

Joe
Hobbs

August 1, 1926

Dear Vern:

Here is a brief report from the Iowa City region, with emphasis on Blue List species.

Black crowned Night Heron: } none seen, not known to
Am. Bittern: } breed in the area in recent years

Accipiter: none seen - Sharp-shinned has recently occurred sporadically in summer.

Red-shouldered Hawk: none - rare migrant in the last decade

Marsh Hawk: none - moderately common migrant of late

Upland Sandpiper: a pair first seen by Mike Newlon on a breeding bird census, then by others, myself included (Johnson Muskratine Co. line, SE of I.C.).

No June records in the last 3 years.

Sold Sandpiper: early migrant in summer plumage, Coralville Reservoir, July 11.

Am. Avocet: early sighting of casual migrant on Reservoir, July 29.

Least Tern: in breeding plumage, single, seen July 10. I have no indication of a previous summer sighting in this area, and of only 2 in Spring (1959, 62). Nearest (exotic) breeding areas I know of are 250 miles to the West (De Soto Bend) or South (St. Louis).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: I have seen fewer than in the past 5 years. This is subjective.

Com. Nighthawk: again subjective, but my impression is of a rather striking drop in numbers.

Belted Kingfisher: worrisome. Summer sightings are definitely declining.

Red-headed Woodpecker: plentiful, but no imm. seen yet, which appears unusual.

Hairy Woodpecker: habitat not listed.

Cliff Swallow: breeds in usual places, abundant in early fall migration. No problem evident.

Loggerhead Shrike: since there have been no summer sightings since 1971, I think, 3 independent observations in locations miles apart in June (Tom Slives, Mike Newlon) and on July 8 (myself) are cheery news — but no nesting was observed.

Bell's Vireo: at least 4-5 singing males stayed into the first week of June, heard and seen by many. Not heard after that.

Yellow Warbler: no evidence of decline.

Yellow-breasted Chat: an exotic, sparse breeder in the area. Several heard and seen, up to June 12, but further, sluggish in response to tape, not territorially behaving.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: colony just SE of I.C. started last year was deprived of its habitat when small slough was drained and planted in corn and soybeans. Colony in Cone Marsh, however, flourishing in its second year, with sightings starting mid-May continuing into late July.

Blue Grosbeak: ♂ seen June 5 is to my knowledge, the first seen in the I.C. area, and only one of only a handful for E Iowa. This is uncommon but regular in the SW corner of the state, and occurs occasionally as far E as Des Moines-Pleasantville, but is casual this far E.

Grasshopper Sparrow: habitat is shrinking.

Heuplow's Sparrow: not found in the field where singing ♂♂ were observed 1974-75, nor elsewhere.

Sincerely
Mike