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DINSMORE  
Feb 1981

Preliminary analysis of raptor counts in Story and Boone counties. These are based on township wide surveys and counts of all raptors seen within the township. Counts of owls are not considered because they obviously are biased and miss most of the birds (the counts generally are done from car).

County	Year	No. counts	hawks /count	red-tails/count	kestrels/count
Story	1977-79	24	.50	.25	.21
	1981	5	3.4	1.6	1.0
Boone	1977-79	12	2.58	1.5	.42
	1981	6	4.5	1.5	2.5

Several things stand out. First in Story county, the number of hawks reported was up dramatically, with red-tails and kestrels making up most of the individuals. The other hawks were ~~mostly~~ unidentified. ~~on a few roughlegs.~~ In Boone county, the number of redtails was the same but the number of kestrels reported was up 4-5 fold. Thus it appears that Boone county, with the good woodlands along the Des Moines river, didn't have much change but that kestrels were up both there and in Story county while Red-tails, which were almost absent in past years in Story county were up considerably there. The lack of snow cover, relatively warm winter and the good observation conditions all probably are important in this change but obviously we have more wintering raptors here in central Iowa than were reported in 1977-79.

The one suprising thing is that only one rough-leg was reported on 13 counts that I have had turned in so far and that from southern Webster county. Probably some of the unidentified birds were roughlegs.

The only other records of note are:

- ✓ Red-headed Woodpecker this definitely seems to be a wintering year for this species in central Iowa. I saw at least 15 of them at Ledges State Park on 4 January in one hour.
- ✓ Golden-crowned Kinglet one was seen very well at 10 feet on the ISU campus on 1 February. This is a species we usually don't see often in winter here.

Dear Tom,

A fairly slow winter. I've had reports of crossbills but no details. Also heard of 2 Pine Grosbeaks (via Zaletels and also Carl Kurtz) and have asked those observers to send you details. Other than the usual siskins and purple finches, there is little else around in the way of winter finches.

I have had a number of students do some raptor surveys, mainly from auto. Each team was assigned a township to cover as thoroughly as possible. So far I have reports on 5 townships in Story and 6 in Boone counties. I have compared the number of hawks and also kestrels and red-tails that were seen this year per township with the number seen in 1977-79 when similar counts were made in those counties. Counts were also made in 1980 but I don't have the data available.

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