

VAN DYK

Fall Report

Note: Due to extensive absences and time pressures my birding has suffered this fall. Hence this brief and sketchy report. I will have to be out of state a fair bit this winter season as well, so the next report will not be much more substantial, I fear.

Weather for the period: August -- largely a wet month with average temperatures. September -- mostly dry and relatively warm, and frost free. Record breaking temps at the end of the month (92 on September 29). October -- first frost of the season on October 2. Generally a dry and normal month. About 2" of snow fell on October 24, which melted a day later. November -- first half of month dry and mild. Major snow storm on November 18/19 (ca. 3-4") and again November 30 (3").

- ✓ - Red-tailed Hawk: excellent migration, particularly in week of October 11.
- ✓ - "Krider's" Red-tailed Hawk: one was present in Oak Grove State Park in western Sioux Co. on September 12.
- ✓ - Bob-white: apparently enjoyed an excellent nesting season. Widespread occurrence of parents with young in western and central Sioux Co, especially in second half of August.
- ✓ - Gray Partridge: like Bobwhite, excellent nesting season. An abundant bird this season.
- shorebirds: very poor migration. Only Pectoral Sandpiper was relatively common. All other species exceptionally scarce.
- ✓ - Screech Owl: good nesting season. Fledgling owls are visible in half a dozen places in Sioux Center alone in late summer. (By fledgling I mean fully fledged grown owls but remaining in the area of the nest).
- Common Nighthawk: a fine migration in late August and through September. Some evenings as many as 30 individuals were visible in the sky at once.
- ✓ - Swallows: large and prolonged migrations, especially of Cliff and Barn Swallows. Last Barn Swallows observed on October 8.
- ✓ - Red-breasted Nuthatch: observed the first individual on October 8 in Sheldon (O'Brien Co.). Since then they have been quite regularly present in many places in Sioux Co.
- ✓ - Brown Creeper: first migrant in Sioux Center on October 11. They are scarcer than Red-breasted Nuthatch thus far.
- Golden-crowned Kinglet: observed the first one in Sioux Center on November 16.
- Eastern Bluebird: at least two nests managed to fledge young in western Sioux Co. A family with 3 young was in Oak Grove Park on August 16, another with 4 young along the Rock River in western Sioux Co.
- Warblers: one of the quietest and most inconspicuous migrations ever! There simply didn't seem to be any warblers at all!
- ✓ - Black-and-white Warbler: an individual was present in the Sioux/Rock Access in western Sioux Co. on August 16. Breeder or early migrant?

- ✓ - Blue Grosbeak: several individuals were present in western Sioux Co. in the week from August 16-20.
- sparrow migration: no real opportunity to observe and judge.
- ✓ - Clay-colored Sparrow: an individual was singing in Sioux Center on October 16.
- Dark-eyed Junco: arrived on time in second week of October.

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