

Barbara L Wilson
Rt 1 Box 41
Hastings, Ia 51540

Spring 1984
Iowa

Form = Wilson farm, NE Mills
county

✓ Common Loon	Mar 29	1	Willow Slough	only one I've seen this year.
✓ Pied-billed Grebe	March 25	2+	Forney's lake	First Ross Sillcock + I saw this year. No large #1's
✓ Eared Grebe	April 16	4	Willow Slough	1st. this year
✓ White Pelican	April 14	40 (count)	Willow Slough	
✓ "	" 16	200 (counted 199)	"	
✓ "	" 27	2	"	
✓ Double-crested Cormorant	April 11	137	"	
✓ "	" 14	51	"	
✓ "	" 16	41	"	

Early ones adults; birds seen in May have been immatures mostly

✓ American Bittern	April 16	1	Willow Slough
Great Blue Heron	April 6	35	farm

✓ 35 Herons in 3 flocks flew north, low over the farm.

I never saw anything like it before. largest flock had 17 birds

* Barrow's Goldeneye Mar. 25 1 Forney's Lake

See documentation

✓ Ross's Goose Mar 24 1 Willow Slough

documentation available
See documentation

* Oldsquaw Apr. 16 1 " "

Hooded Merganser Mar. 16 2 Farm

✓ "	" 24	14	Willow Slough	} a lot of Hoodeds
✓ "	" 26	13	" "	

✓ Red-breasted Merganser Mar. 1 2 Forney's Lake

" 16 1 Willow Slough

" 24 2 " "

" 25 2 Forney's Lake

Apr. 16 1 Willow Slough

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 Iowa

Farm = Wilson Farm,
 NE Mills County

Turkey Vulture	April 7	2	Farm	First I see
Osprey	Apr. 11	1	Willow Slough	
Bald Eagle	Mar. 1	51	Forney's Lake	

Sightings at Willow Slough + in Mills County this year prompted an article in the Malvern Leader. Unfortunately, the article was quite incomprehensible. Anyway, people were interested.

Accipiters none

* Swainson's Hawk April 14 5 Willow Slough Being chased about by an immature Red-tail

Red-tailed Hawk This has been a season of odd Buteos. Most seemed to be Red-taileds, but some are just weird. Lots of dark birds. One with unmarked dark back + wings + pale tan head looked like an eagle from a distance, but wasn't. One was a warm tawny color, almost pale orange, below. On the farm - March 26-27, we had a real pale Kneider's Hawk - tail nearly completely white, with a narrow area of pale rest at tip. Upper parts heavily mottled with white. Head pale.

Let me quote notes taken ~~to~~ after I saw Red-tails at the quarry near Forney's Lake, March 1:

"... two hawks flew over, close together. One of them flipped on its back, + went along that way while I decided I couldn't possibly have seen that. Surely the bird was right side up now, and just a dark bird. Then, after 10 or 15 seconds, it flipped back. Weird."

* Peregrine Falcon Apr. 24 1 Willow Slough See documentation

Ring-necked Pheasant: Not abundant this spring, but plenty common enough; came through the winter OK

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Mills County, Iowa

Bobwhite - apparently hard hit by the bad winter. I note only one song all spring ^{on the farm,} + of course that could be a starling imitation. Tanya Bray says the one place you can depend on hearing them is the S. edge of Lake Manawa, + there certainly were several there May 25.

✓ Piping Plover May 25 3 nests Iowa Power + Light
Settling Ponds, S. of Council Bluffs.

At least one pair has been there all May.

Killdeer due to the wet spring, farmer's couldn't get into the fields to work on time. A couple neighbors report that they found no nest but lots of chicks. This may mean higher productivity, since the nests weren't ~~disks~~ ^{disked} up, but may simply mean more chicks ~~disks~~ ^{disked} up, as the chicks tend to run ahead of the tractor, + I'm sure not every body stops the tractor + shoo's the babies off to the side like these neighbors.

✓ Willet April 26 64 Iowa Power + Light.
(Two flocks, of 20+ and of 44)

✗ Marbled Godwit April 24 1 Farm ^{See documentation}

✓ C. Snipe April 23 1 "ex-Goose Lake" ^{at night}
E. Central Mills County ^{winnowing}
" " 24 1 " ^{mid-afternoon}
W. ⁱⁿ properties
E. Central Mills Co.

✓ Woodcock April 23 1 Willow Slough ^{Flying about making noise at night}

Forster's Tern Apr. 23 1 Willow Slough

" 24 2 "

" 26 1 Iowa Power + Light

Note: my notes usually include a lot of "Tern, sp". Before I call it Forster's or Common, I check. I may make a mistake, but I check.

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Iowa

Form = Wilson form,
NE Mills County

- ✓ Saw-whet Owl Mar 31 1 Willow Slough
Found by ~~for~~ Bob Myers. Roosting in Plum thicket. Seen by a lot of people. Gone Apr. 4 + thereafter
- ✓ Chimney Swift Apr. 19 2 Farm first I see.
- Red-headed Woodpecker: A clarification, More Red-heads wintered in this area than ever before. This is, however, a low number.
- ✓ E. Phoebe April 9 1 Farm first I see
- Horned Lark as late as Mar 8+13 there was a flock of about 40 near the Bellevue Bridge, though the ^{larks} ~~birds~~ were more often seen as singles, pairs, + up to 4 by then.
- ✓ Brown Creeper Apr. 24 1 Farm last I see
- House Wren Apr. 28 1 " first I hear
- Golden-crowned Kinglet Apr. 10-16 fair #'s "
~~is~~ no longer scarce
- ✓ G. Catbird Apr. 30 farm first I see
- Brown Thrasher Apr. 27 " "
- Rufous-sided Towhee - the ♂ + ♀ at my feeder remained into May. All send last date in next installment. Spotted Towhees
- Am. Tree Sparrow April 6 farm last I see
- Junco Apr. 19 " "
- Chipping Sparrow Apr. 20 Glenwood first I find
- Field Sparrow Apr. 9 farm "
- Vesper Sparrow Apr. 6 " "
- ✓ Savannah Sparrow ~~Apr.~~ Mar 17-20 farm at my feeder
description available see documentation
- Fox Sparrow Mar 17 - Apr. ~~30~~ ¹⁹ farm ~~from this area~~ ^{late date}
- ✓ Lincoln's Sparrow April 14 farm at feeder

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6
Farm = Wilson farm,
NE Mills County

Swamp Sparrow Apr. 9 1 farm first seen

White-throated Sparrow - the two that wintered at the feeder stayed all winter, + blended into the spring migration.

Eastern Meadowlark April 19 2 farm these showed up on the farm, where none normally sing, but didn't stay.

✓ Brewer's Blackbird April 14 30 Willow Slough

These birds were a problem to identify. Nice, glossy, white-eyed males. Bills seemed more like Brewer's than Rusty's to me. Females had eyes that were light, definitely darker than the males but not brown. I was confused. In May I visited Oregon + examined a road-kill ♀ Brewer's. The eyes were a yellowish brown - not white like male's eyes, but not dark brown, either. So I believe these ambiguous birds were Brewer's.

Bl. Wilson
Rt 1 Box 41
Hastings, Ia 51540

Spring, 1984
Iowa

May 26, 1984

①

Dear Tom

I gather you need reports early, so I'm sending March + April now. May will come at the end of the month; it's difficult for me to do a report before I do my monthly summary.

Spring is easily described: cold, wet. Winter returned in March, stalling migration. I record snow on Apr. 23, and ice on puddles Apr. 30 (with snow in Omaha that day). May has been cold + wet too. Awful. Birds haven't seemed to be here, and anyway the weather has been too bad to look. I certainly missed the May passerine migration.

Though I feel the migration has been poor, there are several documentations enclosed here. I'm unsure what to do with the Savannah Sparrow. Does one document a bird seen one day before the earliest date in Iowa Birds? I did describe it in my notes. Maybe I'll write a documentation.

I gather you + Ross found some ~~so~~ interesting stuff by Sioux City. Great. Have a good summer.

- Barb Wilson

Again I apologise for ~~not~~ sending so much data of so little significance, but I shouldn't really apologise since I don't think I ever will change. I just keep pouring in more + more stuff, figuring that this way at least I won't have omitted the good stuff. - BLW

Tom says she doesn't think one need document Ross's Goose, so I'll remove the one I wrote. It's available if you want it. i. n. p. 7+8

31 May 1984

Dear Tom,

It's been a hectic month. My notes reveal I was off the farm at least briefly 28 of May's 31 days. Result is lots of sightings, but little consistency.

Frost in lowlying parts of our farm May 9. Wet, cool month.

other observer

Fremont Co - bad flooding on bottom land

✓ Eared Grebe May 17 1 Forney's Lake

Cattle Egret May 6 1 S. Iowa

Tanya Bray

" May 28 93 Fremont County NE of Nebraska City

Red-breasted Merganser May 8 2 IPL Settling ponds

Tanya

✓ C. Moorhen May 28 1 Forney's Lake very tame

✓ Piping Plover As of May 30, there were 2 active nests at Iowa Power + light. One other has failed. 5 Plover were present May 30.

Tanya

✓ " May 28 10 adult plover IPL maximum 50 for

Tanya + Ross

✓ Upland Sandpiper May 6 1 somewhere in Union Co. on Hwy 34

Tanya

✓ " May 28 2 just W. of Forney's Lake

✓ " May 30 2 Harrison Co, ~~NE~~ NE of California Bend

✓ White-rumped Sandpiper May 28 13 Fremont County

✓ Semipalmated Sandpiper " 1 "

✓ L. Yellowlegs " 1 "

✓ Ruddy Turnstone May 20 6 Willow Slough

Tanya Bray

✓ N. Phalarope May 28 2 Fremont County

✓ " May 30 1 IPL Settling ponds.

Forster's Tern ~~May 6 9~~

" May 8 2 IPL

Tanya

✓ " May 28 2 Forney's Lake

" " " 1 Fremont Co.

Tanya

✓ Caspian Tern May 28 1 IPL

✓ Least Tern May 28 1 "

Tanya

" May 28 2 " one gives a fish to the other

" May 30 1 "

✓ " " 1 "Blencoe Lake", a slough by the Missouri in Monona County

✓ Barn Owl May 17 1 NE Mills Co., according to Bach Bake house, who would know

BL Wilson

Spring 1984
Lower

Other observed

✓ Whippoorwill May 7-26 ~~at~~ Wilson farm, NE Mills Co.
One + only one sings each evening + about 5:15 each morning
by our house. This never happened before.

✓ Olive-sided Flycatcher May 26 5 Wilson farm singing!

Tanya Bray

✓ Blackburnian Warbler May 28 1♂ Waubonsie State Park

Tanya Bray +
Ross Sitack

Parula May 4 1 Pammel St. Park Singing

✓ " May 21 2 singing Wilson farm

Tanya Bray

✓ " May 28 ♀ Waubonsie State Park.

the ♀ was at the same place you + Ross saw a ♂ + ♀ on your
Big Day.

Bobolink lots on the farm, anyway.

Orchard Oriole lots of these all over

Tanya

✓ Harris Sparrow May 12 Wilson farm. Last sighting
for the spring

✓ R-s Towhee May 9 Wilson farm my last sighting
of the ♀ Spotted Towhee I banded at my feeder
last winter.

✓ Lincoln's Sparrow May 17 last I see Wilson farm.

If I spent lots of springs traveling, just think what short
reports you might get!

- Barb Wilson

31 May 1984

Dear Tom,

Carl Preibe told me of the following sightings you might like to know about.

Forney's Lake froze out last winter, killing the fish. This affected at least 2 bird species:

White Pelican did not stay at Forney's Lake this spring. No food.

May 23: 3 at Riverton. The last he saw

Bald Eagles came to Forney's Lake in large numbers to eat the fish. Over ~~300~~ 100 present at times. I believe this was late Feb. + early March, when we were seeing so many there.

Other sightings.

Am. Avocet ~~at~~ May 25 near Hwy 2, Fremont Co.

Least Tern May 28 " " " 2 birds

Am. Robin An albino has returned to

Riverton, where it has been seen in recent years.

White w/ dull red breast

Red-winged Blackbird - an albino of this species has also turned up at Riverton.

Great-tailed Grackle - have returned to Riverton.

Carl Preibe is now the district
Wildlife Biologist for
SW Iowa.

- Barb Wilson