

Carolina Parakeet

CA 1850

Webster Co., IA

I. N. Gabrielson's grandfather

McKinley 1965

Record Number: 81-MY  
Classification: NA

REFERENCE

McKinley, D. 1965. Carolina Parakeet in the Northwest. Auk  
82:221-222.

VOTE (1981): 1-I, 2-III, 1-IV, 2-V, 1-VI

V, hearsay.

III, easy bird to id.

I, record acceptable as extirpated species.

III, Prob. correct, although second-hand (or third) report.

Carolina Parakeet

## IOWA

D. McKinley  
Auk 82:221-222 1965  
Carolina Parakeet in  
the Northwest

I looked at Nebraska  
part of article and  
can't see any specific  
references relevant  
to Iowa records. TK

Inasmuch as Iowa is bounded on the west by the Missouri River, almost all that I have written in connection with Nebraska applies to Iowa and I shall not repeat it. Wherever riverbank forest conditions allowed, there can be no doubt that both sides of the river were equally inhabited by parakeets. For Iowa itself, Anderson (1907: 269-271) gave a good account gathered from many sources.

Working entirely from secondary evidence, Paul Bartsch (1895: 2) wrote that in former times the parakeet, "always gathered in flocks, would range as far north as Spirit Lake [Dickinson County] where it would frequently remain until the cold snows and stormy blizzards from the north would drive it southward." He implied that there was an Iowa specimen at the State University of Iowa, but this appears not to have been true, those there being in Talbot's collection from Oklahoma. 6

Notes of the late T. C. Stephens indicate that he knew of sight records of the parakeet in five Iowa counties (J. H. Ennis, letter of 23 November 1962). Of these, Fremont and Woodbury are on the Missouri River and my Nebraska account applies to them. Decatur County is included because of Trippe's (1873: 233) secondhand report of the species appearing in flocks there as late, perhaps, as the early 1870's. I am not sure of the origin of the Sac County record, but it may stem from J. A. Spurrell's rather negative statement (1919: 117) that he had found "only rumors" of the parakeet among the pioneers, nothing tangible. It appears that Stephens did not credit Bartsch's record for Dickinson County, mentioned above; reminiscences of F. W. Calkins of the period of 1865-1880. (Stephens, 1943) indicate that the parakeet was never seen in Clay County, just south of Dickinson County.

The fifth county mentioned in Stephens's notes is Scott, and I have no definite data to validate the claim. It is possible that the somewhat recon-

dite account of T. H. Macbride (1928: 100-101), vaguely referable to the period of 1846-1860, may be the basis of the record. Macbride's fictional but basically true story seems to refer to southeastern Iowa; there is little doubt that he actually saw "lone trees," usually cottonwoods, on the prairies that were visited by flocks of parakeets. At any rate, it is the nearest that I can come to a Mississippi Valley record for Iowa.

Although J. A. Allen (1868) did not find any reports of the parakeet in central and western Iowa in 1867, this may mean merely that parakeets were already forgotten. I. N. Gabrielson reported to me (conversation 13 June 1959) that his grandfather had described the species convincingly as having been seen in Webster County in the late 1850's or early 1860's. } 4

Little new information on the parakeet has been added in the many lists of Iowa birds that have appeared over three-quarters of a century. Keyes and Williams (1889: 131) noted that although it was gone, it once occurred in the southern part of the state; Osborn (1891: 7) listed it, even though no specimen was present in the collection that he was describing, and he later (1905: 568-569) mentioned the species rather perfunctorily. Ridgway (1916: 148, 149) cited the reports of Maximilian, Audubon, and Trippe only. W. W. Bennett (1931: 9), in a list of the birds of Sioux City, referred to Audubon's trip of 1843 (but see above: Audubon did not specifically report parakeets from the Sioux City area) and referred to specimens that *are not* of Iowa origin.

The last careful treatments of the parakeet in Iowa were those of DuMont (1933: 81; 1935: 206). Bent (1940: 10) summarized the affair: "casually Iowa (Spirit Lake and Decatur County)."