

Nora Springs, Iowa
February 21, 1980

Dear Tom;

Congratulations on the new format for the Field Reports. It is now easier to locate the birds seen.

I have a few observations to report from the Mason City area. Probably the most significant is the absence of winter visitors. I have had few reports of purple finches, pine siskins, snow buntings or longspurs. No redpolls at all and only a few tree sparrows. There are some flocks of horned larks appearing now in February. Since Feb. 6 a female evening grosbeak has been at our feeders regularly. An immature male came only one day. No one else in this area has reported seeing any. The common winter birds are numerous and a number of red-headed woodpeckers have stayed through the winter. Two adults and an immature are daily visitors at our feeders. One flicker appears irregularly.

A male sharp-shinned hawk sat near one of our feeders on Jan. 25 and chased a small bird.

A pileated woodpecker was along the edge of our woods on Nov. 14, Dec. 17 and Jan. 8 but we haven't seen it since.

Our most unusual observation was a male Baltimore oriole that feasted on frozen apples in the backyard of a residence in Mason ~~City~~ City. On Dec. 29 I took pictures of this bird. I thought his flight was somewhat wobbly and in the pictures he appeared to have a drooping right wing. He was last seen on Jan. 7, 1980.

This is a delayed report but it may be of interest -
A green heron nested in a cedar tree near a residence two miles south of Nora Springs. This is about a half mile from the Shell Rock River and a small stream runs through this property. The nest was a loosely woven structure of sticks. On June 10 I photographed the nest containing one newly hatched heron and three blue eggs that never hatched. This may have been due to the cold weather as the nest was so loosely woven that the eggs could be seen from the ground through the bottom of the nest. On June 23 I photographed ~~the~~ the young heron which was climbing about in the tree but could not fly. The nest survived several severe storms and on Aug. 1 the lady at the residence called to report that there were then three young herons in the same nest. Apparently the second nesting was more successful than the first.

ON Oct. 9 I sighted a Winter wren in our woods and a hermit thrush on Oct. 11.

I hope you will have good birding in 1980.

Sincerely,

Sorothy A. Brunner