

COMMISSIONERS

JOHN C. BROPHY, Chairman—Lansing
 THOMAS A. BATES—Bellevue
 JOHN D. FIELD—Hamburg
 RICHARD W. KEMLER—Marshalltown
 DONALD E. KNUDSEN—Eagle Grove
 CAROLYN T. LUMBARD—Des Moines
 MARIAN PIKE—Whiting



HARR

11/26/80

Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Addendum:

✓ Evening Grosbeaks being reported to me from birdfeeders in Spirit Lake (Dickinson Co.) and Rock Rapids (Lyon County). Several reports so far, but have not yet sighted any myself. Expect reported observation are probably correct however. These began coming in about Nov. 10, and have been continuing since.

Nov. 24, 1980

Dr. Thomas H. Kent
 IOU Field Reports Editor
 211 Richards Street
 Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Dear Dr. Kent:

Below is my list of mostly uncommon sightings (at least by my standards) for the period Aug.-Nov., 1980. Because most of my sightings are made while I'm working in the field on some project for the state, I do not normally carry documentation sheets with me (although I have them available, usually in the car). Thus I have noted the reasons I believe my observations to be correct from notes I jot down in a pocket notebook

✓ Common Loon--10/29/80 & 11/5/80, Big Spirit Lake (Dickinson Co.); Immature (1), riding low in water & diving, typical loon bill, dark gray color w/white on breast & extending up throat to chin.

Horned Grebe-- 10/15/80 & 10/21/80, Big Spirit Lake; two seen on each date, small size w/definite color break between black cap & white cheeks.

✓ Western Grebe-- 10/15/80 & 10/21/80, Big Spirit Lake; one seen in proximity of large rafts of coots, Mallard-sized w/long neck, sharp bill & distinct head mostly white w/black cap & black extending down nape of neck. Am quite familiar with these birds having observed them extensively while working in their nesting areas in N & S Dakota, in 1967 & 1970.

Db. Cr. Cormorants--common in migration during fall months on Big Spirit & Silver Lakes (Dickinson County) & Rush Lake (Osceola Co.)

✓ White-winged Scoter--two killed by duck hunters on Rush Lake (Osceola Co.) & observed in-hand. One definitely a female & other probably immature (W/more white on face)--white speculum prominent in both. 10/19/80

✓ Turkey Vulture--9/29/80, 8 mi. NW of Larchwood, Lyon Co. Very unusual sighting in this area! ID by large size, prominent naked red head, widely-spread primary tips in soaring, wings held in slight V shape. Observed for approx. 10 min.

✓ Bald Eagle--11/15/80, Rush Lake, Osceola Co; 1 imm. soaring about 100 ft. above ground, ID by indistinct whitish lining on undersides of wings & tail. Observed for approx. 3 min.

(cont.)

HARR

✓ American Woodcock--9/10/80, ½ mi. W of Big Spirit Lake (Kettleon Hogsback WMA); flushed from deep, brushy woods near Hottes Lake (marsh); noted short, round body & "stubby" wings, long bill, darting flight among trees. (These have been seen occasionally during nesting season here in years past).

Common Snipe--Seemed more common than usual throughout much of early fall in Lakes Region; usually seen on pasture w/standing water, ID in most cases possible by stripes on back & head, and/or zig-zag flight. Large group seen with dowitchers (next entry) 4 mi. SE of Lake Park (Dickinson Co.) on 10/21/80.

Long-billed Dowitchers--10/21/80, 4 mi. SE of Lake Park. ID difficult to say the least, but heard single "peep" call uttered several times, which according to Peterson field guide checked at time, appears closer to Long-billed than Short-billed. 30 birds counted. Could not determine plumage pattern as one species or other, even w/spotting scope used from car at range of about 50 yds. Perhaps you will not be able to use this sighting if based primarily on call.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird--9/1/80, Larchwood, Iowa. Feeding on Canna lillies in backyard; Female (1), ID by no throat color. Only one seen in garden this year--usually sight several each year, especially spring & fall.

Sedge Wren--8/13/80, Silver Lake Fen Preserve, near Lake Park, (Dickinson Co.); one sighted in Phragmites. Typical wren posture, almost size of House Wren, but ID by streaks on head and appearing to continue down nape of neck onto back.

Golden-crowned Kinglet--10/21/80, Rush Lake (Osceola Co.), in brush along lakeshore. One female sighted, w/prominent gold cap, white stripe over eye, nervous flitting from branch to branch. Call heard to be a tsee-tsee-tsee. Several other small birds in brush at some distance uttering same call and demonstrating same nervous flitting, but could not make out other details (assumed to be same species but not positive)

Grasshopper Sparrow--8/14/80; appeared to be commonly sighted while running a pheasant survey route in western Lyon County. Quite small birds with plain tan or buff breast. Otherwise fairly non-descript back & no wing bars noted. Any stripe down top of crown not noted in field observation, but in comparing with Peterson field guide in car, it seemed it could have been present. Seen chiefly in bromegrass at edges of open fields. Call not heard distinctly, but seemed to be a withdrawn buzz. (ID perhaps a little shaky on this, but ruled out almost everything else.)

Hope this minor documenting might make my observations a little more useful.

Sincerely,

Doug Harr, wildlife Biologist
Doug Harr
Larchwood, Iowa 51241