

## FIELD REPORTS

SUMMER 1977

- \* American pelican: Randy Robinson, the Iowa Conservation officer at Sweet Marsh (SM), reported the appearance of thirteen pelicans at SM on July 5.
- \* Double-crested cormorant: An adult cormorant was found on June 8, at SM, it was only observed for one day. This is unusual since the bird is not thought to nest anywhere in the N.E..
- Pied-billed grebe: A pair of grebes at SM brought off one young at Cardinal Marsh as many ~~as~~ as three imms. were found. However the number of breeding grebes in the N.E. seems to be decreasing steadily.
- \* Black-crowned night heron: This species was recorded regularly at SM, the most at one time was six individuals, four being adults and two imms.. It is apparent that the ones observed were adults and young of local breeding activity, they were found on June 8.
- Least bittern: Using a canoe to observe marsh birds at SM, I easily found six individuals of this species on June 8. The canoe plus a taped calls works well with most marsh birds.
- Duck species: Breeding ducks were scarce in the N.E., with the only exception being the Wood duck. The drought seems to be liable for this.
- Gadwall: The Gadwall is not a breeding duck in even small numbers so it was unusual to find a pair at SM on June 8, nesting is remotely possible as well as very doubtful.
- Green-winged teal: A pair of this species was found at SM from June 4 to the 24, another individual was found at Cardinal Marsh on July 10.
- American wigeon: A lone imm. or female was at SM on June 26.
- Ruddy duck: An adult male was present at SM from May 7, till June 20.
- \* American kestrel: Fairly good numbers recorded all summer, in N.E..
- Virginia rail: One or two of this species was heard though June at SM.
- Sora: This rail could not be found at SM, but was common at Cardinal Marsh during summer months.
- Shorebirds: According to the authors of several Iowa works few plovers, or sandpipers occur in Iowa during June. But a constant check of mudflats at SM showed that this is not the case, in N. Iowa this year, as the following list will show.
- Semipalmated plover: This plover was rather late in departing from SM as four were present there up to June 5, and two lingered till June 8.
- American woodcock: Three were flushed at Wyth Park (Blackhawk County), on June 4.

\* Upland sandpiper: A total of twelve Upland sandpipers were found in the N.E. during June and July. They are doing well in areas that have pastured land, but many pastures are being converted to cropland.

Solitary sandpiper: This sandpiper made its postbreeding appearance record early with one at Meyer Lake (Winneshek County) on June 26, another was at SM on June 27, and two at Meyer Lake again on June 28.

Willet: A lone bird was at SM on the early fall date of July II.

Lesser yellowlegs: Were found in June at SM one on June 12, and two at SM on June 20.

Least sandpiper: The Least, was also found in June. One at Meyer Lake on June 26, and two at SM on the same date. Others were found at these two locations on June 27, and 28 as well.

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Short-billed dowitcher: A dowitcher at SM, still in breeding plumage was identified by marks as a Short-billed (the lack of barred flanks, and presents of broad white tail barring). This identification was made positive when the the bird was flushed and it gave the distinct Lesser yellowleg-like call. This dowitcher was found June 27 and 28 when niether dowitcher species should be in Iowa.

Long-billed dowitcher: A dowitcher in autumnal plumage (gray) was at SM on June 19 and 20. Its field marks were of a typical fall dowitcher but after careful study of the tail (finely barred and dull white), I came to the conclusion it was a Long-billed, I then flushed the bird in hope it would call, which it did, it gave the thin peeping notes the only truly distinctive mark.

Semipalmated sandpiper: Lingering individuals were found throughout June, seven at Meyer Lake on June 4, eighteen at SM on June 5, six at SM on June 8, one was found at SM up till June 24.

Forester's tern: An individual took up residence at SM all summer, on July 22, six were at SM.

Black tern: Two were at SM on July 22.

Yellow-bellied sapsucker: One was recorded at Granite (Lyon County) on June 2.

Yellow-bellied flycatcher: An individual was identified by voice (the Peewee-like call given on Peterson's record) as well as by sight on the late date of June 7, at St. Lucas.

Least flycatcher: An individual of this species was found calling regularly at SM up till June 15, it was thought to be a breeding bird in territory, but after further searching it proved to be just an unmated bird.

Olive-sided flycatcher: One at Echo Valley State Park (Fayette County), on June 8.

Veery: Four individuals sang at St. Lucas during June and early July.

- Blue-gray gnatcatcher: Fairly common and increasing in N.E. several nests found.
- Prothonotary warbler: The pair at SM were found through the period but no nest or young were ever found.
- Cerulean warbler: Two were found singing June 8, at St. Lucas.
- Blackburnian warbler: A late individual was seen and heard at St. Lucas on June 5.
- \* Yellow-Breasted chat: One was found by Tom Stone and I, at SM on June 14.
- Savannah sparrow: Was abundant summer resident.
- \* Grasshopper sparrow: Numbers down as a whole, but still quite common in some N.E. areas.
- \* Henslow's sparrow: One was found near Cresco on June 11. The only spot in the state of Iowa that is known to have this rare grassland sparrow with regularity is Hayden Prairie. But still it was surprising to find six singing there after a four hour search on July 13.
- \* Vesper sparrow: This ground or grassland sparrow has dropped significantly in numbers in the past two years and is no longer found with any regularity in some parts of the N.E.

\* = BLUE LIST