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Spring 1999 Report

Note: Once again an incomplete report. In March I was one week in St. Louis, in April a week and a half in B.C., and most of the month of May in Australia. I did receive some of the reports from local observers.

Weather for the Period:

March:

March began like the proverbial lamb: a beautiful 62 degrees on March 1. A cooldown began shortly thereafter, leaving the first half of the month slightly below average in temperatures. On March 8 we received a 6" snowfall. The rest of the month quite dry, with mostly normal temperatures. Warmest days: 75 on March 30, 77 on March 31.

April and May: Not enough information for an accurate report.

Observations (following your list in Summer 1998 Iowa Bird Life):

- Greater White-fronted Goose: The only ones I saw were three at Rush Lake, Osceola Co., on March 27.
- Snow Goose: Many flocks were coming over Sioux Center on March 1.
- ✓ - Ross's Goose: Six individuals were easily picked out from a flock of 120 Snow Geese in a field just west of Waupethon (Dickinson Co.) on March 27.
- Canada Goose: Large numbers were migrating in the first week of March.
- Blue-winged Teal: The first ones were at Hawarden on March 31.
- Northern Shoveler: They had arrived by March 27.
- Northern Pintail: Several were at Rock Valley on March 3.

- Green-winged Teal: About 80 of them were in a large farm pond along Highway 9 (Osceola Co.) on March 27; about 60 at Hawarden on March 31.
- Bald Eagle: Splendid migration! A group of 8 were just south of Rock Valley on March 3, and on that same day another flock of 6 were observed flying over Dordt College in Sioux Center.
- ✓ - Sandhill Crane: Two flying over Sioux Center were reported in mid-April. No specific details available. The description (extended necks and legs) appears to confirm the sighting.
- ✓ - Red-necked Phalarope: I found one was just west of Doon (Lyon Co.) on May 28.
- Mourning Dove: Returned on March 27.
- Chimney Swift: Again very late this year, with apparently none observed before May.
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird: First one reported on May 11. One still in my yard on May 30.
- Belted Kingfisher: The first one back was at Rock Valley on March 3.
- ✓ - Olive-sided Flycatcher: One was in my yard on May 29.
- ✓ - Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: One was in my yard on May 29.
- Purple Martin: Looks like a healthy flock at Dordt College this year.
- Northern Rough-winged Swallow: The first were at Rock Valley on April 22.
- ✓ - Red-breasted Nuthatch: One was on the Dordt College campus in Sioux Center on March 26.
- Sedge Wren: At the end of May they were not at their traditional location near Oak Grove Park. They were singing, however, in the grassy fields southeast of Doon (Lyon Co.) on May 28.

- Eastern Bluebird: The first migrant was observed at Oak Grove Park in western Sioux County on March 6.
- ✓ - Gray-cheeked Thrush: One was still in western Sioux County on May 28.
- ✓ - Swainson's Thrush: Last one observed was in my yard on May 26.
- ✓ - Hermit Thrush: First one observed in Sioux Center was on April 6.
- Wood Thrush: Many were singing in western Sioux County on May 28.
- Yellow-rumped Warbler: About a dozen were in a flock at Rock Valley on April 21.
- Warblers: Migration was late and slow. No unusual observations reported to me. Last date for some warblers:
 - ✓ - Tennessee Warbler: May 28
 - ✓ - Nashville Warbler: May 25
 - ✓ - Chestnut-sided Warbler: May 26
 - ✓ - Magnolia Warbler: May 26
 - ✓ - Mourning Warbler: May 30
- Chipping Sparrow: First one arrived in Sioux Center on April 21.
- ✓ - Savannah Sparrow: The first migrants were in Osceola County on March 27.
- White-throated Sparrow: Arrived late. Good migration in last week of April.
- ✓ - Dark-eyed Junco: Several individuals of the "Oregon" race were present in early March. Last ones ("slate-colored") observed in my yard on April 22.
- ✓ - Blue Grosbeak: I saw four of them within a space of five miles just west of Sioux Center on May 28.

- Dickcissel: On May 28 I thought their numbers were down considerably as compared with previous years at this time.
- Bobolink: This species, on the other hand, was plentiful by the end of May. They frequented hedgerows as well as the usual larger alfalfa and grassy fields.
- Red-winged Blackbird: First one observed at Rock Valley on March 3.
- ✓ - Pine Siskin: Remained quite plentiful in Sioux Center during March. Last ones reported on April 16.

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