

Lewis's Woodpecker

28 Nov 1928

Sioux City, Woodbury Co., IA

M. L. Bailey, others

to 20 Mar 1929; Bailey 1929, Youngworth 1929, 1931

Record Number: 81-BI

Classification: A-D

REFERENCES

Bailey, M.L. 1929. [untitled]. Bull. I.O.U. 7:3.

Youngworth, W. 1929. [untitled]. Bull. I.O.U. 7:3

Youngworth, W. 1931. Late fall and winter records 1926 to 1930
in the upper Missouri valley. Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci. 38:277-285.

DuMont 1933

Bent 1939

VOTE (1981): 3-II, 2-III, 2-IV

II, Although not described, it was seen repeatedly by
experienced observers and is easy to identify.

IV, only description big, black, with slow wing beats. (This
could describe a crow!)

IV, No details sufficient to confirm in any written reports.

III, Sight record seen over prolonged period by many
observers. Despite the fact the bird was present for 3 months,
none of the observers recorded a description of the bird in the
three notes on it that were published.

III, Seen by many observers, several with good reputations.
'Big black' seems adequate for a printed description (WY, 1929),
although no mention of breast coloration makes III not II.

REVOTE (at meeting, 1 May 1981): 6-III, 1-IV

Lewis' Woodpecker

Bailey, M. L. (no title).
Bull IOU 7:3, 1929.

The day before Thanksgiving we found at Riverside Park quite a list of birds we had not seen in winter in other parts of the country about here. There were eight Red-headed Woodpeckers. There are not often found in the winter and are still here. A Lewis Woodpecker was really the find of the year and was found and identified by me on that date and later by at least a dozen members of the Bird Club. As far as I can find by looking up the records, this is the first record for Iowa and is considerably east of its most easterly range which is western Nebraska. Two Kingfishers were seen here on November 29th and again we saw one on the 19th of December, but they have not been reported later than that. A flock of a dozen Robins are spending the winter at McCook Lake and in Stone Park. Bluebirds were seen at Riverside December 19th, and a pair of Golden-crowned Kinglets have spent the winter so far on the bank of the Sioux River. A Red-tailed Hawk was a Christmas record but we usually find at least one every winter. We do not consider either the Robins or Bluebirds rare winter records, but do not always find them. While Flickers are always with us, we find more here this winter than usual. The Golden-crowned Kinglet is not a common winter record but, next to the Lewis Woodpecker, the Kingfisher has been the greatest surprise for I can find no one who remembers seeing them here so late in the winter. We have had an abundance of the usual winter birds also.—Mary L. Bailey, Sioux City.

Youngworth, W. (no title).
Bull IOU 7:3, 1929.

Bird students of Sioux City are very fortunate in having a distinguished visitor with them this winter. Many bird lovers have gone out to see this visitor, who makes his abode in the Council Oak Tree in Riverside Park. This tree is well known in local history. Why this bird, the Lewis Woodpecker, should choose this tree will be briefly described.

Dr. T. C. Stephens made known the fact that the Council Oak is a bee tree. It is also known that this species of woodpecker lives mostly on insects, usually caught on the wing. Because of the very mild weather, the bees have been somewhat active, as several observers have reported. Thus it is reasonably safe to assume that our friend is feeding on honey bees whenever he can.

An abundant crop of acorns also furnishes the Lewis Woodpecker with another food supply. It is probable that he robs the caches of numerous Red-Headed Woodpeckers, who are residents in the park this winter. The Red-headed Woodpeckers take every opportunity to drive the intruder away. The big, black woodpecker does not retaliate in the least, but flies off with slow wing beats, evidently not caring to quarrel with his lesser relatives.

The Lewis Woodpecker was first reported by Mrs. H. M. Bailey in November. The bird has stayed on through December and was still as vigorous as ever at the time of this writing, January 17, 1929.—Wm. Youngworth, Sioux City.

Lewis' Woodpecker

Youngworth, W. 1931. Late fall and winter records 1926 to 1930 in the upper Missouri valley. Proc Iowa Acad Sci 38:277-285. 9

LEWIS'S WOODPECKER. *Asyndesmus lewisi*. The presence of a Lewis's Woodpecker at Riverside Park, Sioux City, furnished the ornithological surprise for the whole period. The first report of the bird was on November 28, 1928, by Mrs. W. J. Armour and Mrs. H. M. Bailey, and was later verified by many members of the Sioux City Bird Club. The woodpecker seemed to stay in the Council Oak tree, which is a bee tree and without a doubt bees were eaten along with the usual acorn diet.

This interesting woodpecker is a western form with the Black Hills of South Dakota as its normal eastern range. During December, 1928, and January and February, 1929, the bird was always seen at the same place in the park and was last reported on March 20, by Mrs. H. M. Bailey.

Asyndesmus lewisi Gray. Lewis's Woodpecker

A casual visitor. The only record is of a single individual that remained in Riverside Park, Sioux City, Woodbury County, from November 28, 1928, when it was discovered by Mrs. W. J. Armour, until March 20, 1929. It was seen repeatedly during the intervening time by the members of the Sioux City Bird Club. While the specimen was not collected, there can be no doubt as to the identification (Youngworth, 1931).

DuMont 1934
p91

Bent, A. C.: Life Histories of North American Woodpeckers.
Bull 174 US Nat Museum, Washington, 1939. p 237

Casual records.—Lewis's woodpecker has been taken on several occasions at points east of its normal range. Among these records are Alberta, Castor, May 7 and 9, 1924; Big Hay Lake, October 12, 1930; and Lesser Slave Lake, May 22, 1928; Saskatchewan, one specimen at Herschel on September 23, 1914, three in the Qu'Appelle Valley, one from near Eastend on September 19, 1915, two in the same vicinity on September 24, 1929, and two in the summer of 1931; North Dakota, a specimen was taken at Neche, on October 13, 1916, and one was noted at Grafton on October 10, 1926; Nebraska, recorded at Long Pine during the winter of 1898-99; Kansas, a specimen at Ellis on May 6, 1878, and another near Lawrence on November 7, 1908; eastern Oklahoma, one was carefully observed near Tulsa on December 24, 1922; Iowa, recorded at Sioux City from November 28, 1928, to April 7, 1929; Illinois, one recorded from Chicago on May 24, 1923, and another from Argo on May 14, 1932; and Rhode Island, a specimen collected at Mount Pleasant, near Providence, on November 16, 1928.