

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Printed: 08/26/93

Hoary Redpoll

5 Feb 1978

Pocahontas, Pocahontas Co., IA

Ray Cummins

IBL 48:50-51

Record Number: 81-KO  
Classification: NA

REFERENCE

Field Reports: IBL 48:50-51

VOTE (1981): 5-IV, 2-V

V, no description.

IV, no detail even in documentation.

IV, No details; probably correct.

Hoary Redpoll

Halmi, N. S. 1978. Field reports. Iowa Bird Life 48:47-52

p 50-51

Finches, Sparrows. Northern Cardinals were scarce in Sioux Center (JV). Evening Grosbeaks staged a massive invasion, reaching s.c. Texas. Only in some places in Iowa did they linger: 5-7 daily at Ruth Phipps' feeder, one for 3 weeks until January 4 (DM), and 4-12 at Davenport area feeders (PP). Good numbers, possibly birds in transit, were recorded in YRF (December 2, 24 on December 24, DK, JS). Late observations (2 on February 10 at Seymour, ChS, 1 at Central City, February 11, LS) may signal the start of a retreat to the north. Purple Finches were widely seen, but not in large numbers, and with apparent hiatuses. The highest count seems to have been about 30 in HHP in mid-January (MN). One of the glories of the season was an invasion of Pine Grosbeaks. At least 14 were seen January 7 - February 10 at St. Lucas and West Union (JS), 10 on December 22 in YRF (DK), 2 east of Larabee (MB), one at a Des Moines feeder in mid-January (fide RM), 3 in Glendale Cemetery, January 24 (RM, WB et al.; documented), and 5 in HHP and the adjacent cemeteries January 12 - February 11 (RD, TK, Tst, TSh; documented), for a new area record. The birds seen on the CBC in Cedar Rapids were probably those that kept showing up on January 27 in a yard not far from Cedar Memorial Cemetery (EO) with such regularity that they could be viewed by virtually all active birders in Cedar Rapids and 2 from Iowa City (TSh, NiH) (up to 7 birds). With a slight departure from the checklist order, let me write first about Common Redpolls. Having appeared in the northeast in November, they swept across the state, reaching Shenandoah in mid-January (IG, RP). There were a few flocks of 75-100 birds in weedy fields (west of Des Moines, WB; CoIt, MN, RD), but for the most part the birds came to feeders in towns, in moderate numbers. In Davenport, 59 were banded January 18 - February 1 (PP). A relatively large urban group was 50 in HHP and nearby cemeteries on February 5 (RD). Strangely, Common Redpolls did not appear in northwest Iowa (Cherokee, Spencer) until well into February (DB, CoS). Perhaps because of the affinity of the redpolls for feeders, the stage was set for the addition of Hoary Redpoll to the state list. See the longer note on the sighting of a female in Marion on January 22 (FT), subsequent confirmation by others, netting and photography. As of February 15, this bird has been seen by numerous observers from the Cedar Rapids area (Weir Nelson, LS), Iowa City (TK, TSh, NiH) and Davenport (PP). Its presence lends plausibility to an earlier sighting under much less favorable conditions (S-SB, see longer note) and several subsequent ones (1 from 20 yards with a 20x scope in Pocahontas Co., February 5, and 2-5 with white rumps or light appearance in a flock of some 80 Common Redpolls, February 12, Buffalo Creek Conservation Area) (RC). More convincing is a second documented sight record at a feeder, of a male (February 12, PP). Even though the Hoary Redpoll is now a solid addition to the Iowa list, only extremely detailed observations will be considered corroborated, for I.B.L. or American Birds! Pine Siskins were also common in the southern part of the state, all the way to Hamburg (IG) and Seymour (ChS). Petersen banded 152 January 18 - February 1. But few were left in the N.E. (5 on December 18, JS). While some northern finches brought glamour to an otherwise tiresome Iowa winter, Red Crossbills were not reported at all. White-winged Crossbills were "common" in the N.E. in early December, but not thereafter (DK) (one on December 24 at YRF, JS); 4 were at Eagle Point in Clinton on December 3, and one at a nearby feeder February 6 (PP); a single female has been a regular at a Cedar Rapids feeder since December 28 (LS). A Rufous-sided Towhee at Hamburg on January 22 was, atypically, of the eastern race; later, a member of the western race appeared (IG). "Many" Harris' Sparrows were at Riverton on January 22 (RP); the 70+

4  
3  
5  
6  
7

Robin - 1

81-KO

Reg. Curran  
Field Report  
1978  
Winter

2-5-78 4-5:30 P.M.

1-2 miles N. of GRETZINGER

Clear - 10 nm wind - 0°F Total - 8

Horned Larks - 40-50

Common Crow - 3

Common Redpolls - 4

Hoary Redpolls - 1 20 yds with 20 power spotting scope  
30-45 min observation (5)

Tree Sparrows - 5

State-colored Junco - 2

Lapland Longspurs - 3 winter plumage

Snow buntings - 17

2-12-78 2:30 - 4:30

Buffalo Creek Conservation Area

Cloudy - 20°F - 1-5 knot wind

Total - 10

Ringnecked Pheasants 5

Rock Doves - 12-15

Mourning Dove - 1

Horned Larks - 6

Common Crow - 11

Black-capped Chickadee - 2

White-breasted Nuthatch - 1

Common Redpolls - 75-82

Hoary Redpoll - 2-5 Saw white rump on two birds  
several other birds in flock  
appeared to be Hoary's also

Tree Sparrows - 2

(6)