

Pleasantville, Iowa  
50225

Feb 23, 1977

Dear Nick: - Well, Gene Exler's story "The Bird Lady of Red Rock" Tribune 2/22/77 surely knocked my aura of respectable dignity to hell and gone with the many readers who write me each year, also the many who call me by long distance phone just to visit about birds.

With no effort at all I have made bitter enemies of at least 3 groups (1) the poison-peddling roadside Sprayers and the county road commissioners, (2) the cat fanciers, and (3) the Army Corps of Engineers - with yesterday's story!

As my one and only niece Callen Anne said "without the name, I'd have known it was Aunt Gladys!" She is a Psychiatric Social Worker with the VA Hospital, Knoxville (Master's degree, a mere Bachelor's isn't enough today!) And she has the idea that the better patients shouldn't have to sit all day long staring at blank walls, thinks they need field trips so she is busy involving me in breeding trips with some of the patients in her building. We will begin with an indoor slide show to introduce them to birds. Furthermore she has gained the approval of supervisors all the way up to the head psychiatrist of the hospital. Will we fall flat on our faces is the question??

anyway I didn't intend to ramble on, I meant to report the Snowy Owl to date - 189 Snowy Owls in 73 Counties, added one county today, Jefferson County with 3 Snowies.

Nick, is that April 7 date correct for Amer. Birds reports to you? I thought it was Mar 7.  
(over)

Yesterday Feb 22 on a field trip with 2 local women, saw the first Snow Geese of the season (10 Snow, 2 Blue) and the number of Common Mergansers increased to well over 100 near the dam. Also first Ringbill Gulls arrived this week.

The Lake is mostly a vast mass of mud flats at the upper end and darned near the middle. They have been forced to let it go 6 ft. below the 725 ft. permanent pool level. Now, we can really see the enormous siltation of 7 years!

Also received today from the Register + Tribune cartoonist Frank Miller the original of his Snowy Owl cartoon, Reg. 1/23/77 and have it framed already and on my wall where I can look straight at it. Makes me very happy!

Letter from Charlotte Scott, Seymour today reporting 1 more Snowy from Wayne County brings their total to 12, the greatest number in any county. Several days ago I sent her the names, addresses, + sites of Snowies, the 11 in her county so she could determine if any duplications. I rather thought not. One Wayne County lady who phoned me said they have many grassy fields in Wayne County and that of course attracts them.

Charlotte also reported 2 Northern Shrikes 10 miles apart on power lines along #65 in Lucas County on Feb 3 + Feb 20. Perhaps you already have that report tho.

Mine Burns + wife + I hiked south to Stephens Forest last Sat looking for turkeys - that's west of Lucas in Lucas County. Saw 7 alone but we did see 13 Red-tailed Hawks + 2 Kestrels.

Yesterday saw 4 Marsh Hawks and located 1 Redtail building her nest in woods north side of Lake Red Rock.

Sincerely,  
Gladys Black