

Doug Harr

May 19, 1978

Mr. Peter C. Peterson
Editor, IOWA BIRD LIFE
235 McClellan Blvd.
Davenport, Iowa 52803

Dear Mr. Peterson:

Enclosed are some of my sightings of note for the upcoming issue of IBL. They are a little ahead of the May 31 end of spring observation period, but since I will have little free time in the near future I thought I should submit them before it was too late.

In my work as a wildlife biologist for the Ia. Cons. Comm., I do quite a bit of birding, so have listed here only the sightings that seemed somewhat significant. First, I should make one very general observation that after two years of nearly dry conditions in most of NW Iowa's marshes, this year appears to be extremely promising. Waterfowl here in the Iowa Great Lakes (IGL) region around Spirit Lake are more numerous than in perhaps several years.

Sightings of note:

- Am. Bitterns: 1 at Spring Run Wildlife Mgmt. Area (WMA) on April 27 (Dickinson Co.); 1 at Rush Lake WMA (Osceola Co.) on May 17.
- Ruddy ducks seen throughout May in seemingly larger than normal numbers on many marshes in Dickinson Co.
- Blue & Snow Geese, est. 8,000 on Rush Lake (Osceola Co.) April 4. Also est. 1500 Can. Geese, 50 Wh.-fronted Geese, and 25 Dbl.-crested Cormorants (out of IOU order).
- Merlin at Welch Lake WMA near Spirit Lake (Dickinson Co.) April 4.
- American Kestrels in huge numbers during migration, example: 7 seen along 3/4 mile of road near Spirit Lake on April 4.
- Upland Sandpiper, near Spring Run WMA (Dickinson Co.), May 9.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker seen working in same poplar tree for three days, May 6-8, Kettleson Hogsback WMA near Spirit Lake.
- Purple Martins appear to be present in larger than normal numbers this year, everywhere in Lyon, Osceola, and Dickinson counties.
- Ruby-crowned Kinglets very common throughout May in IGL area.
- Warblers seen in IGL area during May:
 - Black and White, abundant all month.
 - Yellow, 1 seen May 17.
 - Orange-crowned, 1 seen May 8th.
 - Yellow-rumped, abundant all month.
 - Black-throated Green, 1 on May 6, & 1 on May 17 (both at Kettleson Hogsback WMA, near Spirit Lake).
 - Palm, abundant on May 6 at Kettleson Hogsback WMA.
 - Common Yellowthroat, only one seen so far, on May 6.

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- Male Scarlet Tanager at Henderson WMA (east of Arnolds Park, Dickinson County) on May 17. This is the first I have ever sighted in IGL area in 6½ years.
- Harris' Sparrows seem quite common throughout month of May--have been getting reliable reports from fellow birders and have made at least two sightings at Lester (Lyon County) in past two weeks, plus continue to hear singing.

That completes my spring sightings of interest. One other comment: for some of us who are relatively new members, do you prefer that these sighting be sent to you as editor, or do you have someone else in the organization who collects the sightings and then passes them on to you? Perhaps you could either drop me a note on this or else just make a mention of it in an upcoming issue.

-Nick-
I sent him
a card
referring him
to p. 52 of
Mar. issue.
Pete

Sincerely,



Douglas Harr
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