

Details for birds seen on Burlington CBC 12/19/98

COMMON LOON (2) and RED-THROATED LOON

The Red-throated Loon and one Common Loon had been at this location on the Mississippi River just above Lock & Dam #18 for at least a month. The two Common Loons were always together during the observation period, and at one point the Red-throated Loon and both Common Loons were in the same scope view, and at another time, a Western Grebe and the Red-throated Loon were in the same scope view. Both allowed comparisons. Compared to the Common Loons, the Red-throated Loon was smaller, had a thinner neck, smaller head, and smaller bill. It also was a lighter gray on the head, nape and hindneck. In addition, it kept its bill pointed upward at an angle. The Common Loon had a larger bill which it kept horizontal.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD

This male bird was seen at a farmstead just east of Lock & Dam #18. Compared to a Common Grackle, this bird was smaller, had a shorter tail, shorter and more sharply pointed bill, and a rounder head. The head did show a purple sheen, but the rest of the body was a deeper black than that of a Grackle.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK

This bird was soaring not very high in shallow circles at Crapo Park. It was continually harassed by a flock of 5 Rock Doves. This was a very small accipiter, undoubtedly a male. It was about the same length as the Rock Doves. Most of the time, the tail was flared, but when not it appeared to be squared. It was an immature bird. The head and neck appeared small, compared to what I would expect for a Cooper's Hawk.

EASTERN PHOEBE

This bird was seen in a protected ravine in a brushy area with a small stream running through. It had gray upperparts, and off-white underparts. The bird had a relatively long tail which it pumped at times after alighting. The bill was short and dark and the eye was dark. It was constantly flying from bush to bush only a few feet off the ground, and appeared to be foraging for bugs over the running water. It kept making a single noted call.

Jim Fuller