

Mike Newton

Fall migration report 1976

loons, grebes

6-7 common loons and up to 25 horned grebes were on the CoR 10/26-11/7

cormorant

1 double-crested cormorant 10/3 CoR

herons

19 great egrets 9/25 CoR

ducks

very few this fall- only sizeable concentrations were a mixed flock of divers on the CoR and a large flock of teal-- probably due to very low water levels ^{10/26-11/7}

goose, C. 50 9/25 CoR

Blue 1 white phase 9/25n CoR

bufflehead 3 10/7 CoR

goldeneye 6 11/14 CoR

teal, b-w. 400 8/27-28 CoR

hawks

sharpshins and breadwings were more abundant than usual, redtails less abundant. bald eagles did not visit the area this fall, possibly because of the low level of the reservoir

turkey vulture 1 9/12 CoR; 2 10/15 Kent Park

sharp-shinned hawk 1 9/5, 2 9/11, 1 9/16, 2 9/18, 2 9/19 1 9/23 (all in the IC-CoR area) *Note absence of Cooper's.*

redtail 15 records 8/1 -12/1. max 4 10/10 CoR

breadwinged hawk 192 9/18 Iowa City, 15 9/23 IC

red-shouldered hawk 1 imm 9/23 IC

rough-legged hawk 1 10/3 CoR (my only record this fall)

marsh hawk 15 records 8/1-12/1 max 4 9/26, 3 10/10 CoR

osprey 1 9/26 CoR

peregrine falcon 1 9/26 CoR (details elsewhere). A second bird, seen the same day but 40 miles to the south (Cone Marsh) was believed to be a peregrine but the bird was not seen well.

kestrel 1 8/28, 1 9/5, 1 9/23 IC-CoR area *few!*

rails

sora-common on the weedy flats at the CoR. 2 9/15, 2 9/12, 2 9/19

Virginia 1 9/5 CoR

Plovers

semipalmated 1 8/8, 1 8/21, 1 8/28 CoR

golden 1 9/19, 3 Swan Lake.

black-bellied 1 9/25 Swan Lake, 20 9/26 CoR.

Sandpipers

solitary 2 10/5 CoR
l. yellowlegs 60 9/5 CoR.
g. yellowlegs 1 10/23 CoR
Baird's 1 8/21 CoR; up to 7 9/5-9/12 Swan Lake
stilts 5 8/28 CoR
semipalmated 71 8/8 CoR
western 1 8/1 CoR
buff-breasted 2 9/16-9/19 Swan Lake

shorebirds in general were found in small numbers this fall. There were no mud-flats at the shore of the CoR itself, and the oxbows and ponds that attracted birds steadily dried up. The records above are mostly max counts and a few late dates.

gulls, terns

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bonaparte's gull 6 CoR 10/26
black-legged kittiwake 1 CoR 10/26 (credit to N. Halmi) (details elsewhere)

Caspian tern 2 9/16, 12 9/19 9 9/25, 9 9/26 CoR

owls

great horned 1 10/26 CoR; 1 11/20 IC
barred 2 10/26 CoR
short-eared 1 12/4 CoR
Long-eared 3 12/4 CoR

swifts

chimney swift est. 1500, entering a chimney in downtown IC, 9/8

hummingbirds

ruby-throated hummingbirds were numerous in Hickory Hill park, IC. 8/28-9/6.
max count 25 8/28

kingfishers

belted kingfisher 1 8/1, 1 9/5 CoR

woodpeckers

y-b sapsucker 1 9/23 IC

flycatchers

phoebe, E., 1 8/29 IC, 1 9/23 IC, 2 10/6 CoR
olive-sided 1 8/29 IC
kingbird, E. 6 9/5 CoR

swallows

A mixed flock of cliff and tree swallows in about equal proportions, containing 5-10,000 birds, was on the CoR 9/5-9/12. By 10/10 it had dwindled to about a few hundred birds.

titmice

tufted titmouse 4 8/28, 2 9/23 IC

nuthatches, creepers.

r-br. nuthatch 1 8/29, 2 9/23 IC
br. creeper 1 9/23, 1 10/6, 2 10/22 IC area

wrens

s-b marsh wren ~~many~~ many were on the CoR flats, to 10-20 ~~per day 8/1-8/17~~ per day 8/1-8/17; smaller numbers thereafter. last record 1 10/10 CoR

l-b marsh wren 2 9/19, 3 9/25; CoR
Carolina 1 8/28 IC
winter 1 9/23, 1 10/22 IC
house wren last record 9/23 IC

thrushes

bluebird 2 10/15 Kent Pk, 5 10/22 IC
veery 1 8/29 IC
Swainson's 1 9/6 IC

a very poor migration for the 'brown' thrushes-- the above are my total records for the fall.

sylviids

bl-gr. gnatcatcher 1 8/28 IC

kinglets: a good flight -- 50 ruby-crowned, 10 golden-crowned -- 9/23 IC

pipits

water pipit 2 10/3 CoR

waxwings

several hundred cedar waxwings roosted in downtown IC from mid Oct. to about Dec. 1.

shrikes

northern shrike 1 11/6 IC (another seen by Cal Knight 11/14 CoR)

vireos

white-eyed 1 8/28-9, 1 8/30, 3 9/6, 4 (1 imm) 9/11 IC. ~~several~~ all from Hickory Hill park, IC. several of the birds were in full song. Birds of this species had been seen in the park in late spring but not in the summer, though the park was not well covered then. The imm raises the possibility of breeding.

Bell's vireo 3 8/28, 1 8/29 IC. Several singing.
Philadelphia vireo 1 8/28, 1 8/29, 1 9/6 IC

Fringilids

purple finch 6 10/3 CoR
r-s towhee 1 9/6 IC, 1 9/19 CoR
grasshopper sparrow 2 9/19 CoR
LeConte's sparrow - up to ~~8/10~~ 8-10/day at the CoR 9/26-10/10; 2 10/15 Kent Pk
Sharp-tailed sparrow 2 9/16 CoR
Harris' sparrow 2 Kent Park
white-crowned sparrow 3 Kent Park
snow bunting 60-80 11/14 CoR

See separate documentation

General comments

The dry summer and fall, coming on top of last year's drought, produced little good habitat for migrant ducks and shorebirds. On the other hand, the wide flats of the nearly-dry reservoir grew up to dense weeds, ideal habitat for sora rails, marsh wrens, and LeConte's and sharptailed sparrows.

The warbler migration was early and spectacular, but there was a virtual absence of blackpolls. Hummingbirds were abundant, but the brown thrushes were very scarce.

Warblers

migration was early and spectacular, but blackpolls were virtually absent--1 record all fall.

golden-winged 1 8/28, 1 8/29, 1 8/30, 1 9/6 IC
bl-thr. blue 1 females 9/23 IC
Connecticut 1 8/29 IC
Mourning 1 9/6 IC

Icterids

Redwings were on the CoR flats by the tens of thousands 9/25-6.