

Purple Gallinule

SU 1974

south of Ottumwa, Wapello Co., IA

D. and C. Ayers

Heusinkveld 1975, Dinsmore 1979

Record Number: 93-CT
Classification: NA

REFERENCES

Heusinkveld, B., C. Scott, P. Evans. C.C. Ayres, and D. Ayers. 1975. Six county area including Ottumwa and Rathbun Lake. IBL 75:82-86.

Dinsmore, J.J., and D.L. Graham. 1979. Purple Gallinule in Ames. IBL 49:87-88.

VOTE: 4 NA, 1 hold

NA, No description. No reason to doubt this record, but, unfortunately, we have no documentation. /thk

NA, Could Ayres and Ayres still provide information? Apparently Dinsmore/Graham had communication with them and were satisfied enough to cite the record. /wrs

Hold my vote till I get to Ames -- I think I kept the letter. /jjd

RE-VOTE: 5 NA

NA, I don't have letter or other info./jjd

NA, Similar to the habitat of the Burlington bird from the mid 1980s./ric

Brown, W. H. 1975. Field reports. Iowa Bird Life 45:55-59 (p 57)

Shorebirds. This group was generally thought fewer, with two dissents (WJ, PK). Virginia Rails were seen on 5 May (FK) and 13 May at Goose Lake (DH). A "first" was the sighting of a Purple Gallinule near Promise City on 10 May (CS). Coots have been unusually numerous with "millions" (RM). Hendrickson Slough

Heusinkveld, B., C. Scott, P. Evans, C. C. Ayers, and D. Ayers. 1975. Six county area including Ottumwa and Rathbun Lake. Iowa Bird Life 75:82-86. pp 82, 83

Six county area including Ottumwa and Rathbun Lake

Lucas, Wayne, Monroe, and Appanoose -- Written by BILL HEUSINKVELD with substantial help from CHARLOTTE SCOTT and PEARL EVANS.

Wapello and Davis --Written by CHARLES C. AYRES and DARLEEN AYRES

Introduction The six county area includes 2,592 square miles of rough wooded area interspersed with scattered agricultural land. The Des Moines River valley and surrounding area were shaped by glacial action and terminal morain of the last great glacier which deposited its burden of rock, sand, and silt to form many small hills and rolling terrain. Because of the depth of available underground water, most of the smaller towns have city reservoirs and the farmers have ponds. There are thousands of ponds in the area, every one being a potential for birds, depending on the type of vegetation around it. Many ponds are easily viewed from country roads. CS saw a Purple Gallinule on one recently. They are excellent for viewing migrating ducks.

Along the Des Moines River and the numerous creeks which empty into it as well as along the quiet country roads and the railroad right-of-ways one will usually find excellent birding. Town cemeteries and reservoirs often produce fine records, and plowed fields and feedlots should be carefully scrutinized in winter and summer. Whistling Swans and White Pelicans are migrants along the river, and the Bald Eagle may be seen in the winter months especially along the Des Moines River. Snowy Owls, Lapland Longspurs and Short-eared Owls have been seen north of town in the winter and a first record of a Purple Gallinule was obtained in 1974 when one of the birds spent several weeks around a farm pond in the yard of a friend of ours south of Ottumwa.

Dinsmore, J. J. and D. L. Graham. 1979. Purple Gallinule in Ames.
Iowa Bird Life 49:87-88.

Purple Gallinule in Ames -- On 22 May 1978 Mrs. Lorna Volmer found an injured Purple Gallinule (*Porphyryla martinica*) in her yard in north Ames, only a few hundred meters from a wooded park adjacent to the Skunk River. The bird was easy to approach and eventually was given to Graham. He found that the right femur was broken, and set it with a steel pin. The bird weakened and died on 23 May. Graham then gave the bird to Dinsmore who prepared it as specimen No. 1648 in the Iowa State University collection of birds. The bird, a female, was emaciated.

Anderson (1907) considered the species accidental in Iowa, listing three early workers (Allen, Peck, and Krider) who mentioned the species although no specimens were collected. Fenton (1916) claimed one was shot in Floyd County in 1891 and another was seen near Charles City on 9 September 1915 but Gabrielson (1917) questioned the validity of those records. Brown (1971) mentions two more records: one in 1937 near Cedar Falls (Dix, 1937) and one photographed in 1964 south of Iowa City (Kent, 1964). More recently one was seen on a farm pond 7 miles south of Ottumwa in late summer and early fall 1974 (Ayres and Ayres, 1975; D. and C. Ayres, pers. commun.) and another was seen near Promise City on 10 May 1975 (Brown, 1975). Thus this constitutes the fifth unquestioned record of the Purple Gallinule in Iowa in this century and the first for which a specimen is available.

LITERATURE CITED

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1907. The birds of Iowa. *Proc. of the Davenport Acad. of Sci.* 11: 125-417.
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- Fenton, C. L.
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1917. A criticism of two recent lists of Iowa birds. *Wilson Bull*, 29: 97-100.
- Kent, F. W.
1964. A Purple Gallinule in Iowa. *Iowa Bird Life* 34: 50-51.
- JAMES J. DINSMORE, Dept. Animal Ecology, Iowa State Univ., Ames, and
DAVID L. GRAHAM, Dept. Vet. Pathology, Iowa State Univ., Ames 50011.