

Silcock

RR2, Malvern, Iowa  
51551

Vernon,

Please note my change of address (we moved 2 miles up the road).

The mild winter of course was notable, probably leading to the outstanding event this winter here: the incredible numbers of Snow/Blue Geese. By my counts (estimating the area in the fields covered by geese and figuring the area each goose occupied) they peaked at about 400,000 in the northern part of Fremont Co., not including Riverton, which usually has as many or more, on March 14. There were also many Canadas And White-fronts. Puddle ducks are present in very good numbers also.

There was a report of Redpolls (3) on the Shenandoah CBC but I could not find any this winter. Unusual records were mostly southern winterers being north rather than vice-versa. I found a Mockingbird Jan 20 and on the same day a Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler. Also a yellow-bellied Sapsucker Jan 20, a species apparently not present last winter. Red-headed Woodpeckers also wintered in good numbers, whereas ~~last~~ they were very scarce last winter.

Some comments on Blue List birds;

- Canvasback: Regular here in spring, but not as many so far this year as last (10 on Mar 14 vs. 150 Apr 6, 1975).
- Marsh Hawk: Hard to find in winter, but several seen so far this spring (not seen between Nov 18 and Mar 14).
- Barn Owl: I have checked many old buildings and barns around here and so far have found no sign of their presence.
- Hairy Woodpecker: Hard to find in this area; much less common than the Downy.
- Loggerhead Shrike: Recorded through the winter, and also breeds here. Not hard to find.

We are presently expanding our hog operation and I have been pressed for birding time, but plan to get out more this spring - "birding season" in Fremont Do!

Regards, Ross Silcock.