

6/3/80

WILSON

Spring 1980 birds, NE Mills Co., Iowa.

- ✓ Common Loon - hardly unusual in the area, but the one at Willow Slough April 21 looked almost as out of place as a loon on a mud puddle. One in breeding plumage at the Slough May 27 + 28
- ✓ Eared Grebes - at Willow Slough at least March 22 - May 2.
- ✓ Horned Grebe - 1 at River ton May 10 (seen with Ross Silcock + BJ Rose)
- Pied-billed Grebe - Eric Toransen reports that the ice went out at Lake Manawa (Council Bluffs) March 15 and that Grebes were on the lake late that same afternoon
- ✓ Double-crested Cormorant: 1-7 present at Willow Slough ~~12~~ April 18 - May 7. 3 at Forney's lake May 29.
- Green Heron - 3 at Willow Slough May 19
- ✓ Common Egret - 1 at Willow Slough May 29
- * Swan
Geese: First heard March 14. ✓ White-fronts and to a lesser extent ^{2 Canadas} Canadas were very noticeable and common this spring. ^{at Forney's lake May 29}
- ✓ Ross's Goose - 1 March 21 with probably over 1,000 Snow Geese. See documentation form. Willow Slough
- Mallard - tan, very pale, individual accompanies ♂ Mallard April 7, Willow Slough.
- ✓ Whistling Swan - 4 at Willow Slough March 21
- Wood Duck - 5 ducklings on Wilson farm, NE Mills County, May 22
♀ with ±6 ducklings on an interstate highway in downtown Omaha Nebraska May 15. I hope she knew where she was going.
- ✓ Canvasback - still present at Willow Slough May 19 (87?)
- C. Goldeneye - I was surprised to find them in shallow Willow Slough this spring. The last one was April 25.
- Ruddy Duck - see documentation of very strange individual.
- Hooded Mergansers - March 21 - Apr. 25 at Willow Slough.
- Red-breasted Merganser - ^{at least 2} 1 ♀ on Willow Slough April 18. (Common ♀'s were also present that day)
- ✓ Bald Eagle: 1 adult at Lake Manawa March 20. 1 adult + 4 immature at Willow Slough April 2. 1 adult kills a coot + 3 young ^{eagles} pursue it April 3, Willow

Rough-legged Hawk - Ed & Greenwood reports one March 24 in NE Mills County. I don't know how he identified it.

- Slough. 1 adult at Wilson Farm, NE Mills County, April 5.
- ✓ Bobwhite - good population in Mills County
 - ✓ Piping Plover - 1 at Willow slough May 21
 - Killdeer - a cheerful sign of spring March 15, NE Mills County
 - ✓ American Woodcock - Ross Silcock located displaying males at Riverton Game Management area, Fremont County, Iowa. They displayed at least from early May - May 10, when he took BJ Rose + me to ~~see~~^{hear} them.
 - ✓ Willet - 5 at Willow slough April 25
 - ✓ Stilt Sandpiper - 2⁺ at Willow Slough May 19
 - ✓ American Avocet - 2 at Willow Slough May 7
 - ✓ Northern Phalarope - 1 at Willow Slough May 21. An amazing 7 at the slough May 24
 - ✓ Franklin's Gull - at Willow Slough April 3, April 4, May 7, May 27
 - ✓ Bonaparte's Gull - 2 at Willow Slough May 7
 - ✓ Common Tern - 3 at Willow Slough May 19 and 10 on May 24.
 - ✓ Forster's Tern - some at the slough various times at least from May 2 to May 19. This year I found more ~~Forsters~~^{Commons} than Forsters. That never happened before.
 - Black Tern - over 100 on the slough May 19.
 - ✓ Caspian Tern - 1 at Willow Slough May 24, where it ate a Black Bullhead.
 - Barned Owl - a fledgling accompanied by at least one parent at Wilson Farm, NE Mills County, May 2 + 3.
 - Great Horned Owl - flightless young bird accompanied by parent north of Riverton May 10. (with Ross Silcock + BJ Rose)
 - ✓ Pileated Woodpecker - Ed Greenwood reports seeing one at Willow Slough last spring. Described it well.
 - ✓ Red-shafted Flicker - 1 ~~or~~ (or a hybrid) with 10 yellow-shafted flickers in a flock at Willow Slough April 7. ~~It~~
 - ✓ Western Kingbird - 1 at Willow Slough May 21. *Uncommon on Missouri flood plain 20 miles away. Very rare here.
 - ✓ Alder Flycatcher - 6 heard on ~~at~~ Wilson Farm, NE Mills County, on May 26.

- ✓ Willow Flycatcher - singing birds at Willow Slough, where they are summer residents, by May 21
- ✓ Olive-sided Flycatcher - 1 on Wilson Farm, NE Mills County, on May 21.
- Black-capped Chickadee - 1 foraging at fruiting heads of cattail in a cattail bed at Willow Slough April 15.
- ✓ Hermit Thrush - 1 on May 3, Wilson Farm, NE Mills County
- Gray-cheeked Thrush - 1 on May 21, Wilson Farm, NE Mills County.
- ✓ Eastern Bluebird - 4 pairs are probably nesting on the farm, 3 in nest boxes. ~~One~~ One nest failed early ^(beside eggs) + was taken over by House Sparrows. I don't know if the sparrows evicted the Bluebirds or not. ~~A second pair had fledged 3 young from a clutch of this pair was searching for a new nest + is still ~~around~~ around, so they probably have re-nested.~~ A second pair fledged 3 young from a clutch of five eggs. A third is now feeding a brood of five in the nest.
- Warbling ~~Vireo~~ Vireo nest in Silver Maple found May 22, when it was being built, at Wilson Farm, NE Mills County.
- ✓ Orange-crowned Warbler: first I found was April 21 at the Wilson Farm, Mills County.
- Blackburnian Warbler - Facey Pedersen described a lovely male in her hackberry bush May 15. NE Mills County.
- ✓ Louisiana Water Thrush - 1 at ~~Louisiana Water Thrush~~ Wilson farm, NE Mills County, May 16.
- American Redstart - I found ~~1~~ ♀ and singing ♂'s at Willow Slough, where they bred last year, on May 16 (and since)
- ✓ Warblers in general ~~are~~ arrived a few days late this year. The trees, on the other hand, ~~are~~ encouraged by our warm April, leafed out early. These tiny birds are very hard to find behind fig leaves. They were only here in good numbers for a few days around the 17th + 18th of May, too.

Rusty Blackbirds were present in the winter on the farm (NE Mills County) and I found them regularly until March 17, and again from March 31 to April 15.

Blue Grosbeak - ♂ May 10 on Hwy 275 south of Council Bluffs (Pottawatomie County). (Seen with Ross Silcock + B.J. Rose, who found it).

- ✓ Swamp Sparrow - 1 May 19 at Willow Slough, Late?
- ✓ Clay-colored Sparrows - single birds at Willow Slough April 25, 28, and May 16.

Birds out of Order

✓ Eared Grebe - 1 in a flock of 13 Ruddy Ducks May 30. June 1 it was keeping a single Ruddy Company.

✓ White Pelican - 2 at Willow Slough May 30

✓ White-fronted Goose - 1 at Willow Slough May 30.

Snow/Blue Geese - 16 appeared at the Slough May 30. They weren't there before.

doubt
X Tufted Duck - Eric Toransen reports 1 at Lake Manawa March 15. He is not always extremely cautious in identifying birds, but he had a bird book along + insists he saw the long drooping crest as the bird shook itself. That's about the only useful field mark he reported.

Scaup (probably lesser) - a ♀ bird at the slough lacked the white ring at the base of the bill: Confusing!

Shrike, presumably Loggerhead - 2 in rural Pottawatomie County April 10, but surprisingly she found no nests so far.

Bell's Vireo - present as usual at Willow Slough.

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