

HEARD ON THE BIRDLINE (Mid-November to Mid-March)

Rare bird sightings reported to the Iowa Birdline are considered hypothetical until documented and accepted by the Records Committee.

The bird creating the most excitement during the period was a WESTERN FLYCATCHER (Sp.) November 14-15, discovered by Ann Johnson and Beth Brown at Ahquabi State Park in Warren County. This bird represents a potential first state record, and only the third east of Kansas and Nebraska. Another November bird was a RED-NECKED GREBE above Lock & Dam #9 at Harper's Ferry on the 14th.

The number of unusual gull sightings was down, but there were GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS at Red Rock on December 9 and Bettendorf on February 28, ICELAND GULLS of first and second winter and adult plumages, at Iowa City and Davenport in January-February, and a BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE at Red Rock on December 19.

A TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE found on the Mason City CBC turned into a pair a week later. These birds in the Shell Rock River greenbelt southeast of Rock Falls were still present in mid-March. A female MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD was seen only on January 4 at Big Creek State Park, and an OLDSQUAW spent the winter below the Red Rock dam

After several fall reports of SNOWY OWLS, none were reported after the first of the year. However, one discovered on the Bremer County CBC stayed in the same area for another week. Two neck-banded TRUMPETER SWANS were at Cedar Rapids most of the winter. Sightings of NORTHERN GOSHAWKS were numerous throughout the period.