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG), 1 on 10 Sep in Hardin Co. (MPr), 1 on 11 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO), 1 on 15 Sep in Boone Co (seen by many), and a very late individual on 10 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG).

Hermit Thrush: The first reports were for 3 Oct in Story Co. (Martha Stebelton fide BPr), and Cerro Gordo Co. (RG, PH). The last two were on 30 Oct in Marshall Co. (MPr) and 2 Nov in Cerro Gordo Co. (CJF).

Wood Thrush: There were nine reports including three in Oct: 1 on 3 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG-details), 1 rather late on 22 Oct in Polk Co. (DT), and a record-late individual on 26 Oct in Madison Co. (E&EA*).

American Robin: An incredible 26,500 were counted on 3 Nov at Hitchcock NA in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

Varied Thrush: No reports.

Gray Catbird: Last: singles on 19 Oct in Boone Co. (JS, WO) and 27 Oct in Story Co. (JJD).

Northern Mockingbird: All: 2 on 15 Aug in Pottawattamie Co. (MO), and 1 on 6 Nov in Allerton, Wayne Co. (AB).

Brown Thrasher: Two November reports were 1 on 22 Nov in Wayne Co. (AB), and another was still present in a Mason City yard at the end of the season on 30 Nov (CJF).

American Pipit: An extremely early bird was seen well on 18 Aug (MO-details), which is 3rd earliest. It was studied carefully because the observer knew the date was unusual. High counts were 32 on 13 Oct in Polk Co. (BE), and 30 on 26 Oct in Woodbury Co. (GLV). Last: 20 on 4 Nov in Appanoose Co. (TJ).

Blue-winged Warbler: Last: 1 in Linn Co. on 4 Sep (MCD).

Golden-winged Warbler: Six reports with the first on 28 Aug in Clinton Co. (PVN) and the last on 20 Sep in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG).

Tennessee Warbler: First: an adult on 13 Aug in Kossuth Co. (MCK). Last: 1 on 8 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG-details).

Orange-crowned Warbler: The first was early on 8 Sep in Story Co. (WO-details), followed by 1 on 21 Sep in Marshall Co. (MPr), and 1 on 28 Sep in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG). There were 16 reports in Oct with the last on 22 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

Nashville Warbler: The first was up north in Winnebago Co on 18 Aug (RG). The last was 1 in Allamakee Co. on 29 Oct. AB counted 14 on 1 Oct in Marion Co.

Northern Parula: 19 of 24 individuals reported were found in the two-week period 7–20 Sep. Last: 1 on 2 Oct in Story Co. (Martha Stebelton fide BPr).

Yellow Warbler: Seven reports with the last two in September: 1 on 7 Sep in Marshall Co. (MPr), and 1 on 20 Sep in Marion Co. (AB).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: The last two were in Winneshiek Co. and Cerro Gordo Co. on 3 Oct (DC, RG).

Magnolia Warbler: First: 1 on 20 Aug in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG). There were nine reports with a Big Bluestem Audubon field trip finding the last on 5 Oct in Hamilton Co. (WO).

Cape May Warbler: Three reports: 1 on 16 Sep in Clinton Co. (PVN), 1 on 29 Sep in Marshall Co. (MPr), and 1 on 1 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: All six reports came from Brookside Park in Ames (Story Co.), and Parker's Woods in Mason City (Cerro Gordo Co). Single males were seen on 13 Sep and 20 Sep in Parker's Woods (RG), and on 13 Oct in Brookside Park (Chaayan Kasorndorkbua). Females were seen on 14 Sep in Brookside Park (Shane Patterson), and on 27 Sep (CJF) and 1-3 Oct in Parker's Woods (RG, CJF).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: The first was 1 on 12 Sep in Dickinson Co. (LAS), and then the floodgates opened. 40 were counted on 21 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO), another 40 on 4 Oct in Hardin Co. (MPr), 50 on 9 Oct in Winneshiek Co. (DC), and another 40 on 13 Oct in Polk Co. (RC). Reports slowed, but continued through the end of the month with 1 on 29 Nov in Allamakee Co. (FL).

Black-throated Green Warbler: The first was 1 on 24 Aug in Van Buren Co. (RC), and the last were 2 on 15 Oct in Appanoose Co. (TJ). AB counted 8 on 19 Sep in Stephen's SF in Lucas Co.

Blackburnian Warbler: First: 1 on 20 Aug in Hardin Co. (MPr). Last: 1 on 5 Oct in Hamilton Co. (WO).

Yellow-throated Warbler: No reports.

Pine Warbler: Two reports: 1 on 29 Sep in Polk Co. (DT-details) and 1 on 4 Oct in Hardin Co. (MPr*).

Prairie Warbler: No reports.

Palm Warbler: First: 1 on 2 Oct in Marshall Co. (MPr). Last: 1 on 13 Oct in Polk Co. (BE).

Bay-breasted Warbler: First two: singles on 26 Aug in Linn Co. (MCD) and Tama Co. (MPr). Last: 1 on 3 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG).

Blackpoll Warbler: There were two reports of this rare fall migrant, both from Parker's Woods in Cerro Gordo Co.: 2 on 20 Sep (RG) and 1 on 1 Oct (PH).

Cerulean Warbler: The only report was 1 singing on 20 Aug in Washington Co. (MCD).

Black-and-white Warbler: First: singles on 20 Aug in Johnson (MCD) and Cerro Gordo (RG) Counties. Last: 1 on 7 Oct in Linn Co. (MCD).

American Redstart: The last date was 3 Oct, with individuals in Story, Johnson, and Cerro Gordo Counties (BPr, JLF, RG).

Prothonotary Warbler: The last was 1 on 7 Sep in expected habitat in Allamakee Co. (BSc-details), the 2nd latest on record.

Worm-eating Warbler: No reports.

Ovenbird: The last two were 1 on 6 Oct in Winneshiek Co. (Larry Reis fide DC) and 1 on 8 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG).

Northern Waterthrush: First: 1 on 16 Aug in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH). Last: 1 in the same county on 3 Oct (RG).

Kentucky Warbler: The only reports were on 24 Aug: 3 were in Van Buren Co. (RC), and an adult was seen in the company of a fledgling in Warren Co. (JS).

Connecticut Warbler: The only report was 1 on 11 Sep in Polk Co (JG-details).

Mourning Warbler: There were five reports of this rare fall migrant, all singles, including two record-late dates: 10 Sep in Cerro Gordo Co (RG), 11 Sep in Marshall Co. (MPr-details), 28 Sep in Warren Co. (JG), 3 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co (RG) was 2nd latest on record, and then what was possibly the same bird was seen 6 Oct nearby, and documented for Records Committee review.

Common Yellowthroat: Last: 1 on 10 Oct in Tama Co. (MPr).

Hooded Warbler: No reports.

Wilson's Warbler: First: 1 on 12 Aug in Dickinson Co. (ET). Last: 1 on 2 Oct in Marshall Co. (Betty Savage fide BPr).

Canada Warbler: First: 1 on 21 Aug in Marshall Co. (MPr). Last: 1 on 20 Sep in Lucas Co. (AB).

Yellow-breasted Chat: The only two reports were of unusually late birds. One was found on 22 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO-details), and another on 29 Sep in Emmet Co. was record late (DH*).

Summer Tanager: All: 2 on 14 Sep at Waubonsie SP in Fremont Co. (L&BP), and 1 on 15 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

Scarlet Tanager: The last three all were on 3 October: 2 in Johnson Co. (JLF), and 1 in Dickinson Co. (ET).

Spotted Towhee: The first two were 1 on 2 Oct in Marshall Co. (Betty Savage fide BPr), and 1 on 3 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG).

Eastern Towhee: Last: 1 on 5 Oct in Story Co. (WO).

American Tree Sparrow: First few: 1 on 13 Oct in Johnson Co. (MCD), 1 on 28 Oct in Tama Co. (MPr), and 2 on 29 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG).

Chipping Sparrow: There were three November reports: 1 on 3 Nov in Johnson Co (RH), and 2 on 21-22 Nov in Cerro Gordo Co. (CJF, RG). RC estimated 100 in Polk Co. on 15 Sep.

Clay-colored Sparrow: All: There was a late-summer report of an adult in Kossuth Co. on 11 Aug (RG*), 3 were reported on 29 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (JT-details), and 1 adult was found on 3 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG-details).

Field Sparrow: Last: 1 on 26 Oct in Appanoose Co. (RC).

Vesper Sparrow: Last: 1 on 18 Oct in Kossuth Co. (MCK).

Lark Sparrow: All: 13 on 15 Aug in Decatur Co. (AB), 8 on 18 Aug in Mahaska Co. (AB), 1 on 21 Aug in Appanoose Co. (RC), and 2 on 1 Sep in Polk Co. (BE), and 1 on 8 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

Savannah Sparrow: The last was 1 reported by RC on 26 Oct in Appanoose Co., where he counted 120 on the 19th.

Grasshopper Sparrow: All: 1 on 30 Aug in Guthrie Co. (RC), and 1 on 29 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

Henslow's Sparrow: Birds were still singing on 12 Aug in Medicine Creek WA in Wayne Co. (AB), where the high count of 6 was recorded on 6 Aug. The two reports later than this were both from Appanoose Co.: 2 on 15 Aug (MCD), and 3 on 17 Aug (RC).

LeConte's Sparrow: Showed up in three different counties on 29 Sep: 1 in Johnson (CE), 1 in Pottawattamie (MO), and 1 in Cerro Gordo (PH). High count was 7 at Union Hills WMA in Cerro Gordo Co. on 16 Oct (RG, PH). Last: 1 on 30 Oct in Kossuth Co. (MCK).

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: First: 2 on 19 Sep in Kossuth Co (MCK). Last: 10 on 15 Oct in Appanoose Co. (TJ). All locations: USNWR in Kossuth Co. (MCK), Snake Creek Marsh in Greene Co. (RIA, PHA), McIntosh WA in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH, RG), Bluewing Marsh in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG), and Sedan WA in Appanoose Co. where 12 (most) were found (TJ, RC).

Fox Sparrow: First few: 1 on 1 Oct in Kossuth Co. (MCK), 1 on 5 Oct in Story (WO), 1 on 5 Oct in Polk Co. (BE), and 2 on 9 Oct in Winneshiek Co. (DC). Most: 22 on 1 Nov in Kossuth Co. (MCK).

Lincoln's Sparrow: First: 2 on 15 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO). Last: 1 on 1 Nov in Kossuth Co. (MCK). The two high counts both occurred on 29 Sep: 20 in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH), and 16 in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

White-throated Sparrow: First: 1 on 11 Sep in Marshall Co. (MPr). RC counted 100 on 20 Oct in Guthrie Co.

Harris's Sparrow: First: 2 on 1 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (L&BP). Most: 24 on 15 Oct in Kossuth Co. (MCK).

White-crowned Sparrow: Six on 26 Sep in Pottawattamie Co. (MO) were 4th earliest on record. The next were 2 on 1 Oct in Story Co. (WO).

Dark-eyed Junco: On 14 Sep, CN found one on his Cerro Gordo Co. farm, which matched the mark for 2nd earliest.

Lapland Longspur: 1 on 16 Oct in Appanoose Co. (AB) was two weeks prior to the first big flocks: 300 on 30 Oct in Kossuth Co. (MCK), 200 on 31 Oct in Hamilton Co. (JJD), and 200 on 31 Oct in Story Co. (JJD).

Smith's Longspur: Searched for by many with the usual resolve, but only one bird was found on 2 Nov in Dickinson Co. (LAS).

CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR: A potential first-fall record for Iowa, found 9 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co., was referred to the Records Committee.

Snow Bunting: First: 1 near Calumet in O'Brien Co. on 25 Oct (DK). They were found in seven more counties in November.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Last two reports: 1 on 29 Sep in Story Co. (WO) and 3 on 3 Oct in Johnson Co. (JLF).

Blue Grosbeak: Only: 2 on 15 Aug in Pottawattamie Co. (MO).

Indigo Bunting: Last: 12 in Appanoose Co. on 6 Oct (RC).

Dickcissel: All: 20 on 10 Aug in Appanoose Co. (RC), 4 on 24 Aug in Van Buren Co. (RC), 1 on 3 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (L&BP), and 1 on 5 Oct in Story Co. (WO).

Bobolink: The high count was 120 on 11 Aug in Guthrie Co. (RC). The last two reports were 25 on 12 Sep in Emmet Co. (DH), and then more than a month later, on 14 Oct, one was found in Winneshiek Co. (FL-details), which was 4th latest on record.

Red-winged Blackbird: Huge numbers of blackbirds moved past the hawkwatch station in the Loess Hills on 1 Nov, including ~25,000 Red-winged Blackbirds (MO).

Eastern Meadowlark: An individual in Butler Co. on 22 Nov was identified as Eastern Meadowlark based on repeated call notes (MCD-details).

Western Meadowlark: The only report was 6 on 1 Nov in Appanoose Co. (RC).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Two reports: 65 on 18 Aug in Greene Co. (JG), and 2 on 3 Oct in Pottawattamie Co. (L&BP).

Rusty Blackbird: The first few were 1 on 8 Oct in Hamilton Co. (JJD), 1 on 14 Oct in Winneshiek Co. (FL), and 2 on 15 Oct in Lucas Co. (AB). The high count was 150 on 3 Nov in Pottawattamie Co. (MO). Another 75 were at Palo Marsh in Linn Co. on 9 Nov (MCD).

Brewer's Blackbird: The first of the season were 80 counted among three flocks at widely different locations on 26 Oct in Appanoose Co. (RC-details), and that wasn't even the high count. JS estimated 200 on 30 Oct at Diehl Pond in Warren Co (details). Another 38 were counted on 4 Nov in Appanoose Co. (AB).

Common Grackle: Two large flocks were 25,000 on 1 Nov at Pottawattamie Co. (MO), and 5,000 on 9 Nov in Marion Co. (JS), almost all males.

Great-tailed Grackle: Reported from seven central and western counties, all with prior records for this range-expanding species. High counts were 26 on 18 Aug in Greene Co. (JG), and 30 on 28 Oct in Woodbury Co. (GLV). Last: 4 on 1 Nov in Pottawattamie Co. (MO). Some counties still with no records of Great-tailed Grackles but that are adjacent to counties where they have nested are Madison, Adair, Page, Audubon, Crawford, Webster, Pocahontas, Buena Vista, O'Brien, Franklin, Floyd, Worth and Winnebago!

Brown-headed Cowbird: ~500 were reported in Pottawattamie Co. on 3 Nov (MO).

Orchard Oriole: All: 1 on 1 Sep in Polk Co. (MCD), and 1 on 2 Sep in Osceola Co. (JJD).

Baltimore Oriole: 80 were counted in Van Buren Co. on 24 Aug (RC), and another 72 in Pottawattamie Co. the next day (MO). Last: 1 on 3 Oct in Story Co. (WO).

Purple Finch: The first two were 1 on 15 Oct in Cerro Gordo Co. (RG), and 1 on 18 Oct in Dickinson Co. (ET), though there were only four other reports.

Red Crossbill: No reports.

White-winged Crossbill: No reports.

Common Redpoll: No reports.

Pine Siskin: Four reports of from 1 to 3 birds from Kossuth, Story, Pottawattamie and Dickinson Counties. First: 1 on 18 Oct in Kossuth Co. (MCK).

Eurasian Tree Sparrow: 10 on 4 Aug at Indian Slough in Louisa Co. (MCD), and 1 on 7 Aug in Cedar Co. (MCD) were the only reports.

COMMENT

This report was distilled from a database of 2,063 individual records submitted by 50 field observers. These records came from 68 of Iowa's 99 counties. Forty-two records (2%) acknowledged the presence of immature birds.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Purple Martin: 315 in Dickinson Co. on 15 Aug (ET). Hence, they were not the latest since 1970 nor the second latest on record.

Woodland Birding in the Algona Area

Matthew C. Kenne

When settlers first arrived in what would become Kossuth County in the 1850s, virtually all the timber was found surrounding the location of present-day Algona. It was a wooded island in a sea of prairie grasses that is today more accurately described as an oasis in a desert of corn and soybean fields. Depending on the season and conditions, the timber around Algona acts as both a migrant trap, attracting a surprising number of species and individuals with food and resting places, and as a frontier outpost for species more commonly found nesting in woodlands farther to the east and south.

As you approach from the south to within a few miles of Algona on Hwy 169, the geological feature that promoted this woodland growth becomes visible: the Algona Moraine. The debris that piled here along the base of the Wisconsin Glacier 12,000 years ago marks its last stand in Iowa before the final retreat. The ridge left behind is about three miles wide north to south and stands almost 100 feet above the flat terrain to the south. Situated on a promontory north of the moraine, Algona sticks out like a sore thumb into the path of the East Fork of the Des Moines River, which surrounds Algona on three sides before cutting through the Algona Moraine and continuing south. The H. M. and Eva Smith Wildlife Area (WA) and Ambrose A. Call State Park protect some of the virgin timber, and they offer visiting birders a woodland alternative to the wetland pothole birding of northern Kossuth and adjacent counties.

Two miles south of Algona on Hwy 169, just north of its intersection with 180th Street, a sign marks the entrance to Smith WA (Figure 1), an unimproved Kossuth County Conservation area that is open to public hunting. Its 140 acres are comprised of a series of ridges and seasonal streams running from the moraine to the west toward oxbow wetland pools and the Des Moines River to the east. Smith WA is almost entirely wooded except for an old farmstead location and the wetland area in the bottom.

Smith WA is an excellent spot to search for passerines during migration because of its lack of human activity (except hunting) and the wide variety of habitats in a small area: wooded hills and stream thickets, wetland, savannah, open agricultural land, and an isolated clump of Cape May Warbler-producing spruce trees. Whip-poor-will and Kentucky and Hooded Warblers are the most recent new migrant species found here. A single Tufted Titmouse seen here once is the only one I have encountered in Kossuth County. Pileated Woodpeckers occasionally roam the woods and possibly nest. Other nesters include Wild Turkey, Scarlet Tanager, Wood Thrush, Eastern Towhee, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Yellow-throated Vireo. The trail along the western border gives easy access to edge species, and it is the best location to spot a Swainson's Hawk. A pair of Swainson's nested some-

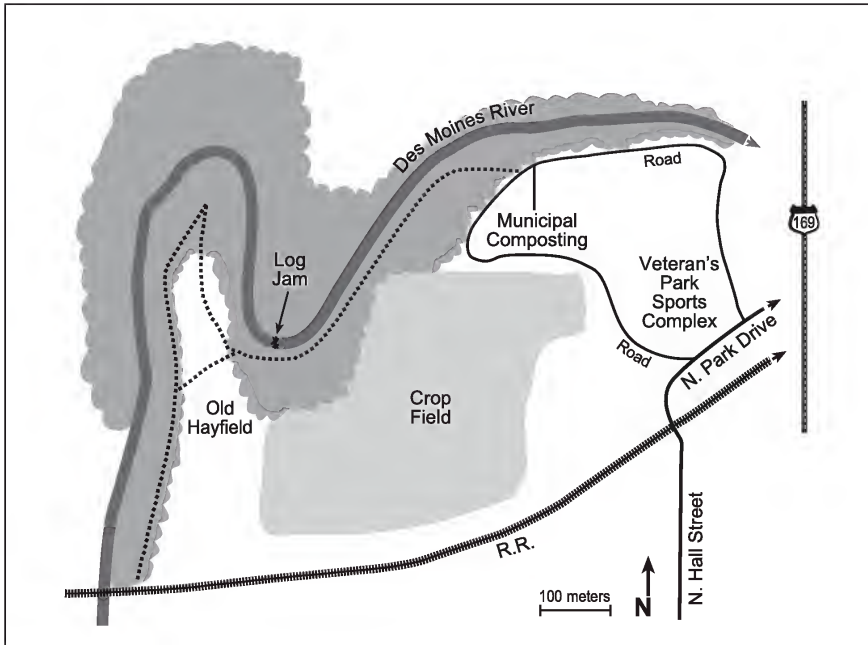


Figure 1. H. M. and Eva Smith Wildlife Area

where nearby for several years and could often be seen over the crop fields or near the gravel pits a mile south, but they have not been as regular recently.

Bushwhacking is still my favorite method of exploring Smith WA, but taking the northern trail will lead you to a unique structure called the Cozy Grove Sugar Shack. Members of the Kossuth County Conservation Board and other interested parties tap the surrounding maple trees each spring to make syrup at the Shack. Boiling the sap has been a tradition at this location for 50 years, and they demonstrate the process yearly to busloads of school children and the public. I watched my first Golden Eagle cruise back and forth over leafless March treetops while drinking hot chocolate at the Sugar Shack.

To continue your birding trip, turn north from the entrance to Smith WA, and then turn west on 190th St. This road turns north again after a mile and becomes Call Park Road. A mile further, the road descends the hill to pass the entrance to Call Park (Figure 2). Call Park's 130 acres are also wooded except for the mowed expanse inside the auto loop, and the park's facilities are all located along a central ridge. Like those at Smith WA, the streams that flank this ridge flow during the spring and wet periods in the summer, but are usually dry by fall. Call Park does not have many visitors other than weekends in warmer weather, so a ranger only seasonally staffs the park.

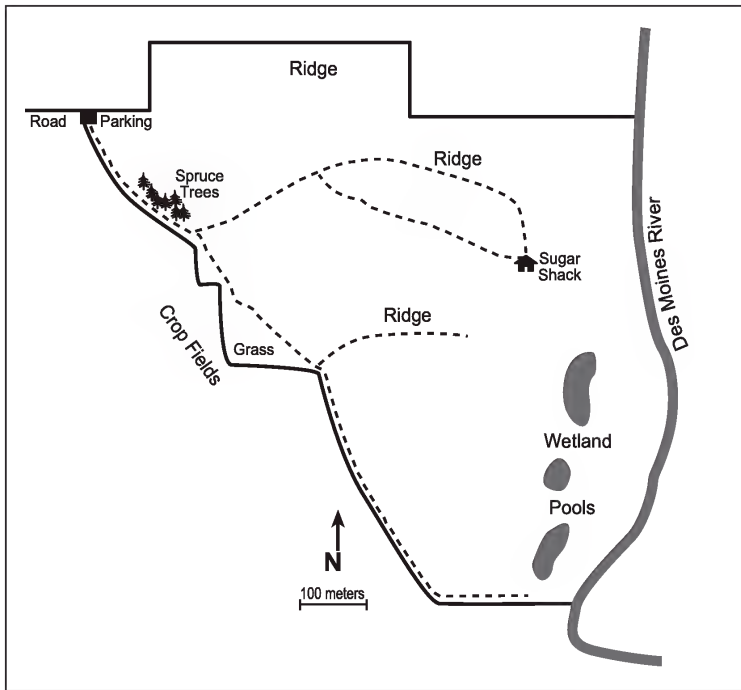


Figure 2. Ambrose A. Call State park

Call Park's trail system makes it easy to quickly search for birds. I usually start in the first parking lot and work down the road to the ranger house. Barred Owls can regularly be found along the beginning of the trail leading up the south creek bottom. Singing Acadian Flycatchers have been found along this creek a couple of times, as has Louisiana Waterthrush. Continuing up the creek, close viewing of warblers and flycatchers along the creek can be the rule of the day if weather and foraging conditions are right. At other times, mixed-species flocks will forage in the treetops on the hills flanking the creek and you must work your way along the ridge tops to get a good view and lessen the strain of "warbler neck." After reaching the top of the park, I return along the road to search the more open areas. Migrant thrushes can often be found in good numbers around the edges of the open central area after a fallout. Quite often though, the park will be birdlessly quiet, highlighting the hit-or-miss nature of birding a migrant trap — some mornings that seem promising to me must encourage the birds to fly somewhere else. The bird species found at Call Park are similar to those at Smith WA, although Yellow-throated and Worm-eating Warblers have pushed Call Park's warbler total to 33 species. Cooper's and Broad-winged Hawks occasionally nest in the park; and pioneering Carolina Wrens have been found here on a couple of occasions, but without any evidence of nesting.

After leaving the park, turn left on Call Park Road. At the T intersection, turn right onto S. Hall Street and pass over the river bridge. Ponds on both sides of the road may host water birds, but there isn't any public access to this private land. Hall Street takes you straight through Algona to the next stop. When you cross the railroad tracks, the street

turns east and becomes North Park Drive. Enter either road on your left through the municipal composting area or the Veteran’s Park sports complex. In the northwest corner of this area, a trail leads west along the Des Moines River. This nature trail (Figure 3) was initially a project of local service organizations, but damage by regular flooding became too much to keep up with and the trail is now imaintainedf by individuals with various off-road vehicles. The trail passes through floodplain forest and ends in an old hayfield that is gradually losing out to the encroachment of new trees.

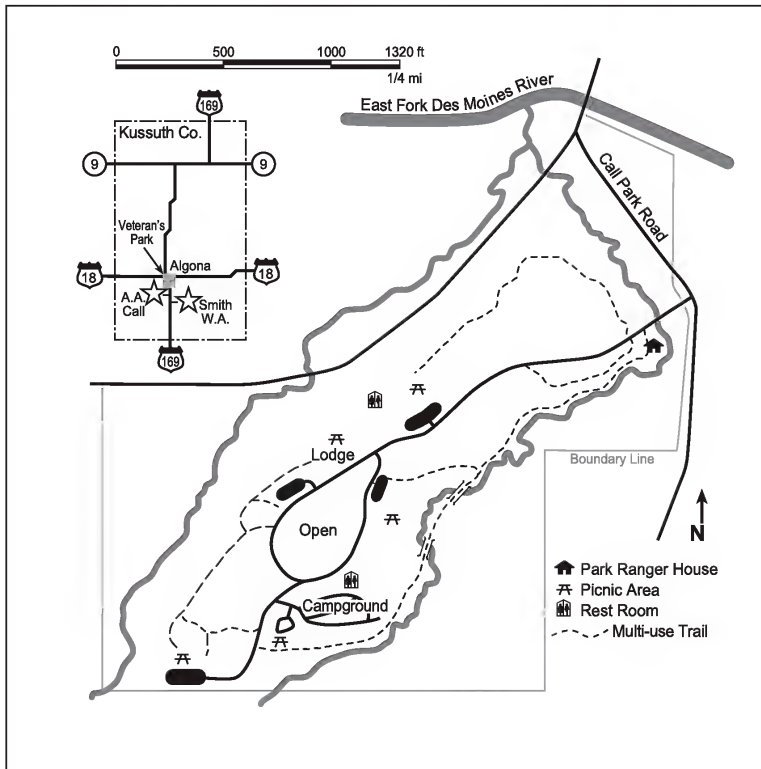


Figure 3. Nature Trail

This trail is another good place to search for migrants, but the main attraction here is nesting Prothonotary Warblers. The area reached just before “the mother of all logjams” is the best spot to search, although they have been found both up and downstream from the logjam on occasion. Brown Creepers and Pileated Woodpeckers have also been seen along the river here during nesting season. The logjam itself is often an interesting birding location — it swarms with insect life, which in turn attracts flocks of swallows, flycatchers, warblers, and waxwings. You can follow the trail back to your car, or, if you’d like to scan the open sky for a while, you can loop back on the railroad tracks. The summer resident Turkey Vultures are most notable here, especially as the flock gathers in the evening. They used Call Park as a roosting location in the past, but in recent years have moved behind the

ridge above the railroad tracks at Veteranis Park.

And now for something completely different. Turn east on North Park Drive and then south on Hwy 169. At the top of the hill, go east on Oak Street five blocks to N. Phillips Street. Turning left here will take you to the front gate of Riverview Cemetery. Surrounded by a hayfield, second-growth woods, and raised thicket-covered railroad embankments, the cemetery is good spot to look for sparrows. Interestingly, the large spruce trees in the north-east part of the cemetery seem to entice an unusual number of lingering June warblers and flycatchers. In winter, when Smith WA and Call Park are locked in frozen, quiet solitude, the conifers of Riverview offer the possibility of crossbills, siskins, and redpolls. A Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, or Merlin will often use the cemetery area as a hunting ground and base from which to raid neighborhood bird feeders. Flocks of Pine and Evening Grosbeaks have lingered here in the past, and hopefully they'll return again in the future.

The central portion of the cemetery is an open hilltop overlooking the Des Moines River valley to the north that is an excellent vantage point for hawk watching during fall migration. The birds travel down the valley from the north and pass overhead to retake the valley path on the south side of Algona. The river acts as a leading line: accipiters and falcons migrate along the wooded "buffet line" of small songbirds, and buteos and vultures use the updrafts from the valley ridges and rising thermals from the pavements of town to gain height. Kettles of Broad-winged Hawks regularly use the woodland areas around Algona in both spring and fall to roost for the night before continuing on their migration.

If you have any questions about birding these or any other Kossuth County areas, please feel free to contact me.

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Curlew Sandpiper in Marion County

Aaron Brees

On the morning of 6 May 2002, I decided to look for shorebirds at the wildlife areas upriver from Lake Red Rock. After birding Runnell's Wildlife Area and parts of Red Rock Wildlife Area, it seemed that few shorebirds were around. However, I decided to make the drive over to the Red Rock dam where a large pond had been drained the previous fall. This pond, located on the north side of Idaho Drive near its junction with county road T-15, was now a large mudflat with scattered pools of shallow water. During the previous week, it had attracted hundreds of shorebirds but had not produced anything unexpected.

As I pulled up to the pond, I was somewhat surprised to find over two hundred shorebirds present. As I began to scope the flocks, something flushed the birds in my direction. My eye was drawn to a reddish-colored bird that flashed white as it flew. The birds quickly landed and resumed feeding, allowing me a better look. After noting the unusual red color and long, slightly decurved bill, I suspected the bird was a Curlew Sandpiper. However, I was not entirely sure, having never seen one. I attempted to consult my field guide only to discover that I had forgotten to bring it. I quickly wrote some notes, then drove home. A

quick look at field guides and internet photos increased my confidence that the bird was a Curlew Sandpiper. I called several local birders as I made the drive back to the pond, hoping the bird would still be present.

When I arrived at the pond I was able to relocate and photograph the bird, as well as take more detailed notes (Figure 1). The Curlew Sandpiper appeared to be loosely associating with a flock of Pectoral Sandpipers. It was similar in size to the pectorals, appearing smaller than some, but larger than others (Pectoral Sandpipers are sexually dimorphic in size). It was proportionally chunkier and longer than a Pectoral Sandpiper. The bill was long, black, and slightly decurved, but less so than is illustrated in most field guides. The legs were black and similar in length to a Pectoral Sandpiper's. The bird showed signs of molt but was mostly in alternate plumage. The head was washed with a dull, reddish color. The face showed a faint, pale supercilium and, from the base of the bill down to the chin, was whitish. The top of the head was covered with thin, dark streaks. The breast

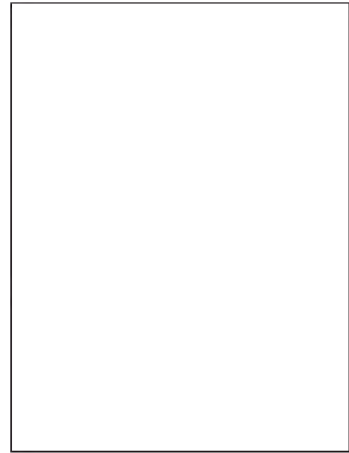
was a deep, brick red, appearing nearly maroon at times. This solid red extended down near the legs, where it broke up into red barring. The flanks and undertail coverts were white. The mantle consisted of rows of black stripes on a reddish background. The scapulars were marked with an intricate black, red, and gold pattern. The primaries extended beyond the tail, but were largely hidden by the dull gray tertials. The coverts formed a very distinctive whitish-gray patch that contrasted greatly with the back and underparts. The bird showed an extensive white rump and a white wingstripe. The undersides of the wings were white, which, along with the rump, made the bird conspicuous in flight. Identifiable photographs were taken, but none are suitable for publication here.

Eugene and Eloise Armstrong, Pam and Reid Allen, Ann Johnson, and Jim Sinclair were able to join me in viewing the bird that afternoon. Many other birders were able to see the bird on 7 May, and it was last reported early the morning of 8 May. At that time, the area received heavy rain, which rapidly began to refill the pond and caused most shorebirds to leave the site.

This is the third record of Curlew Sandpiper for Iowa. The two previous records are 10 May 1985 at Cedar Lake, Chickasaw County (Moore 1985) and 13 May 1988 at Coralville Reservoir, Johnson County (Bendorf and Kent 1988). Iowa is unusual in having only spring records. Away from the East Coast, records from fall outnumber those from spring nearly 2:1 (Kent and Dinsmore 1996), although this pattern is somewhat less pronounced in the upper Midwest (Mlodinow and O'Brien 1996). It is extremely likely that we are overlooking this species in fall despite the fact that adults should still be, at least partially, in their distinctive alternate plumage.

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Aaron Brees.

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Ruff in Marion County

Jim Sinclair

In July of 2002, the Pinchey Bottoms area of the Red Rock Refuge in Marion County became a Mecca for shorebirds. By mid-month, I estimated 5,000 shorebirds in and around Pinchey Bottoms. Although by 28 July numbers of birds had decreased, I still estimated approximately 3,000 shorebirds to be present.

I arrived a little after dawn on 28 July and proceeded to patrol a loop I had established, which took me by each of the various pans. About three hours later, as I was scoping the last pan, I found a bird I did not immediately recognize. Feeding in the same sewing machine style as the three Stilt Sandpipers (*Calidris himantopus*) with which it was associating, was a large bulky shorebird. When first observed, the bird was belly deep in water with its head completely immersed.

As I continued to watch the bird in question, the following details were observed. As stated earlier, the bird appeared bulky, almost the size of nearby Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*). The mantle was a medium gray-brown with prominent pale feather edgings on the wings. The breast was a disheveled, black dominating on the flanks. The bird appeared small headed and plain faced with a very faint dark eyeline. The bill was dark, slightly longer than the head with a faint droop of the distal half. The bird continued to feed belly deep in the water and, hence, I was unable to see the legs.

I first thought this bird was a male Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) in the middle of molting. After considering the bird's size and the extensive black on the flanks, I believe the bird to have been a female, almost completely molted into basic plumage.

This bird was seen by Mark Proescholdt and Mike Dooley later in the day, but could not be subsequently found.

This is the tenth Ruff to be identified in Iowa and the first in the month of July. Interestingly, the last two records both were in Marion County.

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Book Review

Rick Hollis

Rare and Elusive Birds of North America by William Burt, New York, Universe, 2001, 208 pp., 50+ ill.

The attraction of this book is the photographs, without which the book would not be as impressive. The photographs are wonderful. Most are taken at night and the birds positively leap off the pages. The birds are an odd collection of the author's favorite species, the ones that are hard to find and see — six rails, four nightjars, two herons, three warblers, one pipit, one flycatcher, two sparrows, and one wren — definitely an odd combination.

The text that accompanies the photos are what Burt calls “stories,” stories of old timers' experiences with birds quoted from Bent and Forbush, stories from Burt's own experience while trying to find or photograph birds. Some of the stories date back to Burt's youth. The one about a dormitory resident and the Whip-poor-will was very funny.

Portions of this book have appeared elsewhere in magazines and in his earlier book, *Shadowbirds*, (see review, Kurtz 1995).

Burt is at his best in his descriptions of natural places. Here is part of his description of the Atchafalaya Swamp:

I chose one and ventured in through the thickets after him, and soon found myself picking and prying through the single most unpleasant piece of woods — no, the single most unpleasant natural place of any kind I have ever seen. . . . Poison ivy leafed out everywhere, not just on the ground, but upward on the hosting trunks of trees. It was a dense and ominous place, full of looping winding, drooping roots and vines that often looked like snakes and maybe snakes that looked like vines, for all I knew though mercifully I did not see them.

He goes on to mention the real snakes and the blackberry brambles.

In terms of what section you should read to learn something that you will not already know or learn other places, I would suggest his chapter on the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.

His descriptions of photographic technique will not help anyone. The appendix on the natural history of the birds he enjoys are bare minimal capsules for persons who know less about birds than most readers of this journal. I believe they are aimed to introduce the birds' life histories to nonbirders. As such, I think they should contain more easily available references than those cited by the author.

This is a book to pick up. Wonder at the pictures. Read the text. Some parts you may skip over, but from some parts you may learn something new.

LITERATURE CITED

Kurtz, C. 1995. Book review: *A Quest for Rails*. *Iowa Bird Life* 65:107.

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Fifty Years Ago in Iowa Bird Life

James J. Dinsmore

Editor Pierce began 1953 with a thick issue including several interesting articles. The lead article by Fred Kent was a diary of a nest of a Great Horned Owl, the first bird to nest each year in Iowa. The female apparently laid her eggs in early February and eventually fledged two young.

In a second article, long-time IOU member William Youngworth of Sioux City described his experiences with birds during his boyhood years in South Dakota in the early 1900s.

A study of the nesting biology of Field Sparrows was the topic of an article by graduate student Malcolm Crooks and his advisor, George Hendrickson. The sparrows had high losses from cowbird parasitism and a late May snowstorm, and fewer than one young survived per nest.

The 1952 Iowa Christmas Bird Counts tallied a total of 84 species, a record high total for Iowa at the time. The most interesting species reported were a White-winged Scoter and Franklin's Gull, both at Davenport. In recent years the total for Iowa is usually about 130 species and individual counts sometimes exceed 80.

Among the short notes was one describing a Sage Thrasher at Des Moines, the first record for Iowa.

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES (renewable yearly): Fledgling (students) \$15, Goldfinch \$20, Blue-bird \$35, Oriole \$50, Egret \$75, Osprey \$100, Bald Eagle \$250, and Peregrine Falcon \$500+. Additional family members, \$4 per person. Membership dues entitle members to receive *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News* quarterly and to vote and hold office in the Union. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Send subscriptions, membership payments, back issue requests, or address changes to David C. Edwards, 2308 State Avenue, Ames, IA 50014 (dcejce@qwest.net).

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS: Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other material relating to birds in Iowa should be sent in Word or WordPerfect to the editor. Research manuscripts will be sent for peer review. Submission of material should be by email attachment or IBM-formatted 3.5" diskette; alternatively, by mail, typed or handwritten.

Photos and graphics: Submit photos and slides preferably as TIFF (*.tif) images or as high resolution JPEG (*.jpg) images in e-mail attachment, on 3.5" diskette or CD, or by mail. All photos, slides, and graphics will be returned.

Send all materials other than seasonal field reports to Kayleen A. Niyo at Kay@KayNiyo.com or by mail to 25100 Sunset Lane, Evergreen, CO 80439. Deadlines for submission are **January 1 for winter issue (Vol. 1)**, **April 1 for spring issue (2)**, **July 1 for summer issue (3)**, **October 1 for fall issue (4)**. Send seasonal field reports to field reports editors by deadlines listed on inside front cover.

IOU NEWS: Paul Hertzell, Editor, 240 12th Street, S.E., Mason City, IA (phertzell@rconnect.com)

IOU WEB SITE: <<http://www.iowabirds.org>>, Ann Johnson, Webmaster. On-line resource for rare bird alerts, checklists, site guides, IOU information and membership. Support the IOU through purchases at the on-line IOU Nature Store.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Deadline for receipt of reports is 15 January. For forms and instructions, contact Aaron Brees, Christmas Bird Count Editor, 509 S. West Street, Corydon, IA 50060 (abrees@hotmail.com).

IOWA BIRDLINE: Pete Ernzen at (712) 365-2863 and Mike Dooley (mcdooley@blue.weeg.uiowa.edu)

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UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION:

16–18 May 2003, Waterloo



FRONT COVER: Light-phase immature Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*) at 30th Avenue and Clarke Street intersection in northern Warren Co., IA, 8 November 2002. Photograph courtesy of Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.

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