

CONTRIBUTOR: Beth Proescholdt

SEASON: Spring

YEAR: 1981

WEATHER/HABITAT: describe any unusual features at bottom of page

OTHER OBSERVERS: ^{Kevin +} Mark Proescholdt,
Ramona Sommerlot, Garnita Seward,
Phyllis Harris

5/28/81
PROESCHOLDT

SPECIES	NO.	DATE	LOCATION - COMMENT - OTHER OBSERVERS
✓ Eared Grebe	1	5/16-5/20	Liscomb lagoon, n. Marshall Co - bird remained on pond 5 days - observed ^{at 1:30} by Mark Proescholdt, Ramona Sommerlot, Garnita Seward, Phyllis Harris
✓ Ibis (white-faced glossy)	1	5/1	Otter Creek Marsh - s.e. Tama Co documented - seen ^{also} by Ramona Sommerlot, Garnita Seward, Phyllis Harris
Canada Goose	40	3/14	Hendrickson's Marsh - Story Co - geese just a bit larger than mallards they were. Swimming with - (Richardson's?) others - Mark Proescholdt
✓ Lesser Golden Plover	dozens	5/5	by Liscomb lagoon - big flight from 5:30 - 7:30 PM, - high pressure weather after a passing line of clouds + rain - birds flying into strong NW wind - 15 - 20 flocks passing in groups of 10 - 40, with one of 130+ - most flying low + close with sun on them - some too far to identify for sure - some remaining on fields 4 days other observers - Mark + Kevin Proescholdt
✓ King Rail	1	5/14	nw. Marshall Co - documented - others, Ramona Sommerlot, Phyllis Harris, Garnita Seward
✓ Long-billed Dowitcher	3-2-2	5/5, 5/10, 5/16	Liscomb lagoon - reddish under parts to tail - no white underneath - observed carefully - others - Mark Proescholdt, Kevin Proescholdt, Ramona Sommerlot, Garnita Seward, Phyllis Harris
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	0		None seen all month
✓ Northern Mockingbird	1	4/24	in farm yard in n. Marshall Co - observed 1/2 hour by Ramona Sommerlot - 10 min by me + Mark Proescholdt
Loggerhead Shrike	1	5/14	extreme n. Marshall Co - first I've seen for years
✓ Prothonotary Warbler	1	5/25	a singing ♂ in n. Marshall Co. along Iowa R. - others - Mark Proescholdt
✓ Prairie Warbler	1	5/20	Grammer Grove Wildlife Area, n. Marshall Co. - documented - others, Ramona Sommerlot

With temperatures 6 degrees below normal, the coldest May since 1954 perhaps this was why migration seemed so sparse this month - until May 13 when we enjoyed a classic "trees dripping with warblers" day, finding 20 species of warblers that day, with a total of 95 species in much less than a dawn to dark day. Most of this was in Grammer Grove. And that was the only spectacular day in May. The next day in a variety of habitats we found that many species - but not ~~the~~ quantities of birds, of May 13th.

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species King Rail 2. Number 1
3. Location ~~██████████~~ Private gravel pit in n.w. Marshall County
4. Date: May 14, 1981 5. Time Bird Seen: 10 AM to 10:15 AM

6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):

a chicken-like, small-chicken-sized rail, like a Virginia rail but twice as large, + rusty-colored, unlike a Clapper, which of course wouldn't be in an Iowa marsh. The long bill, checked back, rusty neck + wings + barred flanks could have it be nothing else. Legs were light, as was bill with dark tip. It was observed easily, not being secretive as rails usually are.

7. Description of voice, if heard: not heard
8. Description of behavior: feeding in shallow pond, close to ^(interior) road, gradually moving back to end of pond, continuing to feed
9. Habitat - general: marshy area of a gravel pit - this spot not worked for a long time
- specific: shallow water of small pond, surrounded by trees + brush

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:

Clapper Rail
Virginia Rail

11. Distance (how measured)? 30-40 feet (estimated) 12. Optical equipment: Binoculars

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):
Clear sky - full sun on bird, coming from the right + slightly behind us

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:
no sightings of King Rail before, but I have observed Virginia Rails, and also Clapper Rails in Florida
15. Other observers: Phyllis Harris, Garnita Seward, Ramona Sommerlot

16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: none that I am aware of

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds, 2nd Revised, + his new 4th edition
Robbins, et al - Birds of North America - they helped us verify our

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? immediately in our notes

Signature: Beth Proescholdt Address: _____
Date: May 24, 1981 City, State: Liscomb, Iowa, 50148