

- BRAND

Spring 1984 Report

Meteorological conditions: Spring never did arrive in NW Iowa it seemed. Winterlike conditions continued until early May. The lakes, ponds, and lagoons retained a snow and ice cover until late April. The abundant snowfall, cold weather, and later rainfall however, did create many shallow temporary ponds on agricultural land that were frequented by the migrating waterfowl. Warmer, drier conditions finally prevailed in mid-May, enabling agricultural work to proceed except for numerous wet terraces, hillside seeps, and poorly drained low areas. As one would expect, the spring flora in the prairie and forest tracts also appeared several weeks later than usual.

Species Report:

- ✓ -Great Egret-5, April 12, by small pond east of Hudson, S.D. in Iowa, sighted by A.J. Boersma of Sioux Center
- Turkey Vulture-1, April 17, flying along the Big Sioux River bluffs and May 5 near Hawarden
- Osprey-1, April 15, flying low over flooded Big Sioux River floodplain near Hawarden
- ✓ -Bald Eagle-1, March 10, Big Sioux River, Hawarden
- Northern Harrier-1, April 15, Big Sioux River, Hawarden
- ✓ -Sharp-shinned Hawk-1, April 15, same location
- ✓ -Coopers Hawk-1, May 26, near Sutherland, flying along the Little Sioux River
- ✓ -Broad-winged Hawk-200, April 25, huge kettle over both Sioux Center and Orange City, a phenomenal occurrence!
- Swainson's Hawk-several sightings in Sioux County:
  - ✓ March 28, 1 flying over Orange City
  - April 15, May 5 and 6, at Oak Grove State Park, Hawarden
  - May 3, 1 flying 2 miles south of Sioux Center
  - ✓ May 5, 2 one a melanistic phase 2 miles south of Sioux Center
- ✓ -Rough-legged Hawk-1, April 30 sighting by Scott Gritters near Hawarden, IA
- Kestrel-large numbers present in early to mid-April
- Sora-1, May 12 at Big Kettle Preserve near Okoboji
- ✓ -American Avocet-1, April 26, Sioux-Preme Lagoons south of Sioux Center
- ✓ -Greater Yellowlegs-, first flock observed April 14 on flooded agricultural land b/n Sioux Center and Orange City. Last observation was a lone bird, May 21 at Sioux-Preme Lagoons
- ✓ (about 25)
- Lesser Yellowlegs-approximately 25 birds observed on April 14 with the Greater Yellowlegs, first seen April 14 and last seen on May 5.
- Solitary Sandpiper-2, at small pond near Orange City

- ✓ -Spotted Sandpiper-2, April 26 was the first sighting at Sioux-Preme lagoons
- ✓ -Upland Sandpiper-1, May 5 at Oak Grove State Park. Heard singing in the prairie area
- Semi-palmated Sandpiper-3, May 5, on flooded ag. land b/n O.C. and S.C.
- ✓ -Baird's Sandpiper- 2, May 11 at Sioux-Preme Lagoons
- ✓ -Red-necked Phalarope-first observed April 26 at S.P. Lagoons. Last sighting May 11 at the Lagoons. Approximately 10 birds.
- ✓ -Barred Owl-1, May 26, near Sutherland along Little Sioux River
- ✓ -N. Saw-whet Owl-1, March 28 near Orange City
- Winter Wren-April 15 in Orange City
- Marsh Wren-1, May 12, in wet brushy meadow by small pond near O.C.
- Eastern Bluebird-1, an early April 7 sighting at De Soto Nat'l Wildlife Refuge
- ✓ -Hermit Thrush, first sighted April 9, then present in large numbers until April 26
- ✓ -Yellow-rumped Warbler, first observed April 7 at De Soto
- ✓ -LeConte's Sparrow-1, May 4, an excellent sighting of this nervous little bird near O.C.
- Purple Finch, 3-5 present until May 11 at feeder in O.C.
- ✓ -Pine Siskin, 5-7 present at finch feeder until May 10 in Orange City

General Notes:

Waterfowl frequented primarily the flooded agricultural land and rivers during this migration since lakes and ponds remained ice-covered so late this year. There also appeared to be an exceptionally large number of Lincoln's sparrows this year.

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