

Dingmore

Pete: This arrived on August 8; had IBL come out in time, he wouldn't have made his (indefinite) August trip to the IGLR. I won't rewrite report, but am sending

a copy to V.M.K.

General- After two years of drought, water levels were back to normal on marshes and lakes in the Ruthven-Spirit Lake area. Water was high in spring and with fairly heavy early summer rains, marshes stayed high through June and July rather than experiencing the drying out of marshes that the area had seen in 1976 and 1977. In general this meant that species that nest overwater such as grebes, coots, yellow-headed blackbirds and diving ducks were numerous and at least for the first three, had good nesting success. I'm not sure what effect heavy storms in July had on the survival of the young.

The high water also meant that ponds that were brimfull had little suitable habitat for feeding by herons and in general heron numbers seemed to be down, especially the lack of many non-breeders in June. Also in June there were virtually no mudflats in the area and virtually no late lingering shorebirds were present.

As you will probably guess, I had this all written when I decided to make a last trip to NW Iowa on 4-6 August, thus I have added a few records from that trip here.

James Dingmore,
ames

Underlined items all observations by Jim Dinsmore unless otherwise
are significant additions indicated
to Summer Report (✓ indicates sp. not mentioned, ✓B
breeders not mentioned, by others)

✓ Common Loon - 1 just above Saylorville Dam, Polk Co
8 July

Faced Grebe - 4 on Mud Lake, Clay Co 21 June
1 on Lizard Lake, Pocahontas Co 27 June

Pied-billed Grebe - common nester on marshes in Clay, Palo Alto,
Emmet and Dickinson Counties n.w. Ia.

Double-crested Cormorant 1 on Rush Lake, Palo Alto Co 21 June

White Pelican 19 on Trumbull Lake, Clay Co on 8 June
had been around earlier but not seen after that date, in June,
2 present on Trumbull Lake 4 August

(Heron on p 3, sees, I gasted)

Canada Goose - common nester in NW Iowa marshes
also one flying up Des Moines River at Ledges State Park, Boone Co.
on 17 June

Wood Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal - all common nesters on marshes
in NW Iowa. Blue-wings in particular seemed very common after
several years of drought

Canada and Ruddy Duck - smaller numbers breeding in NW Iowa but
still fair numbers around

The following 3 prob bred in small numbers but I don't have nest records
Shoveler - 1 on Dam Green Slough - Clay Co 8 June

✓ American Wigeon - 1 on Dam Green Slough - Clay Co 8 June
2 on Mud Lake, Clay Co, 9 June
1 pair on Mud Lake, Clay Co, 21 June

Ring-necked Duck - 5 on Mud Lake, Clay Co. 9 June
4 ♂ on Mud Lake 21 June
Several on Mud Lake 27 June
1 ♂ Christopher Slough, Emmet Co 28 June

Redhead - very common nester on marshes of NW Iowa this summer
seemed to have a very good year.

Pintail - 1 on Rush Lake, Osceola Co, 9 June

[Black Duck - 1 on Dam Green Slough, Clay Co - 31 May (late report)
west of normal range]

Lesser Scaup - several present on Mud Lake, Clay Co throughout June, prob
non-breeders

Canvasback - 1 ♀ on Marble Lake, Dickinson Co, 20 June

Red-breasted Merganser - 2 on Lizard Lake, Pocahontas Co 27 June

Great Blue Heron - far fewer seen in NW Iowa this summer than in 1977

3 at Hottes Lake, Dickinson Co. - 29 June

1 at Rush Lake, Palo Alto Co 21 June

Common on marshes and lakes in NW Iowa 4-6 August

Black-crowned Night Heron - less common on marshes in NW Iowa this year than in 1977 but still fairly common. Colony at Hottes Lake, Dickinson Co. still present but much smaller with about 50 nests this year (vs. ~~100~~ ¹⁴⁰ last year)

Little Egret - 1 at Dan Green Slough, Clay Co 30-31 May - (late report)

Least Bittern - fairly common in marshes in NW Iowa, 1 nest found in Clay Co.

American Bittern - seemed to ^{be} much more abundant in marshes in NW Iowa this year than in 1977 1 nest found in Clay Co

Green Herons - fairly common in NW Iowa, small colony at Dewey's Pasture, Clay Co. also nested successfully at Smith Slough, Clay Co.

[Little Blue Heron - 1 ^{immature} plumaged bird seen well at Mud Lake, 5 August (at sundown to barely make the deadline)]

Broad-winged Hawk - 2 at Ledges State Park, Boone Co 17 June - prob nested there
1 adult, 1 immature present on 4 August

Swainson's Hawk - 1 at Lake Mills, Winnebago Co on 3 June

1 nest at 4 north of Melvin, ^{Osceola Co} on 9 June - with Tom Nigus
(see attached documentation forms)

also seen by Doug Harr

(in Summer Report)

✓ Gray Partridge - fairly common in NW Iowa this summer

Sora and Virginia Rail - few seen or heard in NW Iowa marshes

Florida Gallinule - none seen in NW Iowa marshes

American Coot - common nested in marshes in NW Iowa

Amer. Woodcock - seen regularly and nest found at Deweys Pasture, Clay Co

Upland Sandpiper - 2 in NE Boone Co - 27 June

Spotted Sandpiper - 1 at Virgin Lake, Palo Alto Co 28 June

Solitary Sandpiper 2 in pond 4 mi west Ames, in Boone Co 18 July

2 in flooded field 1 mi S of Belmond, Wright Co, 28 July

Pectoral Sandpiper - 1 at Dan Green Slough, Clay Co 8 June

Common in flooded fields in N central Iowa 28 July

✓ Ring-billed Gull - ca 20 in field east of Spirit Lake, Dickinson Co on 9 June

fairly common at Trumbull Lake, Clay Co and Spirit Lake on 4-6 August

Franklin's Gull - 1 on 31 May north of Trumbull Lake, Clay Co, then

none seen throughout June; only 1 seen in NW Iowa 4-6 August, that one seen on 5 August at Trumbull Lake, Clay Co

Forster's Tern - 3 small colonies present in Dickinson, Clay and Palo Alto Counties

Black Tern - common nester in marshes in NW Iowa

✓ Least (Little) Tern - one seen well (with binocs and 20x scope) at Elm Lake, Wright Co on 22 June - identification positive as bird seen well

Ruby-throated Hummingbird - none seen during summer months

Red-headed Woodpecker + Eastern Kingbird - both common in suitable habitat in NW Iowa

Willow Flycatcher - common nester around marshes in NW Iowa

Short-billed and Long-billed Marshes - both common nester in marshes in NW Iowa

Veery - 2 heard at Ledges State Park, Boone Co 17 June - prob nesting

E. Bluebird - none seen in NW Iowa after spring migration

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher - 2 seen and heard at Ledges State Park, 17 Jun

Blue-winged Warbler - 1 ♂ heard at Ledges State Park on 17 June on place where seen past few years - prob nesting

Yellow Warbler - very common nester in woods around Trumbull Lake, Clay Co also around other lakes in NW Iowa

Cerulean Warbler - several seen at Ledges State Park on 17 June

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Yellow-throated Warbler - none seen at Ledges State Park where seen
in 1976 and 1977

Yellowthroat - common nester in NW Iowa

Yellow-headed Blackbird - common nester in numerous marshes in NW Iowa

Orchard Oriole - pair found nesting near Trumbull Lake, Clay Co
on 8 June - Gene Armstrong actually found this nest
and showed ~~us~~ it to me

Eastern Meadowlark - I'm not sure how far west in the state this
species occurs but the furthest west I saw any were at
Ledges State Park, Boone Co., and Brushy Creek, Webster Co

Swamp Sparrow - common nester in NW Iowa marshes

Later note - Various shore-birds common in flooded fields in NW Iowa 4-6 August, esp
noted were G. and L. Yellowlegs, Pectoral, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Semipalmated Plover, few
Dowitchers (apparently Short-billed), Also 1 Common Snipe at Dan Green Slough on 4 August

In June I got a late report of a King Rail at Dewey's Pasture, Clay Co. on
19 May, seen by Tom Neal, ICC. (now they tell me!)