

Barbara L Wilson  
Rt 1 Box 41  
Hastings Ia 51540

Summer 1983  
Iowa

Wilson

Dear Mr. Kent:

Weather's been odd. June continued cool + wet. Rained June 28 and not again until July 28. We had a stretch of 100°+ days in July that isn't over yet. Stressed corn + soybeans - price of corn rose 7¢ in one day when traders realized what was happening to corn during tasseling. In June, plants bloomed profusely - many people commented on lovely flowers. I noticed good crops of wild plum, choke cherry, mulberry, but ~~a~~ few plants died back in ~~the~~ recent heat. Crop of small frog, toads good. <sup>Insects variable. Hackberry</sup> not suffering from mites.

Several insect-eating birds (eg Red-headed Woodpecker, Barn Swallow, Crested Flycatcher) were low in numbers in June + May but normal or only slightly low in July. Presumably they had to resort to non-flying insects early in the year + were not conspicuous.

We're sending Piping Plover observations to Pete Petersen as a short article. ~~I~~ I enclose a copy of an early draft + table of sightings.

I noticed that several species on the farm are present in numbers equal to those in 1979. I have no idea why.

Sorry about the order - I tried to follow the new order but kept reverting to the old one.

-Barb Wilson

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Species	#	date	Location, etc.
✓ Common Loon	1	May 19 - July 12 or later	IPL Settling Ponds
		winter plumage	
✓ Eared Grebe	1	June 7	Willow Slough
Pied billed Grebe	nested	June	Forney's Lake
"	<del>summer</del> nested		Willow Slough
Am. White Pelican	1	June 2, 4, 6	Forney's Lake
✓ "	20	late June + July	" " according to Carl Priebe
Double-crested Cormorant	6	June 2	Forney's Lake
✓ "	20	June 6	"
"	2	June 11	Willow Slough
"	1	June 16	"
"	1	July 15	mile 583, Missouri River
Great Blue Heron	a few	summer	Forney's Lake, Mo. River, etc.
✓ Blk-crowned Night Heron	3	June 6	Forney's Lake - immature plumage
✓ Canada Goose	1	July 30	IPL Settling Pond.
		It was there, but I don't know where it came from!	
✓ Gadwall	2-3	as late as June 20	Willow Slough
Am. Wigeon	1	June 7	"
✓ Ring-necked Duck	1-3	as late as June 26	"
Lesser Scaup	8	June 7	"
✓ "	1-2	as late as June 30	"
<u>Ruddy Ducks</u>	several	June	" and Forney's Lake
✓ Red-tailed Hawk	adult + fledgling	July 11	NE Mills County
✓ Am. Kestrel	2 family groups	July	" " "
✓ "	1 nest failed	June	Wearin Prairie, Mills Co.
✓ Gray Partridge	2	early June	Eric Nyren saw the pair on his NE Mills county farm in to June, but has not seen them recently.

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Species	#	date	location
Ring-necked Pheasant	low	June + July	low on censuses on farm. This may be an echo of low productivity last year.
N. Bobwhite			

with PIK ~~acres~~ (set-aside) and better (if not good) weather, productivity may be high this year, but # of adults seems low.

Piping Plover	2 pairs	June + July	Bred at IPL settling pond.
"	7 <del>migrants</del> <sup>(total 9 birds)</sup>	July 4	Loren + Babs Padelford - Ross Silcock
✓ "	15 migrants (total 17 birds)	July 7	" <b>Ross Silcock</b>
"	6 migrants (total 8 birds)	July 12	" Loren + Babs Padelford
"	none	July 12	"
✓ "	See enclosed article		

Killdeer 47 July 30 IPL Settling Pond

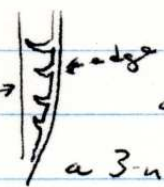
Greater Yellowlegs 1 " " " "

✓ Willet 9 July 2 " " **- Ross Silcock**

✓ Sanderling 2 June 2 " "

✓ Short-billed Dowitcher 1 July 8 " "

\* Breeding plumage. Rich cinnamon. Belly light, under tail coverts cinnamon. Tail with white bars as wide as or wider than black bars. Tertials:

shaft →  2 note worry call as Killdeer fly around. Bill seems to droop. Later, gives a 3-note call, Ki-li-lup.

✓ Dowitcher sp. 3 July 30 IPL Settling Ponds

✓ Wilson's Phalarope 1 July 2 **Riverton - Ross Silcock**

✓ Franklin's Gull 8 June 7 Willow Slough

Forster's Tern 2 July 21 IPL Settling Pond - Bob Howe

✓ Common Tern 2 June 6 Forney's Lake

" ~~Dark primaries~~ <sup>seen</sup>

✓ Least Tern. at least 6 summered at IPL Settling Ponds. No young seen, but courtship (minnow passing) seen in early June. No nests found.

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Species	#	Date	Location
Black Tern		June 6	Forney's Lake
		June 7	<del>Willow</del> Slough
✓	27	July 12	IPL settling Ponds
		July 21	"
✓	1	July 30	"
✓ Black billed Cuckoo	1	June 3	Wilson farm
Yellow-billed Cuckoo		normal #'s	
Belted Kingfisher		summered	Wilson farm
Red-headed Woodpecker		numbers on counts still low in June but low end of normal in July	Wilson farm
✓ Alder Flycatcher	1	June 8	" " "phe-beer" song heard
✓ " "	1	June 15	" " " " "
Willow Flycatcher		summered	Willow slough
Tree Swallow	1	July 15	Missouri River
Cliff Swallow		July 15	bridges on Missouri River
Colonies:		east end only of Nebraska City bridge	
		Bellevue bridge	
		I-480 bridge	
		all colonies small, partly invaded with House Sparrows	
		Bridges without colonies: Plattsmouth, South Omaha, I-80, Omaha Railroad bridge, + the Omaha bridge that pivots to open.	
✓ Tufted Titmouse		none anywhere on farm. They were resident here once, but I found none, + I spent a lot of time in the woods	
House Wren	593	of nests whose results I know have failed. (17 nests total)	
		this is 423 of <del>the</del> all the nests I've seen - some are continuing now	
Sedge Wren		resident	Wearin Prairie, Mills County

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✓ E. Bluebird This has been a very poor year for Bluebird nesting, especially after the great success they had last year. Most losses to predators, but some nests were deserted.

Interesting failures:

1. July 30 a juvenile ~~fox~~ Squirrel was seen by John Wilson <sup>entering</sup> an active Bluebird Box. After wards, the 3 ~~eggs~~ eggs were gone. - Wilson farm
2. Bluebirds are unusual hosts of cowbirds, but this July a pair of Bluebirds raised 1 cowbird + no bluebirds. - Wilson farm

Data on nest success - NE Mills Co.

year	1983	1982	1981	1980
# of boxes	41	36	?	?
nest seen	28	27	12	4
nests known to have failed *	17	4	1	0
% failure	60%	<del>15%</del> 15%	8%	0%
total young fledged	14-19	53-58 <sup>+</sup>	25 <sup>+</sup>	11

\* a conservative #: omits questionable results, and omits the one nest still continuing right now.

Normally, clutch size gradually decreases as the season wears on. <sup>for any bird</sup> This year, I found a 6-egg clutch June 18 ~~usually~~ and Judy Reimers of ~~the~~ Glenwood noted a 6-egg clutch as the second clutch her bluebirds lay. I normally see 6-egg clutches as the first clutch in April + May or not at all. This may be a reflection of the very poor early Spring weather, or something

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- ✓ L. Shrike OK numbers Mills County  
✓ Cedar Waxwing 1-2 pair summured Wilson farm  
this has never happened before. No evidence of nesting.  
Birds always seen in pairs.
- Bell's Vireo summured Willow Slough  
Warbling Vireo decline has ended Wilson farm  
Yellow Warbler summured Willow Slough  
Am. Redstart " " "

\* House Sparrow down significantly on my census route!  
this is great, but unfortunately it probably has a simple  
explanation. We no longer have hogs. When 1 of 4 hog  
operations on the route is gone, a decline in sparrows  
is to be expected. - Wilson farm.

- ✓ Great-tailed Grackle 2 July 3 Rinerton  
See documentation  
Duckcissel \* on farm still fairly high this year