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Wilson's Phalaropes Nesting in Northwest Iowa. -- During June 1968, two nests of Wilson's Phalarope (Steganopus tricolor) were found in Clay and Palo Alto counties near Ruthven, Iowa. The nests were found while conducting field research sponsored by the National Science Foundation Undergraduate Research Participation Program.

The two Wilson's Phalarope nests were located approximately one mile apart in quite different habitats. The first nest was found on 2 June on a state-owned prairie known as Dewey's Pasture in Clay county. The nest was situated in bluegrass (Poa pratensis) about 30 feet from the edge of a dry marsh of Carex sp. It consisted of a depression in the ground lined with bluegrass. On 18 June, the second nest (Fig. 1) was found in Palo Alto county at another state-owned area called the Oppedahl Tract. This nest was situated on a mud-flat overgrown with beggars tick (Bidens sp.). It lacked a well-formed nest bowl although dense Bidens surrounding the nest provided protection for the eggs and the incubating bird.

Both nests were rechecked to determine their fate and complete clutch size. The upland nest was found accidentally destroyed by man on 6 June; the nest located on the mud flat hatched successfully by 1 July. Both nests contained four eggs.

According to Grant (Iowa Bird Life, 33:sp. 56), the Wilson's Phalarope is now considered an uncommon migrant in Iowa although it formerly nested in northern Iowa. DuMont (A Revised List of the Birds of Iowa, 1933:sp. 75) reported the Wilson's Phalarope as a former summer resident, breeding in the northern part of Iowa. The A. O. U. Checklist (1957:sp. 211) indicates the southernmost breeding areas in the Midwest as central Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Apparently, the nests reported here are the first found since Anderson (1904) described Wilson's Phalarope nests in northern Iowa (Proceedings of the Davenport Academy of Sciences 11:212-213). -- Robert D. Bergman, Loren C. Bates and David K. Voigts, Department of Zoology and Entomology, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50010.