

GILLASPEY

answered 2/10/83
sent to us

Route 1, Box 66,
Lamoni, Ia . 50140
Feb. 3, 1983

Thomas H. Kent, Field Reports Editor
211 Richards Street
Iowa City, Ia.

Dear Sir,

Please send me sample forms for making field reports notes and forms for documentation of unusual observations, as offered in notes in a recent issue of Iowa Bird Life. Am inclosing a few stamps in payment for costs. I have access to good copy machines to make additional copies of the forms as we may have need for them.

No big bird news here so far. Horned Larks were completely absent here for a month. Now we are seeing them again. Have many Kestrels here this winter, generally seen one on a wire near a row of the big hay bales along a roadside. This is a new development in the last 5 years.

Will try and send you something useful last week of Feb.

Do you have an extensive library of bird books, or can you refer this to someone who does? We would like to get broad information on the nests and nesting of King Rail, particularly in areas not a marsh with standing water. We have reliable accounts here over the last few years of birds being seen in hayfields around July 1. The observers report they appear to be about twice the size of Upland Sandpiper or size of small hen pheasant and with a bill 3 or 4 inches long that appears to be down-curved. This is on rolling meadow ground. If King Rails, they might be nesting in small patches of cattails of only 100 square feet that can be found near the numerous small farm ponds found here. Also, do you know anyone who has experience in calling any species of Rail with tape-recorder.

Will appreciate anything you can find on above.

Very truly yours,

J. Donald Gillaspey
J. Donald Gillaspey

P.S. The five Lapland Longspurs banded last year by Genevieve DeLong were trapped in a field on my farm. We had the experience at that time of walking AMONG the Longspurs, just like chicken in a poultry yard. Four of us would notice several birds within ten feet on the ground with each slow breathless step.