

HEARD ON THE BIRDLINE

March 15-June 15

All reports of rare birds to the Iowa Birdline are considered hypothetical until they have been documented and accepted by the Records Committee.

An outstanding spring season for rarities was closed out with LAZULI BUNTINGS at the Heine yard near Spencer on May 28-29, and a MACGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER found by Mark Proescholdt in Hardin County on June 2.

Early in the season, northwest Iowa produced March MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD sightings on the 15th in Clay County, and the 25th in Dickinson County. A TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE was at Lake Anita State Park on March 18. The first of five CINNAMON TEAL reports came on the 15th from Lake Manawa at Council Bluffs. Others were a bird near Runnells that stayed put for over a month, in Woodbury County, near Carroll, and in Palo Alto County.

Tim Schantz discovered a REEVE at the Riverton Area on March 31, and it obliged birders through April 2, and Jim Sinclair found a RUFF in Ringgold County on April 22.

Tom Kent went searching snow-covered northwest Iowa on April 12 for CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPURS, and found single birds along the roadside in Sioux and Lyon Counties. At the other corner of the state, Tom's quest for a FISH CROW was rewarded with four birds on April 21 along the Mississippi River in Louisa County.

WHITE-FACED IBIS were reported in unusually large numbers, with as many as 14 at South Blue Lake in Monona County on April 25. Other reports were from Dunbar Slough in Greene County, Union Grove State Park, and the Riverton Area, where as many as five were still being seen in late May. But the two GLOSSY IBIS at Riverton on 18 May was a second state record. RED-NECKED GREBES were also seen more often than usual with four reports from mid-April to early May.

Other April sightings included SMITH'S LONGSPURS in the Cone Marsh area of Johnson and Louisa Counties, SNOWY EGRETS in Guthrie (16th), and Woodbury County (17th), a PRAIRIE FALCON in Guthrie County on the 16th, and a RED-THROATED LOON at Little Wall Lake on the 22nd. In addition, BEWICK'S WRENS were found

nesting in a nail sack in a building in Iowa County, and at a junkyard in Lee County. To close out April, a YELLOW RAIL was flushed at Otter Creek Marsh on the 29th, an OLDSQUAW was at Cone Marsh on the 29th, and a PRAIRIE WARBLER was near Carroll on the 30th.

Things got even more lively in May, and during the first half of the month a SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER was observed in Palo Alto County on the 4th and a BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK paid a brief visit to an Iowa City feeder on the 10th. Gordon Brown reported an adult LAUGHING GULL below the Saylorville Reservoir dam on the 10th, Dennis Carter saw a male BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER in Winneshiek County on the 11th, and a KING RAIL was at Tomahawk Marsh in Sac County on the 13th. Jane Clark watched a MISSISSIPPI KITE sail over Clive on the 15th, and the next day Eugene and Eloise Armstrong found two of them at the rear of the Olivet Baptist Church in West Des Moines. May was also excellent for shorebird rarities, with RED-NECKED PHALAROPES in Story County (14th), and Sac County (20-21st), WHIMBRELS in Fremont and Hamilton Counties, and a LONG-BILLED CURLEW at the dredge pond at Black Hawk Lake on the 22nd.

In late May, a WESTERN TANAGER was at Hickory Hill Park in Iowa City, and a PRAIRIE WARBLER was at Lake MacBride State Park. In the far southwest corner of the state, among all the other herons east of Nebraska City, there was a SNOWY EGRET and LITTLE BLUE HERONS reported.

In Taylor County, Zelbert Freemyer showed off the three nests of BARN OWLS in his farmyard east of Bedford.

Jim Fuller