

## FIELD REPORTS--SPRING 1998

Thomas H. Kent

### WEATHER

March temperatures averaged below normal and below those of the very warm February. A major cold spell and snow storm occurred from the 8th to the 14th with most of the state below zero on the 12th. Temperatures were then moderate until after the 25th when occasional 80 degree temperatures occurred. Heavy rains occurred on the 29th and 30th. The 107 degree temperature range in March was the largest ever.

In contrast to March, April was a very average month with little variation from normal temperatures and slightly above average rainfall.

Early and late May were average, but mid-May was characterized by strong south winds and warm temperatures.

### GENERAL TRENDS

Many waterfowl arrived and even moved through the state in February so that March and April numbers were below average at best. With the warm winter, warm spell in late March, and average April and early May weather, I expected that many migrants would arrive early. This was not the case. April birding was unspectacular and by the 9th of May, the day of the Spring Bird Count, I could not believe how few migrants had arrived. Look at the species accounts to see how late the first arrivals were. Birders from all over the state were wondering what happened to the warblers. No one reported a good warbler day. Shorebird numbers also appeared to be down, although pockets were present and habitat conditions were below average. On the positive side, American Bittern numbers were increased above last-year's good showing.

### UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

Accidental species reported were Neotropic Cormorant, Glossy Ibis, Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Greater Prairie-Chicken, Black-headed Gull, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Hummingbird species, Black-billed Magpie, and Sprague's Pipit. The hummingbird has been reviewed by the Records Committee—the evidence suggested Anna's but was not conclusive. The Prairie-Chicken data came from the Department of Natural Resources. The Records Committee plans to discuss the status of the introduced population in southern Iowa. The other records are pending review by the committee.

Casual species reported include White-faced Ibis (recently changed to Regular) and Black-necked Stilt.

Other reports of interest include a third nesting record of Bufflehead for the state and a spring record of a Black-legged Kittiwake.

### SPECIES DATA (\* = documented)

**Common Loon:** First: 27 Mar at Maffitt Res. (PHA/RIA). Last: 29 May with 2 at Little Wall L. (HZ) and 3 at L. Hendricks in Howard Co. (RGo). Other March arrivals were 3 at Black Hawk L. on the 28th (PE) and 1 on the 30th at L. Manawa (BKP/LJP). There were May sightings from 13 locations.

**Horned Grebe:** First: 3 on 27 Feb at Cherokee sewage ponds (DBi)[record earliest]. Last 2 on 23 May at Tomahawk M. (JJD). From 1 to 16 were found at 12 other locations from 25 March to 20 May.

**Red-necked Grebe:** All: 1 on 10 Apr at Amana L. (CE), 3 on 10 Apr at L. Cornelia (MPr), and 1 on 18 Apr at Little Wall L. (MPr).

**Eared Grebe:** First: 20 Mar at L. Manawa (BKP/LJP). Last: 24 May at Tomahawk M. (PE). From 1 to 6 were found at 12 other locations from 27 Mar to 16 May.

**Western Grebe:** All: 22 Apr at West Okoboji (ETH) and 31 May at Hendrickson M. (HZ, JJD, MPr).

**American White Pelican:** First: 15 on 29 Mar at Long Pond in Guthrie Co. (DT). High count: 1,000 south of Iowa City on 18 Apr (CE).

**Double-crested Cormorant:** First: 25 on 22 Mar in Sioux Co. (JV). High count: 214 at Forney L. on 26 Apr (BKP/LJP).

**Neotropic Cormorant:** A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

**American Bittern:** First: 18 Apr at Cardinal M. (DeC) and at Dunbar Sl. (MPr). From 1 to 5 were reported from 18 locations, which is far more than have been reported in recent years.

**Least Bittern:** First: 2 on 19 May at Camp Dodge in Polk Co. (Jane Schuster fide JJD). Other locations of single birds were Iowa L. in Hancock Co. and Gladfelter M. in Hancock Co. (Steve Fairbairn fide JJD), Riverton A. (PHA/RIA), and Harrier M. (WO).

**Great Blue Heron:** There were 21 nests along the Little Sioux R. in Woodbury Co. on 15 Apr (DBi) and 12 pair at the rookery at West Hottes L. on 26 May (DCH).

**Great Egret:** First: 26 Mar in Johnson Co. (JLF). High count: 30 on 30 Apr at Waubonsie W.A. (BKP/LJP).

**Snowy Egret:** All: 9 Apr at Cherokee (DBi), 3 May near Booneville (PHA/RIA), 12 May at Saylorville Res. (DT), and 20 May at Kettleon Hogsback A. (CE).

**Cattle Egret:** First: 9 Apr at Little Wall L. (BPr). From 1 to 7 were reported at 15 locations.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** First: 10 Apr at Union Slough N.W.R. (MPr). From 1 to 4 were reported at 10 locations.

**Glossy species:** 1 was reported from Thorpe P. in Winnebago Co. (\*GD), which, if accepted, will be the third record for Iowa.

**White-faced Ibis:** All: 2 on 9 May at Sandhill L. in Woodbury Co. (BFH).

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck:** 1 found on 9 Apr at Tomahawk M. in Sac Co. (\*RR) was relocated on 3 May and was seen at least through 19 May (\*PE, \*THK, \*JLF, \*ART, \*MPr, \*CE).

**Tundra Swan:** First: 80 on 9 Mar at Lansing in Allamakee Co. (FL). Other flocks included 7 on 14 Mar at Cone M. (CE), 20 on 20 Mar in Kossuth Co. (MCK), and 16 on 22 Mar at Muskrat Sl. (CE).

**Trumpeter Swan:** Reports were of 2 at Cone M. on 5 Mar (JF) and 9 at Kettleon Hogsback A. on 21 Mar (FL). The latter were at a fenced DNR breeding area. Others that were known to be present were not reported.

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** First (for March): 280 on 1 Mar at Dan Green Sl. (LAS). Last: 23 May at New L. (RR). Birds were seen at 6 locations in May.

**Snow Goose:** High count: 50,000 at Riverton A. on 25 Mar (BKP/LJP). This is a very low count compared to previous years when hundreds of thousands were typical. It has been said that most Snow Geese are now migrating though central Nebraska, so counts from Iowa may be of more interest now.

**Ross's Goose:** First: 2 on 21 Mar at Forney L. (BKP/LJP). Last: 3 on 4 May at Sanborn (RGr). High count: 10 on 28 Mar at Brown's L. (BFH).

**Wood Duck:** 180 (80 percent males) were loafing at Blue L. on 29 May (RR).

**Green-winged Teal:** High count: 147 on 28 Mar at Brown's L. (BFH).

**Northern Pintail:** High count: 1,000 at Smith's Sl. in Clay Co. on 1 Mar (LAS).

**Blue-winged Teal:** First: 2 on 21 Mar at Rathbun Res. (PHA/RIA).

**Cinnamon Teal:** All: 1 male on 10 Apr at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK), 1 male on 14 Apr at Waubonsie W.A. (BKP/LJP), and a pair on 2 May at Virgin L. in Palo Alto Co. (LAS).

**Gadwall:** High count: 400 on 28 Mar at Brown's L. (BFH).

**Canvasback:** High count: 354 on 7 Mar at Saylorville Res. (BE).

**Redhead:** High count: 232 on 14 Mar at Saylorville Res. (BE).

**Greater Scaup:** All (singles): 28 Mar at Pleasant Creek L. (CE), 29 Mar at Big Creek L. (DT), 10 Apr at Beed's L. (MPr), and 9 May at Trumbull L. (LAS).

**Oldsquaw:** All: 1 on 4 Apr at Union Slough N.W.R. (PHA/RIA).

**White-winged Scoter:** A flock of 85 males landed briefly at Sanborn sewage ponds in O'Brien Co. on 25 Apr (\*RGr).

**Bufflehead:** A female with 6 young on 31 May at Dan Green Sl. in Clay Co. constitutes the third Iowa nesting record for this species. The previous record was at the same location in 1992.

**Hooded Merganser:** High count: 75 on 7 Mar at Saylorville Res. (BE).

**Common Merganser:** High count: 300 on 24 Mar at L. Manawa (BKP/LJP).

in spring?  
still in Iowa  
in fall

LAS ?



**Red-breasted Merganser:** High count: 323 on 7 Apr at Saylorville Res. (BE).

**Ruddy Duck:** High count: 350 on 18 Apr at Mud L. in Clay Co. (LAS).

**Turkey Vulture:** First: 3 on 25 Mar at Waubonsie S.P. (BKP/LJP). A nest with 2 eggs was found near Promise City in Wayne Co. on 13 May (Duane Bedford fide JJD).

**Osprey:** First: 28 Mar at Crystal L. in Hancock Co. (MPr). Last: 13 May at Coralville Res. (THK).

**Mississippi Kite:** All: 1 was reported at Ledges S.P. on 19 and 24 May (CE, MPr).

**Bald Eagle:** High counts: 66 at Coralville Res. on 21 Mar (CE), 198 at Saylorville Res. on 21 Mar (BE), and 166 at L. Manawa on 22 Mar (BKP/LJP). A pair was at a nest near Rock Rapids in Lyon Co. in March and April but abandoned it (DCH).

**Cooper's Hawk:** A nest was found in Ames on 8 May (JJD). There were 2 active nests in Warren Co. (JSi).

**Northern Goshawk:** All: immatures were reported on 7 Mar at Fallow M. and on 29 Mar at Huston P., both in Palo Alto Co. (LAS). Same bird?

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** 8 reports were from Benton, Boone, Cerro Gordo, Kossuth, Lee, Louisa, Lucas, and Polk counties.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** First: 1 on 14 Apr in Plymouth (RR). High counts: 250 on 25 Apr at Algona (MCK) and 54 on 25 Apr at Larchwood in Lyon Co. (DCH). Both of these groups roosted in town for the night.

**Swainson's Hawk:** First: 2 returned to the Osceola Co. nest site on 13 Apr (DBi). From 1 to 3 were seen in Dickinson, Fremont, Hancock, Monona, and Plymouth counties.

**Red-tailed Hawk:** On 25 Mar birds were migrating in western Iowa with 57 at Waubonsie S.P. (BKP/LJP) and 25 in Lyon and Sioux counties (JV). A Harlan's Hawk was near Hawarden on 28 Mar (JV). Two nests were found in Pottawattamie Co. on 14 Mar (JJD).

**Rough-legged Hawk:** Last: 27 Apr in Plymouth Co. (RR).

**American Kestrel:** 16 were south of Sioux City in 5 Apr (JJ).

**Merlin:** All: 1 Mar at Sioux Center (JV) and at Dan Green Sl. (LAS), 7 Mar at Spencer (LAS), 25 Mar at Waubonsie S.P. (BKP/LJP), and 26 Apr at Saylorville Res. (DT) and at Moenckley Prairie (BE).

**Peregrine Falcon:** Migrants were noted at 6 locations from 26 Apr to 29 May. A pair at Des Moines <sup>hatched</sup> fledged 3 young in early May (JRC). A resident bird was in downtown Cedar Rapids on 12 May (JLF).

**Prairie Falcon:** All: 1 on 14 Mar at Snyder's Bend in Woodbury Co. (BFH-details).

**Gray Partridge:** Birds were reported from Cherokee, Clay, Dickinson, Monona, Palo Alto, Plymouth, Sac, Story, and Wright counties.

**Ruffed Grouse:** 3 were heard on 28 Mar at Stephens F. in Lucas Co. (JSi). This is an area where birds have been introduced.

**Greater Prairie-Chicken:** A Department of Natural Resources report indicated 43 males in Adair, Decatur, and Ringgold counties. A female appeared to be on a nest near Kellerton in Ringgold Co. on 3 May (DT).

**Northern Bobwhite:** Appanoose Co. populations were said to be the lowest in 14 years (TNJ) and survey numbers were down there (RLC). In Buchanan Co., 2 were seen on 4 Apr (MPr). Game birds are not uniformly reported by contributors to the Field Reports. The DNR does a much better job of tracking them.

**Yellow Rail:** All: 1 on 10 Apr at Santee Prairie, which is west of Spirit L. (Maury Muhm fide DCH).

**Virginia Rail:** All: 1 May at Rush L. in Osceola Co. (PHA/RIA), 2 and 5 May at Otter Creek M. (CE, JLF), 11 May at Errington M. in Polk Co. (DT), and 16 May at Ketelsen M. in Story Co. (HZ).

**Sora:** First: 22 Apr at Big M. (MPr).

**Common Moorhen:** All: 2 on 18 May at Forney L. (THK) and 1 there on 21 May (CE).

**American Coot:** High count: 3,000 on 28 Mar at Snyder's Bend (BFH). It should be noted that there were not many coot counters this year.

**Sandhill Crane:** First: 3 on 24 Mar at Spirit L. (ETh). From 1 to 2 cranes were noted at 10 locations.

**Black-bellied Plover:** First: 1 on 12 May at Harrier M. (DT). Last: 1 on 31 May in Story Co. (MPr). High count: 17 on 21 May in Pocahontas Co. (DBi).

**American Golden-Plover:** First: 4 on 24 Mar in Buena Vista Co. (PE). Last and high count: 700 in alternate plumage on 19 May on mud flats at Spring Run in Dickinson Co. (THK).

**Semipalmated Plover:** First: 2 on 26 Apr at Waubonsie W.A. (BKP/LJP). Last: 1 on 31 May at Maynard Reese W.A. in Kossuth Co. (MCK). High count: 50 on 18 May at Coralville Res. (CE).



**Piping Plover:** Resident birds were first noted at Port Neal in Woodbury Co. on 18 Apr (BFH) and at the MidAmerican Energy plant in Pottawattamie Co. on 21 May (CE). This discrepancy in dates is strange, because many birders visit the latter location looking for this species.

**Killdeer:** Many arrived in February this year, but 31 were migrating over Ames in a snow storm on 24 Mar (JJD), and 46 were at Sandhill L. in Woodbury Co. on 28 Mar.

**Black-necked Stilt:** All: 1 on 28 Apr at Mark Twain N.W.R. in Louisa Co. (\*TJu)[2nd earliest].

**American Avocet:** First and high counts: 26 Apr with 2 at Kettleson Hogsback A. in Dickinson Co. (LAS, JJ), 62 in Woodbury Co. (BFH), and 99 at three location in Fremont Co. (BKP/LJP). Last: 31 May in Kossuth Co. (MCK).

**Greater Yellowlegs:** First: 26 Mar at Coralville Res. (JLF). Last: 17 May in Appanoose Co. (RLC).

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** First: 26 Mar at Coralville Res. (JLF). Last: 2 on 31 May in Appanoose Co. (TNJ).

**Solitary Sandpiper:** First: 18 Apr in Appanoose Co. (RLC).

**Willet:** First: 19 Apr at Trumbull L. (LAS). Last: 12 May at Long Pond in Guthrie Co. (DT). High counts: on 30 Apr, 16 at Zirbel Sl. (RGo) and 17 at Port Neal (PHA/RIA).

**Spotted Sandpiper:** First: 28 Apr at Hubbard (MPr).

**Upland Sandpiper:** First: 26 Apr in Johnson Co. (CE).

**Hudsonian Godwit:** First: 26 Apr at Riverton A. (BKP/LJP). Last: 31 May near Hendrickson M. (HZ).

High count: 16 on 30 Apr at Riverton A. (BKP/LJP). Other reports were from Coralville Res., with 12 on 13 May (JLF) and 7 on 18 May (CE), from Jemmerson Sl. with 9 on 15 May, and from Hallett's Quarry with 8 on 16 May (HZ). This species is usually found in much greater numbers, especially in western Iowa in mid-May where one observer saw 450 in one day last year and none this year (THK).

**Marbled Godwit:** All: 2 on 18 May at Coralville Res. (CE) and 1 on 23 May at Dunbar Sl. (JJD-details).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** All: 25 May at Sweet M. (MPr) and 29 May at Rathbun Res. (TNJ).

**Sanderling:** All: 8 on 18 May at Coralville Res. (CE).

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** First: 2 on 26 Apr at Waubonsie W.A. (BKP/LJP). High count: 140 on 31 May at Sedan A. in Appanoose Co. (TNJ).

**Least Sandpiper:** Last: 12 on 31 at Maynard Reese W.A. in Kossuth Co. (MCK).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** First: 4 on 18 May at Coralville Res. (CE). High count: 110 on 31 May at Maynard Reese W.A. (MCK).

**Baird's Sandpiper:** First: 2 on 26 Mar at Coralville Res. (JLF). Last: 1 on 18 May at Coralville Res. (CE).

High count: 36 on 26 Apr at Waubonsie W.A. (BKP/LJP).

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** First: 4 Apr in Sac Co. (PE).

**Dunlin:** First: 2 May at Big M. (MPr). High count: 50 on 18 May at Coralville Res. (CE).

**Stilt Sandpiper:** First: 2 on 13 May at Green Island W.A. (CE).

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** First: 8 on 15 May in Sac Co. (PE). Last: 4 on 31 May in Appanoose Co. (TNJ). High count: 80 on 18 May at Coralville Res. (CE).

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** First: 1 on 7 Apr at Colo Ponds (MPr). Last: 3 on 17 May at Colo Ponds (HZ, JJD, PHA/RIA)[record latest]. High count: 50 on 30 Apr at Riverton A. (BKP/LJP). The record late birds were heard to call "keek", but no description was provided.

**Common Snipe:** First: 2 on 28 Mar in Buena Vista Co. (PE). High count: 45 on 5 Apr in Appanoose Co. (RLC).

**American Woodcock:** First: 2 Mar at St. Anthony in Marshall Co. (JJD).

**Wilson's Phalarope:** First: 27 in Fremont Co. (BKP/LJP). Last: 31 May at Maynard Reese W.A. (MCK). High count: 23 at Riverton A. on 30 Apr (BKP/LJP) and at Blue Wing M. in Palo Alto Co. on 16 May (LAS).

**Red-necked Phalarope:** All: 23 May in Sac Co. (JJD).

**Franklin's Gull:** First: 1 in alternate plumage on 1 Mar at Big Creek L. (PHA/RIA) was quite early, but winter and early spring records of this species are on the increase. High count: 100 on 30 Apr at Forney L. (BKP/LJP).

**Bonaparte's Gull:** First: 3 on 26 Mar at Coralville Res. (JLF). Last: 6 on 26 Apr at Colo Ponds (HZ).

**Black-headed Gull:** An adult was at Kettleson Hogsback A. on 17 May (ETH-details).

**Ring-billed Gull:** High count: 5,000 on 24 Mar at L. Manawa (BKP/LJP). Certainly more went unreported at the large reservoirs in Iowa.

**Herring Gull:** 1 was still present in Appanoose Co. on 31 May (RLC).



**Thayer's Gull:** All: A first-year bird was found at Lost Island L. in Palo Alto Co. on 18 Apr and possibly the same bird was at Spring Run in Dickinson Co. on 2 May (LAS-details)[record latest by over a month].

**Glaucous Gull:** All: 1 imm. on 28 Mar at Marble L. in Dickinson Co. (ETh-details).

**Black-legged Kittiwake:** All: A first-year bird was at Rathbun Res. on 26 Apr (\*RLC, \*TNJ), which, if accepted, will be the first spring record for Iowa and one of few from the Midwest.

**Caspian Tern:** First: 3 on 3 May at Saylorville Res. (PHA/RIA). Last: 1 on 30 May at Trumbull L. (LAS). High count: 35 on 24 May at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

**Common Tern:** All: 1 on 9 May at Trumbull L. (LAS), 1 on 19 May at Jemerson Sl. (THK), 1 on 23 May at Saylorville Res. (BE), 2 on 24 May at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK), and 3 on 31 May at Port Neal (BFH).

**Forster's Tern:** First: 6 on 26 Apr at Kettleon Hogsback A. (JJ). High count: 30 at Cardinal M. on 6 May (DeC).

**Least Tern:** All: 1 on 18 and 21 and 2 on 30 May at MidAmerican Energy plant in Pottawattamie Co., 1 on 23 May at Port Neal in Woodbury Co. (RR), and 1 at Rathbun Res. on 30, 31 May (TNJ, RLC).

**Black Tern:** First: 8 May at Hallett's Quarry (JJD). High count: 613 on 16 May at Saylorville Res. (BE).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove:** From 1 to 2 continued to be present at Grinnell in March, April, and May (m.ob.).

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** First: 18 May at Coralville Res. (CE).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** First: 10 May in Lee Co. (CE). Several observers noted that cuckoos were common, especially yellow-billed.

**Barn Owl:** 1 was at the usual location east of Bedford in Taylor Co. on 25 May (PHA/RIA).

**Long-eared Owl:** Last: 1 on 18 Apr s. of Mapleton in Monona Co. Others include 1 on 10 Mar at Cone M. (THK), 25 on 10 Mar at Rathbun Res. with 8 remaining on 28 Mar (TNJ), 1 at Spirit Lake on 31 Mar (ETh), and 4 on 3 Apr at Oak Grove P. in Sioux Co. (JV).

**Short-eared Owl:** All: 1 on 29 Mar at Dunbar Sl. (DT) and 1 on 14 May at Walnut Creek N.W.R. (Kathy Andersen, Liessa Thomas fide JJD).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** All: 1 on 4 Mar at Big M. (MPr), 3 on 22 Mar and 1 on 25 Mar at Moorehead P. (PE), and 1 on 29 Mar at Huston P. in Palo Alto Co. (LAS).

**Common Nighthawk:** First: 8 May in Appanoose Co. (RLC).

**Chuck-will's-widow:** Birds were present at the usual location in Fremont Co. on 17 and 21 May (THK, CE). A bird heard at Cedar Rapids in Linn Co. on 22 May (Neil Bernstein fide JJD) is much more unusual.

**Whip-poor-will:** First: 1 on 25 Apr at Croton Unit in Lee Co. was flushed from the ground (THK).

**Chimney Swift:** First: 21 Apr at L. Manawa (BKP/LJP).

**Hummingbird species:** A hummingbird was found in a greenhouse on 31 Mar at Le Claire in Scott Co. by John A. Schmitz. The record was accepted as Hummingbird sp. by the Records Committee. The bird was released. The brief notes suggest that the bird may have been an Anna's Hummingbird.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** First: 17 Apr at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (DCP)[record earliest by 1 week].

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Birds were at nest holes in Spencer on 9 May (LAS) and Mason City on 10 May (RGo).

**Pileated Woodpecker:** A nest was found at Ledges S.P. on 26 Apr and young were being fed there on 25 May (JJD). There were also reports from Appanoose, Lucas, Van Buren, and Kossuth counties.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** First: 13 May at Grammer Grove W.A. (BPr). Last: 26 May in Emmet Co. (DHe).

**Eastern Wood-Pewee:** First: 2 on 11 May at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (CE).

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** All: 20 May at A. A. Call S.P. (MPr), 25 May at Hickory Hill P. (CE), 25 May at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPr), and 27 May at Sioux Center (JV).

**Acadian Flycatcher:** First: 10 May at Croton Unit (CE). Others were at Yellow River F. (CE), Geode S. P. (PHA/RIA), and north of Stone City in Jones Co. (CE).

**Alder Flycatcher:** First and last: 18 and 25 May at Grammer Grove W.A. (BPr, MPr).

**Willow Flycatcher:** All: 11 May at Red Feather Prairie in Polk Co. (DT), 24 May in Appanoose Co. (RLC), and 25 May at Hickory Hill P. (CE).

**Least Flycatcher:** First: 5 May at Grammer Grove W.A. (BPr).

**Eastern Phoebe:** First: 25 Mar at Riverton A. (BKP/LJP).

**Great Crested Flycatcher:** First: 6 May at Coralville Res. (CE).

**Western Kingbird:** First: 9 May at State Capitol in Des Moines where birds have been present for several years (PHA/RIA). The only other report away from the western edge of the state was at Christopherson Sl. in Dickinson Co. on 17 May (LAS).

**Eastern Kingbird:** First: 27 Apr at Otter Creek M. (MPr).

**Purple Martin:** First: 2 on 11 Apr at Eldon in Wapello Co. (MPr).

**Tree Swallow:** First: 25 Mar, with 5 at L. Sugema in Van Buren Co. (MPr) and 6 at Riverton A. (BKP/LJP).

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** First: 2 on 21 Apr at L. Manawa (BKP/LJP).

**Black-billed Magpie:** All: 3 were in northwestern Plymouth Co. on 24 Jan (\*BLS), and 2 were present on 30 Apr at last year's nesting site in Plymouth Co. (PHA/RIA-details).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Last: 11 May at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPr). Reports at 11 locations of 1 to 3 birds at scattered dates from mid-March to mid-May are less than would be expected after last fall's invasion.

**Brown Creeper:** 1 at Sioux Center on 2 Mar (JV) may have been an early migrant.

**Carolina Wren:** The only bird from the northern half of the state was at Cherokee on 28 Mar (DBi).

**Bewick's Wren:** All: 1 on 10 Apr at Fairfield (DCP).

**House Wren:** First: 17 Apr at Fairfield (DCP).

**Winter Wren:** 1 was banded at Cherokee on 28 Mar (DBi). Other reports were from April, except for 2 on 28 Mar at Stephens F. in Lucas Co. (JSi).

**Sedge Wren:** First: 9 May at Big M. (MPr).

**Marsh Wren:** First: 30 Apr at Forney L. (BKP/LJP).

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** First: 26 Mar at Mason City (JLW)[ties 3rd earliest]. Last: 17 May in Story Co. (MPr).

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** First: on 11 Apr at Croton Unit and at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (PHA/RIA).

**Veery:** First: 10 May at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPr).

**Gray-cheeked Thrush:** First: 10 May at A. A. Call S.P. (MCK).

**Swainson's Thrush:** First: 6 May Coralville Res. (CE).

**Hermit Thrush:** First: 4 Apr in Sioux (JV), Johnson (CE), and Buchanan (MPr) counties.

**Wood Thrush:** First: 6 May in Polk Co. (JRC, PHA/RIA).

**American Robin:** High count: 500 at Coralville Res. on 25 Mar (CE).

**Gray Catbird:** First: 5 May at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (DCP).

**Northern Mockingbird:** Northerly birds of note were at Hallet's Quarry in Story Co. on 2 May (WO), Hardin Co. on 8 May (MPr), O'Brien Co. on 8 May (RGr), and Fayette Co. on 31 May (FLM). May is the typical month for birds to occur north of the usual range, but the number reported this year is slightly more than usual.

**Brown Thrasher:** First: 1 Apr at Mason City (JLW).

**American Pipit:** First: 13 on 29 Mar at Big Creek L. (DT). Last: 18 on 11 May at Colo Ponds (HZ).

**Sprague's Pipit:** A report is referred to the Records Committee.

**Northern Shrike:** All: singles on 7 Mar, at Saylorville Res. (DT) and in Clay Co. (LAS).

**White-eyed Vireo:** All: 10 May at Croton Unit in Lee Co. (CE).

**Bell's Vireo:** First: 10 May at Saylorville Res. (JRC). Other reports were from Appanoose, Plymouth, Polk, Hamilton, and Winneshiek counties.

**Solitary (Blue-headed) Vireo:** First: 5 May at West Des Moines (PHA/RIA) and Grammer Grove W.A. (BPr).

**Philadelphia Vireo:** First: 10 May Saylorville Res. (JRC). Last: 25 May at Hickory Hill P. (CE) and in Warren Co. (JSi).

**Red-eyed Vireo:** First: 9 May at L. Macbride (CE).

**Blue-winged Warbler:** First: 6 on 2 May at Croton Unit (RLC, TNJ).

**Golden-winged Warbler:** First: 6 May at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPr). Last: 25 May at Amana Woods (CE).

**Tennessee Warbler:** First: 2 May at West Des Moines (PHA/RIA).

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** First: 1 on 12 Apr at Voas N.A. in Dallas Co. (MJ)[record earliest]. Another was at Mather's F. in Floyd Co. on 17 Apr (JLW).

**Nashville Warbler:** First: 26 Apr at Cone M. (CE).

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**Northern Parula:** First: 12 Apr at Voas N.A. in Dallas Co. (MJ)[2nd earliest].  
**Yellow Warbler:** First: 6 May at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPr).  
**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** First: 11 May at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (CE).  
**Magnolia Warbler:** First: 10 May at Liscomb (MPr).  
**Cape May Warbler:** First: 2 on 10 May at Spencer (LAS). From 1 to 3 were reported at 5 other locations from 11 to 13 May.  
**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** All: 12 May at Mason City (RGo).  
**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** First: 4 Apr at Line Creek N.C. (MPr).  
**Black-throated Green Warbler:** First: 5 May at Grammer Grove W.A. (BPr).  
**Blackburnian Warbler:** First: 10 May at Martin's Access in Cherokee Co. (PE).  
**Yellow-throated Warbler:** First: 11 Apr at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (MPr, PHA/RIA)[ties 3rd earliest]. Other locations were at Red Bird Farm in Johnson Co. (JLF), Walnut Woods in Polk Co. (JRC, PHA/RIA), and Ledges S. P. (m.ob.). Nest building was observed at Walnut Woods on 9 May (PHA/RIA).  
**Prairie Warbler:** Birds returned to last year's locations at L. Macbride on 9 May (CE) and near Mud Creek P. in Henry Co. on 19 May (\*PHA/RIA).  
**Palm Warbler:** First: 30 Apr at Diamond L. (MPr). Last: 25 May at Moorehead P. (PE-details)[3rd latest].  
**Bay-breasted Warbler:** First: 15 May at Decorah (DeC).  
**Blackpoll Warbler:** First: 25 Apr at Moorehead P. (PE-details)[record earliest].  
**Cerulean Warbler:** First: 25 Apr at Croton Unit (THK). From 1 to 4 birds were reported from 10 locations. The most unusual was at Wanata S. P. in Clay Co. on 31 May (LAS).  
**Black-and-white Warbler:** First: 25 Apr at Moorehead P. (PE). [or 12 Apr at Voas N.A. in Dallas Co. (MJ)]  
**American Redstart:** First: 7 May at Otter Creek M. (MPr).  
**Prothonotary Warbler:** First: 9 May at Dudgeon L. (MPr). In Dickinson Co. birds were found at West Okoboji on 16 May (JJ) and at Kettleston Hogsback A. on 17, 19, and 20 May (ETh, THK, CE).  
**Worm-eating Warbler:** All: 2 at Croton Unit on 10 May (CE) and 1 at Wildcat Den S.P. on 12 May (CE).  
**Ovenbird:** First: 3 May in Cedar Co. (CE).  
**Northern Waterthrush:** First: 2 May in Iowa Co. (CE).  
**Louisiana Waterthrush:** First: 5 Apr in Appanoose Co. (RLC). Others were at typical locations: Croton Unit, Lacey-Keosauqua S.P., Wildcat Den S.P., Amana Woods, near Stone City, Ledges S.P., Woodland Mounds in Warren Co., Ringgold W.A., Waubonsie S.P. and near Turin in Monona Co.  
**Kentucky Warbler:** First: 10 May at Croton Unit (CE). Others were at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P., Yellow River F., near Stone City, Des Moines, and Waubonsie S.P.  
**Connecticut Warbler:** All: 15 and 30 May at George Wyth S.P. (FLM), 21 May at A. A. Call S.P. (MCK), 24 May at Hickory Hill P. (JLF), and 24 May at Ledges S.P. (MPr).  
**Mourning Warbler:** First: 11 May at Mason City (RGo). Last: 27 May at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPr). There were reports from 6 other locations.  
**Common Yellowthroat:** First: 2 May at Otter Creek M. (CE).  
**Hooded Warbler:** All: 21 May at Kettleston Hogsback A. in Dickinson Co., 25 May at Des Moines (BE), and at L. Ahquabi in Warren Co. (JSi, 2 territorial males).  
**Wilson's Warbler:** First: 4 May at Moorehead P. (PE). Last: 31 May at Liscomb (MPr)[ties latest x 3]. Another was at Trumbull L. on 30 May (LAS).  
**Canada Warbler:** First: 23 May at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPr). High count: 5 on 25 May at Moorehead P. (PE).  
**Yellow-breasted Chat:** All: 11 May at Saylorville Res. (DT), 14 May in Warren Co. (JSi), and 19 May at Ledges S.P. (CE).  
**Summer Tanager:** The wintering Iowa City bird remained until 5 Mar (Mary Noble fide THK). Others were at usual locations: 2 on 3 May (DCP) and 4 on 10 May at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (CE); 3 on 21 May at Waubonsie S.P. (CE); and 1 on 25 May in Warren Co. (JSi).  
**Scarlet Tanager:** First: 6 May at Brown's Woods.  
**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** First: 2 on 6 May at Coralville Res. (CE).  
**Blue Grosbeak:** All: near Forney L. on 18 May (THK), near Melvin in Osceola Co. on 25 May (DCH), a female singing at Secret L. in Fremont Co. on 26 May (PHA/RIA), and in Monona Co. near Onawa on 30 May (MJ) and near Turin on 31 May (JRC).

**Evening Grosbeak:** All: 1 on 19 Apr at Fairfield (DCP).

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** 2 were at Allen Green Refuge in Des Moines Co. on 10 Apr (PHA/RIA), which is in the Mississippi flood plain where this species is usually found.

#### COMMENT

The data comprised 40 reports and 19 documentations (of 11 species). I made 1,254 entries into a computerized database, which is 16% less than last year. Some of the decrease in the amount of data can be accounted for by the absence of one active observer (Steve Dinsmore). I often wonder how well the data represents the birds present in the state. Almost every contributor provides sightings that add to the depth of the report. If the number of contributions were doubled, this would undoubtedly affect the early and late dates and add several species to the report.

In spite of reservations about the consistency of sampling of Iowa birds in a season, the spring of 1998 was unusual. Perhaps the national data, as published in *Field Notes* by the American Birding Association, will give clues as to why the passerine migration was so late and thin this year. Can our observations be related to El Nino or to the fires in Mexico?

#### CONTRIBUTORS

\* = documentation only

Pam H. Allen (PHA), West Des Moines; Reid I. Allen (RIA), West Des Moines; Dick Bierman (DBi), Cherokee; Dennis Carter (DeC), Decorah; Jane R. Clark (JRC), Clive; Raymond L. Cummins (RLC), Centerville; James J. Dinsmore (JJD), Ames; \*Gian Dodici (GD), Ames; Chris Edwards (CE), North Liberty; Bery Engebretsen (BE), Des Moines; Peter Erzen (PE), Ida Grove; Carolyn J. Fischer (CJF), Mason City; James L. Fuller (JLF), Iowa City; Rita Goranson (RGo), Mason City; Robert Gruenewald (RGr), Sanborn; Douglas C. Harr (DCH), Larchwood; Dennis Henrickson (DHe), Estherville; Bill F. Huser (BFH), South Sioux City, NE; Maridel Jackson (MJ), Ankeny; Thomas N. Johnson (TNJ), Mystic; Jack Jones (JJ), Sioux City; \*Tim Julison (TJu), Wapello; Matthew C. Kenne (MCK), Algona; Thomas H. Kent (THK), Iowa City; Fred Leshner (FL), La Crosse, WI; Francis L. Moore (FLM), Waterloo; Wolfgang Oesterreich (WO), Ames; Babs K. Padelford (BKP), Bellevue, NE; Loren J. Padelford (LJP), Bellevue, NE; Marietta A. Petersen (MAP), Walnut; Diane C. Porter (DCP), Fairfield; Beth Proescholdt (BPr), Liscomb; Mark Proescholdt (MPr), Liscomb; Russell Reisz (RR), Missouri Valley; \*John A. Schmitz (JAS), Le Claire; Lee A. Schoenewe (LAS), Spencer; Jim Sinclair (JSi), Indianola; \*Brian L. Smith, (BLS), Rockwell City; Ed Thelen (ETh), Spirit Lake; Dennis Thompson (DT), Johnston; John Van Dyk (JV), Sioux Center; Connie Van Ervelde (CV), Grinnell; Robert Van Ervelde (RV), Grinnell; Jan L. Walter (JLW), Mason City; and Hank Zaletel (HZ), Nevada.

211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 51126

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