

Iowa Field Reports-Fall 1996

Stephen J. Dinsmore
4024 Arkansas Dr.
Ames, IA 50014

- ✓ Red-throated Loon-*1 first-basic on 27 November at Red Rock Res.
- ✓ Pacific Loon-1 basic on 5 November at Saylorville (small loon, dark chinstrap, dark-backed, three-toned neck pattern: white throat, dark gray crown and nape, thin dark line separating throat and nape)
- ✓ Common Loon-12 on 9 November at Saylorville; it was a very poor fall for this species in central Iowa with no large flight detected
- ✓ Pied-billed Grebe-534 on 11 September at Lake Manawa; 29 on 22 November at Big Creek L.
- ✓ Horned Grebe-1 on 23 September at Cedar L.; 9 on 9 October at Little Wall L.; 24 on 13 October, 36 on 24 October, 12 on 16 November at Saylorville; 2 on 24 November at Terra L.
- ✓ Eared Grebe-1 on 11 September at Lake Manawa; 4 on 9 October, 2 on 3 November at Little Wall L.; 2 on 24 October, 1 on 26 October at Saylorville; 1 on 3 November at Spirit L.; 1 on 17 November at West Okoboji L. (+JJD); 1 on 22 November at Big Creek L.; 1 on 24 November at Terra L.
- ✓ Western Grebe-1 on 30 October, 3 November at West Okoboji L.; 1 on 31 October, 2 November at Lost Island L.; 3 on 2 November at Spirit L.; 1 or 2 from 4-16 November at Saylorville; 2 on 16 November at Red Rock Res.
- ✓ American White Pelican-350 on 13 August, 835 on 30 August, 2,100 on 5 September at Saylorville; 4,000 on 17 August (+JSi), 4,700 on 5 September at Runnells W.A.; 1 through 30 November below Saylorville dam (Scott Rolfes fide SJD)
- ✓ Double-crested Cormorant-2,100 on 27 October at Saylorville (+JSi); 2 on 30 November at Ponderosa L., Poweshiek Co. (+JSi)
- ✓ Anhinga-*1 female or immature on 17 September at Lake Darling S.P.
- ✓ Least Bittern-4 on 13 August at Forney L.
- ✓ Great Blue Heron-556 on 17 August at Runnells W.A. (+JSi)
- ✓ Great Egret-280 on 12 August, 277 on 9 September at Waubonsie W.A.; 96 on 17 August at Runnells W.A. (+JSi); 23 on 8 September at Myre Sl. (+JJD); 1 on 30 October at West Okoboji L.
- ✓ Snowy Egret-5 (2 adults, 3 immatures) on 12 August, 3 immatures on 9 September at Waubonsie W.A.; 1 immature on 13 August at Saylorville; 2 adults on 29 August at Heron Bend; 3 immatures on 29 August at Fort Madison
- ✓ Little Blue Heron-38 (17 adults, 12 calicos, 9 immatures) on 12 August, 2 immatures on 9 September at Waubonsie W.A.; 5 immatures on 22 August and 3 immatures on 29 August at Heron Bend
- ✓ Cattle Egret-340 on 12 August, 708 on 9 September at Waubonsie W.A.; 1 on 22 August at Montrose; 1 on 29 August at Fort Madison; 19 on 21 September at Hallett's Quarry (+JJD); 1 on 27 October at Saylorville
- ✓ Green Heron-12 on 21 August at Saylorville; 1 adult on 6 October at South Twin L.
- ✓ Black-crowned Night-Heron-3 on 12 August, 17 on 9 September at Waubonsie W.A.; 1 on 13 August at Forney L.; 6 on 15 August at Big Wall L. (+JJD); 7 on 8 September at Myre Sl. (+JJD); 1 on 7 October at Saylorville
- ✓ Yellow-crowned Night-Heron-10 (6 adults, 4 immatures) on 12 August, 1 immature on 9 September at Waubonsie W.A.

Trumpeter Swan-7 adults (all neck-banded) on 17 November at West Okoboji L. (+JJD); 1 injured adult (neck-banded) on 19,24 November on the Des Moines R., Dallas Co. was a Union Slough NWR bird; 1 adult (green neck collar) and 1 immature on 25 November at Saylorville

Tundra Swan-2 adults and 3 immatures (family group) on 30 October at Christopherson Sl.; 1 immature on 25 November at Saylorville (with two Trumpeters-in flight only, but noted smaller bill and much smaller size); 2 adults on 30 November at Ponderosa L., Poweshiek Co. (+JSi)(one adult with yellow bill spot, upper mandibles concave, birds too small for Trumpeters)

Snow Goose-1 on 7 October at Saylorville

Ross's Goose-7 on 1 November at Barringer Sl.; 1 on 17 November 2 mi s of Storm L. (+JJD); 1 on 17 November n of Sioux Rapids, Buena Vista Co. (+JJD); 2 on 17 November ne of Shimon M., Pocahontas Co. (+JJD)

Canada Goose-a major flight occurred on 24 November over central Iowa
American Black Duck-1 on 9 November s of Slater, Polk Co.; 1-5 were seen in Guthrie, Marion, and Poweshiek counties

Blue-winged Teal-1 apparently healthy immature male on 28 November at Hallett's Quarry

Canvasback-1 male on 29 August at Pool 19 may have summered; 228 on 2 November at Spirit L.

Redhead-450 on 30 October at West Okoboji L.

Greater Scaup-1 female on 30 October at Swan L., Dickinson Co.; 9 (4 male, 5 female) on 1 November, 10 (3 male, 7 female) on 3 November, 1 female on 17 November (+JJD) at Spirit L.; 13 (2 male, 1 female) on 10 November, 7 (4 males, 3 females) on 22 November at Saylorville; 4 females on 17 November at West Okoboji L. (+JJD); 1 female on 30 November at Iowa County P., Iowa Co. (+JSi); 1 female on 30 November at Diamond L., Poweshiek Co. (+JSi)

Lesser Scaup-1 male on 12 September at the Mid-American Energy ponds may have summered; 4,500 on 30 October at West Okoboji L.

Oldsquaw-1 female on 31 October at Lost Island L.; 1 immature male on 3 November at Spirit L.; 2 immature males shot on 24 November along the Des Moines R., Dallas Co. (specimens to ISU); 1 adult male and 1 female on 27 November at Rathbun Res.

Black Scoter-single females or immatures on 16,22 November at Saylorville were probably different birds (both were dark ducks with a white throat patch)

White-winged Scoter-1 female or immature on 3 November at Spirit L.; 1 immature female shot on 26 November at Runnells W.A. (Nick Chia fide SJD-specimen to ISU)

Bufflehead-102 on 11 November at Saylorville

Hooded Merganser-131 on 16 November at Saylorville

Common Merganser-7,000 on 27 November at Saylorville; 3,000 on 27 November at Rathbun Res.; 13,000 on 27 November at Red Rock Res.

Red-breasted Merganser-83 on 2 November at Spirit L.; 117 on 9 November, 257 on 16 November at Saylorville; I saw more Red-breasted Mergansers this fall than I can ever remember

Ruddy Duck-1 on 23 September, 793 on 24 October, 5 on 29 November at Saylorville

Bald Eagle-1 immature on 17 August at Runnells W.A. (+JSi); 62 (21 ad., 41 imm.) migrating over in 2 hours on 24 November along the Des Moines R., Dallas Co.

Northern Harrier-9 on 31 October at Barringer Sl.

Sharp-shinned Hawk-1 adult on 29 August at Swan; 1 immature on 30 August at Saylorville

- Cooper's Hawk-1 adult on 12 August at Waubonsie W.A.; 1 immature on 14 August at Hallett's Quarry; 1 immature on 17 August e of Swan (+JSi); 10 on 5 October at Grammar Grove (+MPr, BPr)
- Red-shouldered Hawk-1 immature on 21 August at the Polk City W.A.; 1 adult on 14 September at Lake Panorama; 1 adult on 5 October at Grammar Grove (+MPr, BPr); 1 adult on 26 November e of Runnells, Jasper Co.
- Broad-winged Hawk-35 on 17 September at Lake Darling S.P.
- Swainson's Hawk-1 adult on 2 October at Cedar Falls
- Golden Eagle-1 immature on 2 November at Barringer Sl.; 1 adult on 24 November in NE Dallas Co.
- Merlin-1 female or immature on 9 September in West Des Moines; 1 male on 17 September at Fairfield was trapped inside a building after flying in after a House Sparrow; 1 female or immature on 30 September near Timmons Grove, Marshall Co.; 1 male on 5 October at Grammar Grove (+MPr, BPr); 1 female or immature on 7 October at Saylorville; 1 on 27 October w of Madrid (+JSi); 1 female or immature on 2 November at Barringer Sl.; 1 female or immature on 17 November n of Storm Lake (+JJD-dark bird)
- Peregrine Falcon-1 immature on 29 August at Runnells W.A. (probably a young bird from Des Moines); 2 adults on 1 October at Cedar Falls; 1 adult on 1 October at Sweet M.; 2 adults on 9 October at Grammar Grove (+MPr, BPr)
- Gray Partridge-6 on 9 September in N Polk Co.
- Sora-2 on 6 October at Gordon's M.
- Common Moorhen-6 adults and 1 immature on 13 September at Blue L.
- American Coot-12,000 on 24 October at Saylorville; 5,000 on 30 October at Spirit L.
- Sandhill Crane-152 in four groups (1,3,52, and 96 birds) on 31 October at Barringer Sl.
- Black-bellied Plover-9 on 29 August at Runnells W.A.; 1 on 30 October at Christopherson Sl.
- American Golden-Plover-43 on 4 October at Harrier M.; 47 on 6 October e of Glidden; 1 on 2 November at Barringer Sl.
- Semipalmated Plover-1 on 6 October e of Glidden
- Piping Plover-1 immature on 12 August at Waubonsie W.A.; 1 adult on 21 August at Saylorville
- Killdeer-291 on 1 September at Saylorville (+JJD); 535 on 5 September at Maskunk M.
- American Avocet-1 on 22 August at Heron Bend; 14 on 27 October at the Polk City W.A. (+JSi)
- Greater Yellowlegs-1 on 1 November at Barringer Sl.
- Solitary Sandpiper-13 on 21 August at Saylorville
- Spotted Sandpiper-1 on 9 October at Little Wall L.; *1 on 27 November at Little River Rec. Area (photos)
- Hudsonian Godwit-*1 juvenile on 26 October at Harrier M. (+JJD, photo)
- Sanderling-very scarce this fall; 36 on 24 October at Saylorville was late for such a large group
- Western Sandpiper-1 molting adult on 13 August at Waubonsie W.A.; single molting adults on 21 August and 4 September and 1 juvenile on 5 September at Saylorville (most identified by bill shape, also by heavy V markings on flanks and rusty scapulars on adults)
- Least Sandpiper-432 on 21 August at Saylorville; 1 basic on 3 November at Spirit L.
- Baird's Sandpiper-2 on 6 November along the Des Moines R. in NE Dallas Co.
- Pectoral Sandpiper-634 on 17 August at Runnells W.A. (+JSi); 785 on 21 August at Saylorville; 6 on 6 November along the Des Moines R. in NE Dallas Co.

Dunlin-7 on 3 November at Spirit L.; 1 on 10 November at Saylorville
Stilt Sandpiper-162 on 17 August at Runnells W.A. (+JSi); 75 on 21 August at Saylorville; 53 on 13 September at Blue L.; 1 on 26 October at Harrier M. (+JJD)(injured leg-with Lesser Yellowlegs, noted slightly longer, drooped bill, duller leg color, white rump)
Buff-breasted Sandpiper-2 on 12 August at Waubonsie W.A.; 13 on 13 August, 17 on 21 August, 7 on 1 September (+JJD), 15 on 3 September (Scott Rolfes fide SJD) at Saylorville; 14 on 17 August (+JSi, RLC), 41 on 5 September at Runnells W.A.; 8 on 5 September at Maskunkya M.; 1 on 7 September at Restoration M., Floyd Co. (+JJD, JSi, RIC, FLM); 1 on 13 September e of Glidden, Carroll Co.
Long-billed Dowitcher-1 on 31 October at Barringer Sl. (in flight only, keek call note heard)
Common Snipe-40 on 31 October at Barringer Sl.
American Woodcock-1 on 12 October in EC Monroe Co.
Wilson's Phalarope-1 on 8 September at Sandpiper Hills WPA, Cerro Gordo Co. (+JJD); 1 on 13 September at Blue L.
Red-necked Phalarope-2 on 29 August at Heron Bend; 1 on 12 September at the Mid-American Energy ponds
Red Phalarope-*1 first-basic on 14 October at Saylorville (+m.ob.)
Pomarine Jaeger-*1 intermediate phase juvenile from 10-22 November, joined by a dark phase subadult from 11-16 November and a second intermediate phase juvenile on 22 November at Saylorville (+JJD, photos); *1 dark phase juvenile on 16 November, 2 juveniles (1 dark, 1 intermediate) on 27 November, 3 (1 intermediate juvenile, 1 dark juvenile, 1 possible dark subadult) on 30 November (+JSi) at Red Rock Res. (photo)
jaeger sp.-* 1 intermediate phase juvenile on 17 November at Spirit L. (+JJD)(probably a Pomarine based on size, but bird never flew and raised its wings only twice)
Laughing Gull-*1 juvenile on 17 August at Runnells W.A., Marion Co. (+JSi, RLC); 1 juvenile on 5 September at Red Rock Res. (photo-possibly same individual as previous bird)
Franklin's Gull-1 on 12 August at Waubonsie W.A.; 400 on 11 September at the Mid-American Energy Ponds; 2,000 on 25 September, 33,500 on 30 September at Saylorville; 3,500 on 3 October at Clear L.; 1 first-basic on 27 November, 1 adult-basic on 30 November (+JSi) at Red Rock Res.
Bonaparte's Gull-282 on 4 November at Big Creek L.; 5 on 25 November at Saylorville; very few were seen after early November, in contrast to most years when a few linger to the end of the month
Mew Gull-*1 adult-basic on 29 November at Saylorville
Ring-billed Gull-1,200 on 17 August at Runnells W.A. (+JSi); 13,000 on 25 November, 4,400 on 29 November at Saylorville; 40,000 on 27 November at Red Rock Res. (counted coming to roost at dusk)
Herring Gull-3,000 on 27 November at Red Rock Res.
Thayer's Gull-1 first-basic on 11,22,23 (+JJD),24 November (photos), 2 first-basic on 25 November, 1 fourth-basic on 25,27 November at Saylorville; 1 adult and 1 first-basic on 27 November, 1 first-basic on 30 November (+JSi) at Red Rock Res.
Lesser Black-backed Gull-*1 first-basic on 27 November at Red Rock Res.
Glaucous Gull-1 first-basic on 23 November (+JJD), 2 first-basic on 24 November at Saylorville; 1 first-basic on 30 November at Red Rock Res. (+JSi)
Black-legged Kittiwake-*1 first-basic on 30 November at Red Rock Res. (+JSi)

- Caspian Tern-32 on 19 September w of Boone (+JJD); 1 on 13 October at Saylorville
- Forster's Tern-31 on 13 August at Riverton W.A.; 2 on 27 October (+JSi), 1 first-basic on 4 November at Saylorville
- Least Tern-1 juvenile on 13 August at Riverton W.A.
- Black Tern-175 on 22 August at Heron Bend
- Snowy Owl-1 probable immature male on 30 November at the Hawkeye W.A. (+JSi)
- Short-eared Owl-1 on 31 October at Barringer Sl.
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird-1 through 8 October at Ames (Jeanne Edwards fide SJD)
- Olive-sided Flycatcher-1 on 16 September at Saylorville
- Eastern Wood-Pewee-1 on 1 October at Sweet M. (seen well, call note heard)
- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher-1 on 31 August at Ames (+JJD-in our backyard-identified by solid yellow underparts and throat); 1 on 5 September at Fleming Woods, Poweshiek Co.; 1 on 8 September at Beeds Lake S.P. (+JJD)
- Least Flycatcher-1 singing on 1 September at Saylorville (+JJD)
- empidonax sp.-1 on 25 September at Saylorville (not a Yellow-bellied)
- Horned Lark-2,550 on 21 November in Osceola Co.
- Barn Swallow-400 on 7 October at Saylorville
- Red-breasted Nuthatch-1 on 12 September at Lake Manawa
- Carolina Wren-1 on 22 November s of Polk City
- Winter Wren-3 on 12 October in EC Monroe Co.
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet-1 on 30 November at Iowa County P., Iowa Co. (+JSi)(seen well-noted small size, greenish coloration, and bold eyering)
- American Pipit-1 on 21 September at Lake Panorama; 2 on 7 November at Bays Branch
- Solitary Vireo-7 on 6 October at Dolliver S.P.
- Yellow-throated Vireo-1 singing on 22 September w of Luther
- Warbling Vireo-13 on 13 September at Lake Manawa; 1 on 25 September at Saylorville
- Philadelphia Vireo-2 on 19 September at Grammar Grove; 1 on 25 September at Saylorville
- Golden-winged Warbler-1 on 19 September at Grammar Grove
- Tennessee Warbler-8 on 8 September at McIntosh Woods S.P. (+JJD); 1 on 9 October at Marshalltown
- Nashville Warbler-16 on 15 September at the State Forest Nursery; 1 on 6 October at Dolliver S.P.
- Northern Parula-3 on 13 September at Yellow Smoke Park, Crawford Co.; 4 on 16 September at Saylorville; it was an excellent fall for this species in central Iowa
- Chestnut-sided Warbler-12 on 8 September at McIntosh Woods S.P. (+JJD)
- Magnolia Warbler-11 on 2 September at the State Forest Nursery
- Cape May Warbler-1 on 19 September at Wolf Creek Recreation Area, Grundy Co.
- Yellow-rumped Warbler-1 on 17 November n of Sioux Rapids, Buena Vista Co. (+JJD)
- Black-throated Green Warbler-1 male on 8 October e of Marshalltown
- Yellow-throated Warbler-1 immature on 5 September in NE Warren Co. (probably hatched nearby)
- Pine Warbler-1 male on 25 September at Saylorville (large warbler, bright yellow breast, large-billed, solid greenish back without streaking)
- Bay-breasted Warbler-8 on 16 September at Jefferson County Park
- Black-and-white Warbler-12 on 8 September at McIntosh Woods S.P. (+JJD)

- Northern Waterthrush-1 on 17 August at Runnells W.A. (+JSi)
 Mourning Warbler-1 male on 5 September at Lake Keomah S.P.; 1 male on 8 September at Myre Sl.
 Scarlet Tanager-1 on 19 September at Pine Lake S.P.; 1 on 21 September at Ames (+JJD-in our backyard)
 ✓ Dickcissel-*1 adult male in basic plumage on 28 November at Hallett's Quarry
 ✓ Spotted Towhee-1 male on 25 September, 1 female on 7 October at Saylorville
 ✓ Vesper Sparrow-1 on 30 October e of Spirit L.; 1 on 29 November below Saylorville dam (seen well-large sparrow, noted eyering and white outer tail feathers)
 ✓ Grasshopper Sparrow-2 on 6 October at Gordon's M.
 ✓ Henslow's Sparrow-1 singing on 22 August in NE Wayne Co.
 ✓ Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow-5 on 4 October, 1 on 26 October at Harrier M. (+JJD); 4 on 6 October at Gordon's M. (photos)
 ✓ Fox Sparrow-24 on 26 October at Saylorville
 ✓ Lincoln's Sparrow-1 on 25 September at Saylorville
 ✓ Lapland Longspur-1,500 on 28 October e of Union Slough NWR; 5,000 on 9 November at Bays Branch; 1,000 on 17 November n of Storm Lake (+JJD)
 ✓ Snow Bunting-2 on 1 November at Barringer Sl.; 32 on 16 November at Saylorville; 170 on 21 November in Osceola Co.; small numbers were widespread during November
 ✓ Bobolink-2 on 4 October at Harrier M. (+JJD)
 ✓ Yellow-headed Blackbird-1 female on 22 September w of Luther
 ✓ Great-tailed Grackle-1 on 14 August, 21 on 4 October at Harrier M. (+JJD); 1 on 13 September at the Mid-American Energy ponds; 10 on 13 September at Blue L.; 11 on 6 October s of Dunbar Sl.; 4 on 31 October, 9 on 1 November at Barringer Sl.
 ✓ Brown-headed Cowbird-a flock of 6,000 on 6 October w of Dunbar Sl., Carroll Co. contained no Shiny Cowbirds
 ✓ Baltimore Oriole-1 immature male on 30 November at a feeder in Iowa City (+JSi)
 ✓ Purple Finch-1 on 27 October w of Madrid (+JSi); 3 on 17 November n of Sioux Rapids, Buena Vista Co. (+JJD)
 ✓ Red Crossbill-9 on 26 October at Big Creek S.P.
 ✓ Pine Siskin-1 on 4 September at Saylorville; small numbers were present from mid-September to mid-October

*=documentation enclosed

Other Observers

Robert I. Cecil (RIC)
 Raymond L. Cummins (RLC)
 James J. Dinsmore (JJD)
 Francis L. Moore (FLM)
 Beth Proescholdt (BPr)
 Mark Proescholdt (MPr)
 Jim Sinclair (JSi)

A few general comments about the fall. September had several good cold fronts and passerine numbers were slightly better than average. October was very mild with only a couple of moderate cold fronts; consequently, there were few waterfowl around until the very end of the month. Most waterfowl moved through Iowa on the strong winds on 29-31 October. In contrast to the past two

falls, the scoter flight was very poor. Other species present in below normal numbers were Common Loon, American Bittern (I saw none), Bonaparte's Gull, and Northern Shrike (I saw none). It was a good fall for species like Horned Grebe, Red-breasted Merganser, Snow Bunting, and Pine Siskin. The number and diversity of gulls at Saylorville and Red Rock reservoirs was excellent at the end of the period.