

Brown Pelican

30 May 1993

Rathbun Res., Appanoose Co., IA

*Ray Cummins, #R. Allen, #T. Schantz

P-0384, P-0387, IBL 63:72, 64:68

Record Number: 93-09

Classification: A-P

DOCUMENTATION

Raymond L. Cummins, 609 S. Main St., Centerville [12/10/93]

PHOTOGRAPHS

Reid I. Allen, 31 May, P-0384

Tim Schantz, 31 May, P-0387

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 63:72

Records Committee: IBL 64:68

American Birds 47:419, 1993, P-0384

VOTE: 7 A-P

A-P, No doubt on this one!



Brown Pelican at Rathbun Reservoir, Iowa, on May 31, 1993. Photograph/Reid I. Allen.

ing Plovers consisted of a pair at a *Woodbury*, IA, power plant May 13 (BH) and three at the Iowa Power and Lights ponds May 9 (B & LP). The Regional trend of increased Black-necked Stilt reports continued this spring, with four at Horseshoe L., MO, Apr. 27 (DE), two in Carrol, IL, May 8 (LJ), and two at Amana L., IA, May 20 (†TS, †TK, †RPi, ph. *et al.*). Am. Avocets were reported in good numbers; notable sightings included four in *Jefferson*, KY, Apr. 14 (MM *et al.*), 17 at L. Spfld., Apr. 20 (DBo), a winter-plumaged bird at Headlands Beach S.P., OH, Apr. 25 (LR, JW), and one at the Delaware W.M.A., OH, May 4 (KA). Whimbrels are rarely seen away from the Great Lakes; consequently, the four in *Fulton*, KY, May 22 (PB, JBe, BBC), and 13 at Horseshoe L., MO, May 23 (†LK) were extraordinary. The only Marbled Godwit reported e. of the Mississippi R. appeared in *Allen*, IN, Apr. 17 (EPo), to establish a new early arrival date for that state. The Least Sandpiper flight was sparse; peak counts were only 60 at L. Cal., May 15 (WM) and 56 at Colo Ponds, IA, May 19 (HZ). White-rumped Sandpipers were reported in every state; the highest count was 2000+ in n.w. MO, May 25 (DE). Pectoral Sandpiper numbers were disturbingly low; few reports exceeded 100 birds, and several active observers found none. Stilt Sandpipers were also scarce; the highest count was 20–25 near Bondurant, KY, May 11 (CP). A Ruff appeared April 7 in Delaware W.M.A., OH, (†KA) and a bird believed to be a female was at the Woodburn sewage ponds, IN, May 2 (†Haw). Counts of both dowitchers were extremely low across the Region; the only concentration consisted of 200 Short-billeds at Ottawa N.W.R., OH, May 9 (*vide LR*). Indiana's first confirmed Com. Snipe nesting since 1934 was made May 17 when an adult and two chicks were observed in *Orange* (JCT ph.). For the first time this century, Wilson's Phalaropes nested in Missouri; a nest was observed May 22–27 in *Holt*, MO (†DE, ph.).

GULLS, TERNS

Inland Laughing Gull sightings included singletons in *Gibson*, IN, Apr. 18 (GB), at Eagle Cr. Park, IN, Apr. 25 (†CK), at Kentucky Dam May 8 (MM *et al.*), and at Falls of the Ohio, KY, May 23 (BM *et al.*). A Franklin's Gull seen flying over the Mississippi R. in

Fulton, KY, May 22 (PB, JBe, BBC) was noteworthy for that location. A breeding-plumaged Mew Gull at L. Decatur, IL, Mar. 5 (†MD) was unexpected. The Ring-billed and Herring gull colony at L. Cal. was estimated to contain 20,000–25,000 birds (JL). Indiana's first Slaty-backed Gull, a winter adult, was seen at Michigan City harbor Mar. 13 (†KB, †SBA, †JCa, †LH *et al.*). A first-year Iceland Gull lingered at Waukegan and the Great Lakes Naval Training Center, IL, until May 3 (JN). Noteworthy among numerous Lesser Black-backed Gull reports were an adult that wandered W to L. Macbride, IA, where it was seen Apr. 16 (†JF) and two adults at R.E.D.A., Mar. 12 (JZ). Glaucous Gulls peaked at L. Cal., Mar. 21, when seven were counted (DM), and a second-summer bird remained at Waukegan until May 29 (JN). An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake appeared irregularly along the shoreline of s. L. Michigan. It was first seen at Johnson Beach, IN, Apr. 24 (JMc), then reappeared May 8 and June 3 at Waukegan, IL (RHu, ASi, JN) and May 28 at Chicago (RHu).

Regionwide, the Com. Tern migration was perhaps typical of recent years. Northwest Indiana, however, experienced the best flight in a decade, with a peak count of 400 at Michigan City harbor May 14 (KB). These may have been birds that normally migrate along L. Michigan's w. shore, as concentrations were very low in Chicago (*vide EW*). An Arctic Tern discovered near Joliet, May 27 (†JM, †JL, †WS, CA, JO, ph.), provided Illinois' 2nd record and the Region's first spring



Snowy Plover at Headlands Beach State Park, Ohio, on May 13, 1993. First state record. Photograph/Larry Rosche.

record. Least Terns returned to the *Gibson*, IN, nesting area May 9 (GB). Outstanding among a number of fine late May Black Tern counts in Iowa was an impressive 1100 at L. Amana May 26 (TK), representing one of the highest Regional counts in a decade.

CUCKOOS TO SWALLOWS

Cuckoos were scarce in every state except Ohio, where both species were more prevalent than in recent springs (LR). In *Cook*, IL, 62 party hours of owl surveys Mar. 5–7, yielded 42 E. Screech-Owls and 25 Great Horned Owls (*vide SLc*). Snowy Owls lingered later than normal. Three were reported at Miegs Field (Chicago lakefront) Mar. 14 and Apr. 8

(ASc, RHu). Inland records included singles at LuVerne, IA, Mar. 23 (*vide MK*) and in *Douglas*, IL, Mar. 30 (*vide RCh*). The Short-eared Owl migration was not impressive, with singletons reported at only 3 locations in Illinois and Indiana. Nesting was suspected near W. Frankfort, IL, where two Short-eareds remained through early summer (LSt). Notable among a handful of N. Saw-whet Owl records were a very responsive bird at Salamonie Res., IN, Mar. 2 (Haw *et al.*), one found in dense red cedar in *Knox*, MO, Mar. 25 (CH, PMc *et al.*), and one in Huron, OH, Mar. 28 (JVa). Rarely detected except on territory, migrant Chuck-wills-widows were found in a Fort Wayne, IN, city park Apr. 28



Rock Wren in Warren County, Iowa, on April 25, 1993. Photograph/Reid I. Allen.

(DWa) and in a lakefront lilac thicket at Michigan City harbor May 11 (LH). A calling Chuck in *Ida*, IA, May 17 (PE) was w. of this species' normal range. Thirty to 40 Chimney Swifts were found dead around L. Spfld., where low-flying birds, forced down by cool spring weather, collided with cars (*vide DBo*). A ♂ Rufous Hummingbird that visited a feeder in rural *Boone*, IA, May 8 & 9 (†SLa, †JF, †JSc) provided the Region's first spring record. An early April ad. ♂ sapsucker at the Burr Oaks Nature Center, Blue Springs, MO, created a lively debate among local birders. Observers agreed that the bird possessed a red nape and displayed other characteristics inconsistent with a Yellow-bellied but were unable to reach a consensus on the bird's identification. In Chicago, a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker lingered until May 23 (RHu). Pileated Woodpeckers continued to expand, with several sightings in previously unoccupied areas within the Chicago metropolitan area.

Outstanding among a number of excellent Chicago area Flycatcher counts recorded May 23 were 40 E. Wood-Pewees and 25 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers (RHu). W. Kingbirds appeared at 3 Illinois locations: in Bondville May 5 (RCh), in Tinley Park May 28–29 (PW, †JL, JM, ph., m.ob.), and in *DuPage* May 31 (DT). The Purple Martin situation is bleak. Several correspondents lamented their scarcity, and the Region's highest count was only 20 at Heidecke L., IL, May 24 (JM). Tree Swallows fared a bit better, with counts of 2500+ flying S along the L. Michigan lakefront at Highland Park, IL, Mar. 14 (WM) and 1500



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BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

93-09

1. Species BROWN PELICAN 2. Number 1
 3. Location LAKE RATHBUN Island West Boat Ramp
 4. Date: 5-30-93 5. Time Bird Seen: 8AM to 8:30PM
 6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):
LARGE DARK ^{Brown} BIRD w/ white FOREHEAD & CROWN,
BIRD WAS ABOUT TWICE THE SIZE OF CASPIAN TERN
AT IT'S SIDES. BILL WAS AS LONG AS NECK AND SEEM
to touch the ground when bird was at rest. Careful
detail was not noted because there was no doubt to this
bird identity. It seems to be a first spring bird.
 7. Description of voice, if heard: NO
 8. Description of behavior: RESTING
 9. Habitat - general: OPEN WATER
specific:
 10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7, & 8.
Explain: NOTHING I KNOW OF
 11. Distance (how measured)? 20 yds Estimate 12. Optical equipment: Kowa Spotting Scope
 13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):
Clear / Light OK - SUN AT BACK
 14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:
Many Seen in previous on the East Coast & Gulf Coast.
 15. Other observers:
 16. Did the others agree with your identification? Yes
 17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: Bill & Marg H Tom Johnson Mary Montag
 18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description: NG checked during sight
 19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?
- Signature: Raymond L. Cummins Address: 607 S. Main St
Date: 5-30-93 Centerville City, State: IA