

RT 1 Box 41

Hastings, Iowa 51540

WILSON

Dear Mr. Kent,

It was good to meet you at the I. O. U. meeting this spring.

In southwest Iowa, the early part of the season was dry + unseasonably warm. May has been wetter + cooler. The trees leafed out early, + some of the marshes are dry.

Forney's Lake - dry since winter

Riverton - water only in the main lake + closest ditches partly dry

Willow Slough - fast drying up

Lake Manawa - water levels low, with some mudflats

Iowa Power + Light Settling Ponds - full of water, but now the south pond is getting an unnatural blueness that may signal its imminent death

~~the~~ "Goose Lake" - former lake, now former marsh - water only in the drainage ditches. It's been burned + disced + planted to corn.

Taylor Lake, Fremont county - fluctuating, but very wet May 21. Unusual.

Folsom Lake (the original marshy lake, not the barrow pit) - dry.

I-29 Barrow pits - low, with mud flats.

Won't be a great summer for marsh birds.

Waterfowl - March 2, Babs Padelford called. She said all the waterfowl one would expect (including Red-breasted Merganser and Greater Scaup) had been seen in the Omaha/Council Bluffs area, except Wood Duck + Blue-winged Teal. (As it turned out, Lesser Scaup weren't back yet either.)

According to Ray Adams in S.W. Michigan, Least Bitterns fly about in early August for some reason, thus becoming conspicuous where they are normally invisible. (See fall note in last IBL)

- Barb Wilson

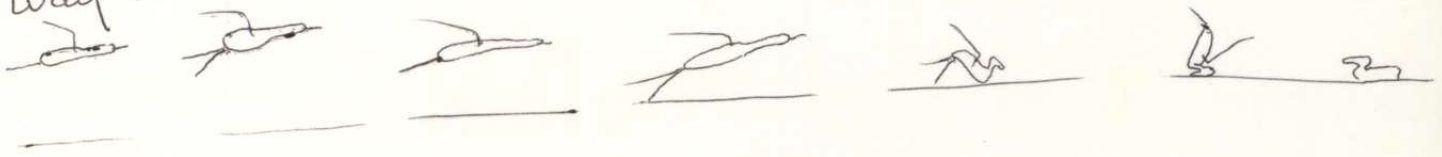
I believe the county in the S.W. corner of the state is Fremont, not Freemont, county.

Your statement in the spring I.B.C. that I found only one Titmouse in Mills County all winter is technically correct, but also misleading hyperbole. I only looked for them on our farm.

The white sides of scamp seem a poor - or difficult to use - field ~~mark~~ mark. True, the gray-sided ones are lesser, but the bird has to be amazingly close to ~~be~~ be sure a seemingly white-sided one doesn't have gray feather edgings.

May 29 a Painted Turtle waded across Willow Slough. It could be dry in a week.

May 29 a Pied-billed Grebe was feeding at the slough. Nervous because it couldn't dive, it flew away every time I got close. Once it took a short cut over a mudflat, & seemed to be having trouble keeping its legs up. The leg troubles ~~led to~~ led to the bird's losing altitude, all of a sudden a leg drooped & snagged on the drying mud flat - and the grebe somersaulted, landing facing the way it had come!



There were relatively many Ibis sightings in S.W. Iowa this spring. Do you suppose the drought down south has sent them north? Or is the drought over there?

I guess I may as well give up trying to send short reports to you. I certainly fail. Thanks for your patience in reading all this.

Do you suppose the new regional editor will figure out that there are two Willow Sloughs in his region?

— Barb

CONTRIBUTOR: Barbara L. Wilson

OTHER OBSERVERS: Ross Silcock

SEASON: Spring

B.J. Rose

YEAR: 1981

Loren + Babs Padelford

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

SPECIES	NO.	DATE	LOCATION - COMMENT - OTHER OBSERVERS
Eared Grebe	1	11 Apr.	Lake Manawa (Council Bluffs)
"	1 ⁺	9 May	Iowa Power + Light Settling Pond ^{South of} Council Bluffs
"	6 ⁺	20 May	" "
"	?	21 May	" with Ross + BS "
Pied-billed Grebes			Scattered scattered single birds reported in Feb. + Early March. Become commoner in mid March. No large concentrations. Actually, no concentrations over 8 birds.
White Pelican	220	10 Apr.	Willow Slough
Double-crested Cormorant	2	31 Mar.	Lake Manawa
"	37	10 Apr.	Willow Slough
Great Egret	1	10 Apr.	"
White-faced Ibis	2	19 May	" - documented
"	2	21 May	Taylor Lake, Mills Fremont County with Ross + BS
Cattle Egret	1	3 May	South of Iowa City w/ Pete Peterson, Ross, Robert Myers, Francis Moore
Whistling Swan	2	16 Mar	Willow Slough. (one with, 1 of without yellow ^{on bill})
Canada Goose	2	8 Mar	"
	45	16 Mar	"
	43	20 Mar	"
	3	23 Mar	"
	2	26 Mar	"
	250	"	Parker's Farm, N.E. Mills County
	15	31 Mar	Willow Slough
	8	4 Apr	"
	20	5 Apr	"
	31	10 Apr.	"

CONTRIBUTOR: Barbara L Wilson

OTHER OBSERVERS: _____

SEASON: SpringLoren + Babs PadelfordYEAR: 1981

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

SPECIES	NO.	DATE	LOCATION - COMMENT - OTHER OBSERVERS
White-fronted Goose	102	16 Mar	Willow Slough
"	103	20 Mar	"
"	40	23 Mar	"
"	2	26 Mar	"
"	550	"	Parker's farm, NE Mills County
"	30	31 Mar	Willow Slough
"	21	4 Apr.	"
"	90	5 Apr	"
"	28	10 Apr.	"
Ross's Goose	2 ⁺	26 Mar	Parker's farm, NE Mills County ^{documented}
Blue-winged Teal		16 Mar	Willow Slough - First I see
Wood Duck		25 Mar	IPL Settling Ponds - "
Greater Scaup	8	3 Mar	Settling Ponds
"	1	9 Mar	Lake Manawa
"		10 Mar	Settling Ponds
"	8	12 Mar	Settling ponds
"	1	17 Mar	Lake Manawa
"	2	18 Mar	"
"	1	11 Apr.	"
Lesser Scaup	many	17 Mar	" Loren + Babs Padelford find them. These are the first anybody has seen this year.
Red-breasted Merganser	1	9 Mar	"
Turkey Vulture		25 Mar	Pottawatomie County First I see
Marsh Hawk	1	23 Mar	Willow slough
	1	24 Mar	Wilson farm, NE Mills county
Osprey	1	9 May	Pony Creek Reservoir, near Glenwood Iowa. with Padelfords + Father Hoffman. This is the only good bird I've EVER seen on that barren reservoir.

unusual water -
mammal water -
fence

one group of
8 staying at the
Settling ponds 1 or 2 G's
with Red heads at Manawa.
an odd bird in April!

CONTRIBUTOR: Barbara WilsonOTHER OBSERVERS: Ross SilcockSEASON: SpringBJ RoseYEAR: 1981

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

SPECIES	NO.	DATE	LOCATION - COMMENT - OTHER OBSERVERS
Golden Plover	3	5 Apr.	Willow Slough
"	7	27 Apr.	"
American Woodcock		10 Apr.	" Flying + singing at 5:00 Dusk
Upland Sandpiper	1	21 May	" with Ross Silcock + BJ Rose
Dunlin	1	11 May	"
"	6	19 May	"
"		21 May	" with Ross + BJ
Sanderling		21 May	" " " " "
Short-billed Dowitcher	1	11 May	" pale + buffy, narrow marks on tertials white belly + undertailcoverts, small spots
Long-billed Dowitcher	11	11 May	" cinnamon - darker than above. belly with cinnamon. tertials with broad outlines + marks.
"	1+	19 May	" one had bars at sides of breast. All were cinnamon the darker color, but I could be sure of one.
Stilt Sandpiper	11	19 May	"
"		21 May	" one with a black belly (muddy?) really confused us! with Ross + BJ Rose.
Marbled Godwit	1	19 May	" documented
Hudsonian Godwit	1	9 May	Borrow pits by Pacific Junction, Mills Co.
Whimbrel	1	19 May	Willow Slough. Documented
American Avocet	38	28 Apr.	Lake Manawa
Northern Phalarope ♂	1	11 May	Willow Slough
" ♀	1 dead	19 May	"
Ring-billed Gull	1200	9 Mar.	Lake Manawa
Franklin's Gull	15	4 Apr.	"
"	8	10 Apr.	Willow Slough
"		28 Apr.	Lake Manawa
Bonaparte's Gull	6	10 Apr.	Willow Slough
Cuckoos		4 May	Fontenelle Forest, Bellvue, <u>Nebraska</u> Both species newly present, singing. Seems early.

CONTRIBUTOR: Barbara WilsonOTHER OBSERVERS: Ross SiscookSEASON: SpringBT RoseYEAR: 1981

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

SPECIES	NO.	DATE	LOCATION - COMMENT - OTHER OBSERVERS
Common Tern	1	21 May	Willow Slough, with Ross + BT
Chuck-wills-widow	2*	21 May	north of Waubonsie park, with Ross + BT
Chimney Swift		26 Apr.	Farm. First First I see.
Hummingbirds	none		as usual
Red-headed Woodpecker			becomes common in late april, about April 24. according to John Parker, they had become common in Fontenelle Forest, Bellevue Bellevue, Nebraska, about 3 weeks earlier.
Eastern Phoebe		24 Mar.	Wilson farm, NE Mills county
Acadian Flycatcher	1	28 May	Wilson farm, ^{NE} Mills County (song)
"	1-2	29 May	" (song)
Willow Flycatcher		21 May	Southwest Iowa, with Ross + BT (song)
"		23 May	Wilson farm, NE Mills county "
"		28 May	" "
"		29 May	" also Willow Slough "
Olive-sided Flycatcher	1	7 May	near Willow Slough. Seems early
"	1	21 May	Manti Park, near Shenandoah, Iowa
"	2	29 May	Wilson farm, NE Mills County
Bewick's Wren	1	2 May	Hickory Hill Park, Iowa City
Sedge Wren	1	19 May	Willow Slough
"	1	21 May	"
Eastern Bluebird			2 nests have certainly fledged young. a third on our farm + a fourth elsewhere probably fledged. A fifth pair has begun nesting, + one of the pairs with fledged young seems to be working on re-nesting. Pretty good so far.
Cedar Wax Wings		21 May	Pretty obvious so far this spring Manti Park, near Shenandoah.
Loggerhead Shrikes			I have seen shrikes repeatedly at 2 locations in mills county + a few times at a third; probable nestings.
Starling		23 May	This year's young out of the nest + flying around. Wilson farm, NE Mills County
Vireos		21 May	Manti Park, near Shenandoah, Iowa.

I find a ~~nest~~ nest, NE Mills County, May 29. Different place from other sightings.

with Ross + B.J. →

Many Red-eyes, Warblers, + more Philadelphia's than you're likely to see in 3 years in S.W. Iowa. Good flock.

CONTRIBUTOR: Barbara L Wilson

OTHER OBSERVERS: Ross Silcock, BJ Rose, Loren + Babs Padelford, Pete Peterson, Francis Moore, Robert Myers

SEASON: Spring

YEAR: 1981

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

SPECIES	NO.	DATE	LOCATION - COMMENT - OTHER OBSERVERS
Worm-eating Warbler	1	3 May	with Pete Peterson, Ross Silcock, Francis Moore, Robert Myers Singing, Wildcat Den State Park
Golden Winged Warbler	1	9 May	with Father Hoffman, Babs + Loren Padelford Martin Chapel Cemetery, Mills County
"	1	9 May	with some observers Bluffs north of Cemetery, Mills County
Bay-breasted Warbler	1♂	21 May	with Ross Silcock, BJ Rose Manti Park, South of Shenandoah
Hooded Warbler	1♂	3 May	with Ross Silcock, Robert Myers, Francis Moore Wildcat Den State Park
Dickcissel		30 Apr.	Mills County. First ones I see
American Goldfinch			strikingly abundant in early May, Mills Co.
Grasshopper Sparrow		12 Apr.	Wilson farm, NE Mills County
Junco		6 April	" " " " " last sighting
Tree Sparrow		25 Mar	" " " " " "
H. Fox Sparrow		15 Mar	" " " "
Lincoln's Sparrow		5 May	" " " " last sighting
			the one at my feeder was present December → April
Swamp Sparrow	1	21 May	with BJ Rose, Ross Silcock Taylor Lake, Mills County, Singing
Harris Sparrow		9 May	Swamp Mills County. Last sighting
Blue Gray Gnatcatcher	1	30 May	Willow Slough
Ruddy Turnstone	1	30 May	Willow Slough - documented
Red-tailed Hawk	1	6 April	Wilson Farm, ^{NE} Mills County This bird had a belt of streaks across the upper belly like a Red-tail. Shape like Red-tail. Much white above, but Red-tails often have some white there. Tail WHITE. Seemed all white at first, but when seen with light transmitted through the tail it did have some brown bars on the outer 2/3 of the tail. Bars stronger near the tip (I could see these from above the tail when I looked for them.)

I have descriptions of all worm-eating, Hooded, + Golden-winged Warblers + so can document them if you want.

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Greater Scaup 2. Number 8
3. Location Iowa Power + Light Settling Ponds South of Council Bluffs
4. Date: March 3 1981 5. Time Bird Seen: mid morning to 10-15 minutes

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):

Heads usually appeared rounded, but sometimes square at back. No more than square; certainly no crest. Back approximately uniform gray. Sides appear all white. Decidedly much bigger than the Ring-necked Duck, and not as big as Canvasback.

(Scaup pattern - not recorded in my notes)

7. Description of voice, if heard:

8. Description of behavior:

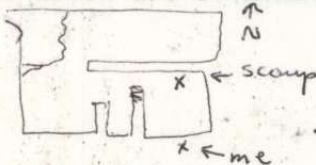
9. Habitat - general: Pond
specific:

10. Differed from lesser Scaup in head shape and size. (lesser Scaup is the size of a Ring-necked)

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

11. Distance (how measured)?

Edge
other side of settling pond



12. Optical equipment: 40x lens
on telescope

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

Overcast. Late morning. Birds north of me

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:

I've seen them but haven't observed well, in Oregon.

15. Other observers: None today. Padelford's found them yesterday and reported them probable Greater's.

16. Did the others agree with your identification?

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:

see #15.

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

Consulted later

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 2 hours

Signature: Barbara L Wilson Address: Rt 1 Box 41

Date: 24 May 1981 City, State: Hastings Iowa 51540

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Greater Scaup 2. Number 1 ♂
3. Location Lake Manawa, Council Bluffs
4. Date: March 9 1981 5. Time Bird Seen: _____ to _____

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):

(Pattern as a scaup, + I didn't write it down)

Size as Redheads (it's with Redheads)

Head rounded. Flanks white. Nail on bill visible

10. Lesser scaup has back of head angled, is the size of a small Redhead or smaller.

7. Description of voice, if heard:

8. Description of behavior:

9. Habitat - general: Oxbow lake
specific:

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

11. Distance (how measured)? 30 yds.

12. Optical equipment:

Guess. Near shore

20x telescope

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

not recorded

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:

I have seen both species but not observed them well

15. Other observers:

None today. Seen later by Padelfords, BT Rose, others.

16. Did the others agree with your identification?

Ross too I think

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

I'd read the Iowa Bird life Article by now.

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?

Signature: Barbara L Wilson Address: Rt 1 Box 41

Date: 24 May 1987 City, State: Hastings Iowa

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Greater Scaup 2. Number 5⁺, 3⁺
3. Location Iowa Power + ~~the~~ Light Settling ponds.
4. Date: 12 March 1981 5. Time Bird Seen: ± 10:00 am.
morning to
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):

All the same size. Greenish gloss on head I think. Sides white. Head rounded, except one - square.

7. Description of voice, if heard:

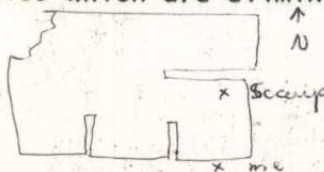
8. Description of behavior:

9. Habitat - general: Large pond.

specific:

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

Pond:



11. Distance (how measured)?

12. Optical equipment: 40x scope

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

Bird north of me. Bright sunlight!

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:

I was beginning to learn about them by now.

15. Other observers:

None today. Seen independently by several including

16. Did the others agree with your identification? Podelfords + BJ Rose

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?

Signature: Barbara L Wilson Address: Rt 1 Box 41

Date: 24 May 1981 City, State: Hastings Iowa

Someday, probably an hour or so later

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Greater Scaup 2. Number 1
3. Location Lake Manawa, Council Bluffs
4. Date: 11 April 1981 5. Time Bird Seen: 6:10 pm to 5 + ~~to~~ minutes

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):

1 ♂ in a group of ~~56~~ 6 ♀ Scaup. Head not crested or even square - sloping in back. ~~That way~~ That way 5 minutes or so (not a merely compression before a dive). Sides white (3 of the other ♂ have more or less grayish sides). Biggest of these scaup, but certainly doesn't stand out as big. I can't tell if the back is different from the others. I can see its bill nail when I can't see those of the others.

7. Description of voice, if heard:

8. Description of behavior: Just floating about with others.

9. Habitat - general: Lake - oxbow lake.

specific:

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

Differs from Lesser Scaup in head shape, size, size of bill. Differs from many lessers in white flanks.

11. Distance (how measured)?

100 yds or 50? guess. maybe less.

12. Optical equipment:

20x scope, maybe

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

east of me in evening. Broken cloud cover, light overcast.

40x but I didn't write it down.

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:

Mainly this spring.

15. Other observers:

None.

16. Did the others agree with your identification?

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description

None.

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? Written right

Signature: Barbara L Wilson Address: Rt 1 Box 41 . then.

Date: 24 May 1981 City, State: Hastings Iowa 51540

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Marbled Godwit 2. Number 1

3. Location Willow Slough, N.E. Mills County, Iowa

4. Date: 19 May 1981 5. Time Bird Seen: ±6:00 ^{±5 minutes, but maybe}
to 1 minute well

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):

not in field notes
→ (large, bill upturned. Godwit. Bill $\frac{1}{2}$ pink, outer $\frac{1}{2}$ black.)
Pale, uniformly colored godwit standing alone. As I
came near it flew. Rump color uniform with back. Wings
unpatterned.

7. Description of voice, if heard: → Mellow + querulous at the same time. 2 + more
syllables, ta, tu. Once when it gave the call
with 2 notes, a pheasant crowed an answer.
The rhythm was the same, though the
pheasant's voice was harsher.

8. Description of behavior: → Fed, but nervous + more often called + bobbed
its front up + down. Flew when I was
still distant.

9. Habitat - general:
specific: Standing in shallow water in drying slough.

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:
Hudsonian Godwit is similar, but has contrasting rump + ~~wing~~ wing stripe

11. Distance (how measured)?

80 ft ~~7~~ less?

12. Optical equipment:

7x binoculars

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

Sunny. Clear. Bird straight east of me, ~~flies~~ flies to south.

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:

This species was commonly seen where I bided in Oregon, +
I saw a lot of them. I've seen lots of Hudsonian Godwits here.

15. Other observers:

None. (Some day,)

16. Did the others agree with your identification?

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

None.

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? an hour

Signature: Barbara L Wilson Address: Rt 1 Box 41

Date: 24 May 1981 City, State: Hastings Ia 5-15-40

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

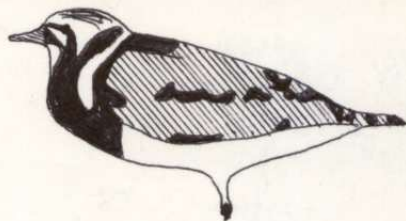
1. Species ~~██████████~~ Ruddy Turnstone 2. Number 1
3. Location Willow Slough
4. Date: 30 May 1981 5. Time Bird Seen: 6:45 ^{+ also some other times} to 7:00 pm
6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):

Description after
I'd seen it briefly:

Tracing of my drawing of
the bird in the ~~of~~ field.
(Neatened in the tracing) →

Back + wing coverts reddish with some black feathers. White stripe in wing, + much black. Head white with black pattern; two vertical stripes (one through eye), going down to large black patch on breast. Lower breast + belly white.

Later I saw the legs were black - after the bird had been standing in soupy mud.



7. Description of voice, if heard: walking about with white-rumped + Semipalmated Sandpipers. larger than theirs.
8. Description of behavior: Picking stuff from the mud. Slept (looking around often) as I drew it.
9. Habitat - general: mudflats at edge of what water
specific: remains in the slough.

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:
Nothing looks like a breeding-plumage Ruddy Turnstone.

11. Distance (how measured)?

as close as 40'

12. Optical equipment:

20x telescope, 7x binoculars

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

Sunny (occasional cloud shadows). Bird east of me ~~each time I saw~~ it well.

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:

I saw a lot in Oregon, but it wouldn't matter. You can't mistake these.

15. Other observers:

Tayce Peterson

16. Did the others agree with your identification? Yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

None.

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? while the bird was there,

Signature: Barbara L Wilson Address: Rt 1 Box 41

Date: May 30, 1981 City, State: Hastings, La 51540