

Jim: Sorry about the "roughness" of this copy -- we are down at our cabin without the usual amenities. I am not submitting a formal field report -- the forms are up in Iowa City. I did share the sightings of Worm-eating Warblers and Kentucky Warblers in Shimek with Bob Cecil. Also saw with Prairie Warbler with son Steve. Most notable: Three (3) Rough-legged Hawks at Roberts Park, Van Buren Co. on 13 June -- which must be early, unless they nested here. Birds had all the diagnostic features -- black "wrist" marks, white rump marks, wide black band on tail, etc. Also Chuck-will's Widow at Johnson Tree Farm in Mahaska County on

21 July and again on 24 July. As far as I know
the presence of this species here is not unusual.
How is the Newsletter coming along? Are you the
editor? I'll be glad to help if I can on that
project!

Hope your vacation Down East is a success in
every way!!!!

Cordially,

Hi to Steve!

Jim S.

WEATHER AND HABITAT CONDITIONS

June and July 1985 reversed the second warmest spring pattern on record and, to some degree, the very hot, dry summers of the two preceding years.

The month of June averaged 3° F. cooler than normal and recorded nearly two-thirds the normal precipitation, but with spotty distribution. On 8 June temperatures reached record levels (105° F. at Swea City, Algona, Pocahontas, and Sioux Rapids) with 100° F. or higher over almost all of the northwest half of Iowa. Five days later, Leon recorded 35° F., Elkader 37° F., and Atlantic and Chariton 38° F., with frost damage reported in some south central localities. July was more normal in temperature, but the searing days over a long period did not occur this year. In general, July was cooler than usual, but the famous and infamous Iowa humidity did not fail to make its presence felt.

Precipitation over the two months was unequally distributed over the state. Rainfalls were usually light, but Charles City and Boone reported 3.57" and 3.20" respectively on 27 June. On 16 June an intense hailstorm moved from Pottawattamie County into Union County, while hail piled in drifts in Adams County. One path of the storm--over 40 miles long and up to 4 miles wide--damaged 150,000 acres of crops and property. On 23 June, hail, wind, and rain inflicted damage to ~~an area across~~ Adair, Madison, Warren, Clarke, and Lucas Counties. These storms caused soil erosion as well, especially south of Atlantic where a short duration rainfall of 3.75" occurred.

Dryness in June and July (and the preceding months) caused concern in the northeast, east central, central, and southwest. Not until the last few days of July did many areas of Iowa get some relief from the dry conditions with some heavy storms and some soaking rains. Eastern Iowa, for example, which had received 7"-8" below average rainfall, began to recover with rains that began to fall on the night of 24-25 July when Fayette County received 4.03".

The relatively cool, relatively moist summer over much of Iowa was a welcome relief from the recent past.

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JIM: Not much about habitat--the hunters and farmers down here in SE Iowa tell me that the pheasants, quail, and turkey populations are "exploding"--ideal breeding conditions?

I have seen several species begin a third nesting period, incl. Bluebirds, Robins, Wrens, etc. It must have been a good season in general for breeding birds.