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Iowa Ornithologists' Union



STATE BIRD OF IOWA: THE GOLDFINCH

Nora Springs, Iowa
February 13, 1978

Rec'd 2/16

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A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

EDITOR

PETER C. PETERSEN
235 McClellan Blvd.
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Dear Dr. Halmi,

I think that it is about time that you had some news of the bird world in this area of the state. Early in January I thought I had something exciting to report when a pair of pine grosbeaks visited us. I had a number of phone calls reporting robin-sized birds being seen. An immature male pine grosbeak struck a window in Nora Springs and died. Now I have learned that several organizations sighted them on their Christmas census so it appears that they are invading the state this winter.

Redpolls and goldfinches are numerous, especially around thistle feeders. There are some purple finches around town but not in large numbers yet. Large flocks of longspurs and snow buntings are being seen along the roadsides. Juncoes have been scarce until the later part of January and now we see them everyday. Cedar waxwings have been feasting in a crab apple tree since Jan. 14. We have had four tree sparrows most of the winter. They and the juncoes eat the seeds spilled under the thistle feeder. Chickadees, nuthatches and downy woodpeckers are numerous, as usual. A pair of hairy woodpeckers come to eat suet regularly and occasionally a pair of red-bellied woodpeckers. On Feb. 8, I saw a red-headed woodpecker in the woods. A male red-winged blackbird has been coming to a feeder in town for several weeks. I saw him on Feb. 7. A lone evening grosbeak, (adult male) came to our feeder on Nov. 28 and again on Dec. 1 and 2. I took pictures of him through the window.

There aren't as many cardinals in this part of the state as ~~the~~ there are south of us. Everyone who puts up a feeder hopes to attract a pair. This winter they have been quite successful though I think in some cases several families may be sharing the same pair.

Laura Glasgow from Marshalltown and I went to Texas in Dec. and saw the whooping cranes, skimmers and long-billed curlews at Rockport. At the Santa Ana Refuge near McAllen we saw green jays, kiskadee flycatchers, Lichtenstein's orioles, chachalacas and golden-fronted woodpeckers - all new to our life lists.

The Iowa Bird Life just arrived. I wonder why the spring I.O.U.

meeting is scheduled a week early.

I hope that you are enjoying good birding in Iowa City this cold winter. Such weather sometimes brings in some unusual species.

Sincerely,

Dorothy A. Brunner

Feb 4 2/16

I think that it is about time that you had some news of the bird world in this part of the state. Early in January I thought I had something exciting to report when a pair of pine grosbeaks visited us. I had a number of phone calls reporting robin-sized birds being seen. And I saw a male pine grosbeak strike a window in my office and die. Now I have learned that several other birders sighted them on their Christmas census so it appears that they are invading the state this winter.

Redpolls and goldfinches are numerous, especially around Christmas. There are some purple finches around town but not in large numbers yet. Large flocks of longspurs and snow buntings are seen along the roadsides. Juncos have been scarce until the first part of January and now we see them everywhere. Cedar waxwings have been feeding in a corn apple tree since Jan. 14. We have had some tree sparrows most of the winter. Jays and the juncos and some other birds are still in the state. On Feb. 2, I saw a red-headed woodpecker in the woods. A male red-headed woodpecker has been feeding in the woods for several weeks. I saw him on Feb. 7. A lone veery grosbeak (adult male) came to our feeder on Nov. 28 and again on Jan. 1 and I found evidence of him between the window.

There aren't as many cardinals in this part of the state as there are in the rest of the state. Everyone who puts up a feeder hopes to attract a cardinal. This winter they have been quite successful though I think in some areas several families may be sharing the same feeder.

Large flocks of downy woodpeckers and hairy woodpeckers are seen in the woods. They are feeding in the woods and in the trees. I saw a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 14 and a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 15. I saw a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 16 and a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 17. I saw a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 18 and a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 19. I saw a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 20 and a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 21. I saw a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 22 and a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 23. I saw a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 24 and a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 25. I saw a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 26 and a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 27. I saw a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 28 and a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 29. I saw a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 30 and a hairy woodpecker on Jan. 31.

The Iowa bird list has arrived. I wonder why the spring I.O.U.