

Pleasantville Ia  
50225

Dear Vernon: - Not much of a migration  
report with probably nothing worth  
printing in Amer. Birds.

Rock Rock dam, (US Army Corps of  
Engineers flood control dam) has  
killed our beautiful valley -  
Two successive flood years have  
been devastating to all wildlife!  
3 of the 6 years (1969-73-74) since the  
Lake filled have been flood years  
altho we were assured that a big  
flood would only occur once in 25 years.

Next spring Saylorville, another Corp dam,  
just above Des Moines to fill with more  
hellscape produced. Also our Ledges State  
Park - the beautiful Ledges area along the  
Maines River - oldest State Park, will  
be flooded by Saylorville. So you probably  
will be receiving reports from some of  
the Des Moines birders.

Dean Masman of Ankeny wrote me earlier  
that 1072 birds were killed Sept 12 and 497  
Sept 13 at the Alleman (very tall) TV Tower  
north of Des Moines - majority Red-eyed Vireos,  
that is, over 500. Had a few Great-Crested Flycatchers  
and Black-billed Cuckoos in the kill too. This  
is a cooperative study with I 3 U, Ames Ia.

Sincerely,  
Gladys Black

1974 Fall Migration  
(La) Lake Red Rock Area

Black-billed Cuckoos - 30 and Lake last week Sept.  
(in 1973 - 234 Cuckoos)

White Pelicans - 6 to 12 on Lake Aug + 1st 3 weeks of Sept

Great Blue Herons - 250+ in late Aug thru Sept  
after our big flood waters finally  
receded in mid Aug. (about same no. in 1973.)

Great Egrets - Peaked at 20 in Sept  
(1973-105)

Black-crowned Night Herons - 5 on Sept 23  
in west end of Refuge, 3 in east end.  
Very scarce!

Geese - population down in both 1973-74 -  
two years of flood water covering all  
the flood plain (50,000 A.) with no  
crops whatsoever i.e. corn to attract  
the geese.

Peaked at 3500 Snows } all moved  
500 Canadas } out Nov 4/1974

Small flocks of giants 6 to 10 with a high of  
24 giants on Sept 18.

A flock of 250 Minima (Hutchins) on  
Oct 3 + Nov 1 - a first for a large flock  
as usually we see 6 to 8.

(Past records - Nov 17, 1970 - 4,000 Canadas - 12,000 Snows  
with 1500 Canadas still in Refuge Dec 29, 1970  
Nov 19, 1972 - 1000 Canadas, 3000 Snows "

Ducks - very low count all fall, all species.

Mallards peaked at 12,000 Nov 11 - Red Rock Ref.  
Past years - 1970 - 40,000 } aerial counts  
Red Rock 1971 - 70,000 } done by  
1972 - 35 to 40,000 } wildlife  
Biologists

Gladys Black  
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Turkey Vultures - Count down from past years. In the 3 roasts - Pinchey 46; Red Rock Bluff 52, Elk Rock 0 (this roost usually had 40 to 50) These are also summer roasts of non-breeders.

Bald Eagles - 1a. + 1 im on Sept 3  
3a. on Oct 20  
1a. on Nov 10

In past years fall count ranged 12 to 15+ with immatures being in the majority.

Marsh Hawks few - 2 during Oct in Refuge  
2 west of Pleasantville (upland) Nov 6

2 years of floods has wiped out the rodentia + small birds on the flood plain, a favorite hunting ground on non-flood years.

Amer Kestrel - a total of 50+ seen along gravel roads during Sept + Oct, covered parts of 2 counties (Warren + Marion)

Bob Whites } Count down perhaps as much as 60%  
& }  
Pheasants } Wet spring + early summer - nests flooded or chicks wet + developed pneumonia quickly.

Amer. Coots - small flocks went thru in Sept. + Oct.

Shore bird migration very good but not as high as 1973

Flowers - Semipalmated golden, Blackbellieds in fair numbers Aug, Sept + early Oct but not as many as 1973.

Sandpipers - good migration of common species  
8 Buff-breasted on Sept 5; 1 Willet on Aug 14,  
3 Wilson's Phalaropes Aug 14; 1 Stilt Sandpiper Aug 14  
also a few Drupe + Dowitchers. 4 Avocets on Sept 15

Gulls - 2 to 3 Herring in Sept, Oct  
200+ Ringbills Sept Oct, early Nov.  
500+ Franklins week of Oct 20.

Terns - 25 Caspian Sept. (50 in 1973)  
500+ Black Terns below dam Aug 14  
1 Least Tern on Aug 14 in Refuge

Swallows - Large flocks of Cliff left by Sept 1  
500 Trees on Oct 22  
1000+ Barns at 1 farm Sept 18 + 19

Bluebirds - very scarce. Only 2 small flocks seen all fall, largest 10.

Warblers - Poor migration except yellow rumps week of Oct 13 + Oct 20.

Blackbirds - Also disrupted by flood of 2 yr.  
Only a few flocks in Refuge. In non-flood years hundreds of thousands roost in short willows on flood plain.

Sparrows - poorest migration ever - again disrupted by floods.  
No weed fields or grain on 50,000 ft flood plain.

Also every gravel roadside is browned and each summer by herbicide spraying done by the County despite protests by citizens and the State Conservation Com.  
Only 1 Fox sparrow seen, Nov 6.

a few small flocks of Tree Sparrows + Junco seen along gravel roads in early Nov.

Towa Black

Pleasantville Iowa  
50225

Aug 21, 1974

Dear Vernon:- I did not send in a Nesting Season report - not much unusual except a terrible wet spring + then 2 months dry, very hot weather. And Red Rock Lake flooded again all summer - 25 miles long - just yesterday back to permanent pool for first time since last Feb. Awful!!

Five pairs L. Shrikes had nesting success, considered very scarce elsewhere in the state. Bluebirds very scarce in Refuge area, only saw 1 pair. At south end of Lake Red Rock dam, a pair produced 10 young, 2 nestings at a private residence - a white egg female! Also 5 Carolina Wrens nestlings banded and fledged at same residence, nest in garage. Counted 135 mid-jug nests on the face of Red Rock dam and estimated 200 Cliff Swallows still feeding young on Aug 14. A few nests taken over by House Sparrows. A wooded ravine along south side of Lake Red Rock had 6 Whip-poor-wills calling in late June also a pair of Barred Owls feeding 2 fledglings, making their peculiar begging calls

Are you the Non-gamebird Biologist for Ill? If so, I'd like some information, please. A job description of your duties and your program (if that is permitted.)

I will mail fall report on time, I promise. Lots of Shorebirds now + others - Great Blue Herons numerous, did not nest in Red Rock Refuge but did have successful nesting in Lake Rathbun Rookery in southern Ia. That Lake has less pollution, a smaller watershed.

Sincerely,  
Gladys B Black



Re. Red Rock

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Dept. of Conservation

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