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SPENCER, IOWA 51301

APRIL 22, 1979

MR NICK HALMI
DEAR SIR:

THOUGHT I'D GET MY REPORT TO YOU NOW AS WE ARE GOING ON A TRIP TO OREGON AND WON'T BE BACK UNTIL NEAR THE DEADLINE.

YOU PROBABLY KNOW THAT THE ICE JUST WENT OUT OF THE LARGER LAKES EXCEPT FOR WEST OKOBOJI JUST THIS WEEK AND THEY EXPECT IT TO GO OUT OF WEST LAKE THIS WEEK END. SO OUR MIGRATORY WATERFOWL HAVE HAD TO USE STREAMS, AND THERE WAS LOTS OF OVERFLOW FROM THEM THIS SPRING, AND SNOW MELT IN FIELDS.

THE CANADIAN GEESE CAME EARLY, A FLOCK OVER TOWN ON MARCH 12 AND NEAR TRUMBULL LAKE IN A MARSH FED BY SNOW MELT A FLOCK OF ABOUT 200 ON MARCH 25. ON APRIL 1 A FLOCK OF ABOUT 200 CANADIANS ON DAN GREENE SLOUGH 6 GREAT BLUE HERONS IN THE SAME AREA THE SAME DAY, AND A FLOCK OF HERRING GULLS I ESTIMATED TO BE 1,000 BIRDS NEAR DEWEY'S PASTURE THE SAME DAY.

A PAIR OF HOODED MERGANSERS ON THE OCHEYEDAN RIVER WEST OF SPENCER ON MARCH 31. I HAD SEEN A PAIR ON THE SAME RIVER BUT ABOUT A MILE UPSTREAM IN 1975. WHEN I FIRST SAW THEM I THOUGHT IT WAS A PAIR OF BUFFLEHEADS BUT WITH THE GLASSES I SAW THE BUFFY CREST OF THE FEMALE. THEN I NOTED THE MERGANSER BILL, AND THE "STRIPES" ON THE REAR WING OF THE MALE. THEY WERE ABOUT 150 FT. AWAY IN GOOD LIGHT AND WERE THE ONLY DUCKS IN SIGHT, AND SWIMMING JUST AT THE EDGE OF THE CURRENT IN THE OVERFLOW WATER.

THERE WAS A GOOD DUCK MIGRATION THROUGH HERE. THE FLOODED CORN FIELDS WERE AN ATTRACTION, BUT THE ROADS WERE SO BAD THAT YOU HAD TO STAY MOSTLY ON THE HARD SURFACED ROADS, BUT I SAW ALMOST ALL SPECIES OF DUCKS.

I DID NOT SEE ANY SHOW GEESE HOWEVER.

FOR THE LAST WEEK I HAD SEEN CORMORANTS FLYING UP AND DOWN THE LITTLE SIOUX RIVER BUT HAD NOT SEEN THEM ON THE WATER, BUT YESTERDAY APR. 21 I DROVE AROUND AND FOUND THEM ON A POND WEST OF SPENCER. 9 OF THEM INCLUDING 3 IMMATURES.

FOR ABOUT A WEEK NOW THERE HAS BEEN A FLOCK OF ABOUT 200 WHITE PELICANS AT THE OUTLET OF LOST ISLAND LAKE.

ALSO THE APRIL 21 ISSUE OF THE SIBLEY-SHELDON PAPER HAD A FRONT PAGE PHOTO OF A GREAT EGRET TAKEN AT SIBLEY IOWA. THE SAME ISSUE ALSO HAD PHOTOGRAPHS OF WHITE PELICANS TAKEN AT SILVER LAKE (LAKE PARK)

I CHEATED A LITTLE AND WENT UP TO LOON LAKE ABOUT A MILE NORTH OF BIG SPIRIT BUT INSIDE THE MINN. LINE. SAW TWO LOONS ON APRIL 15 ALONG WITH MANY DUCKS.

THIS HAS BEEN AN EXCELLENT YEAR FOR AMERICAN KESTRELS. SAW THE FIRST ONE MARCH 19 THEN THEY GOT VERY NUMEROUS, BUT NOW I SUSPECT THEY HAVE MOVED NORTH AS THERE ARE NOT NEARLY SO MANY.

ABOUT AN AVERAGE YEAR FOR NORTHERN HARRIERS. I BELIEVE WE HAVE A SMALL RESIDENT POPULATION OF THEM HERE.

I SAW A BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER YESTERDAY (21) WHICH IS ABOUT 3 WEEKS EARLIER THAN MY NOTES INDICATE I HAD SEEN THEM PREVIOUSLY.

I THOUGHT THAT THROUGH THE WINTER I HAD MORE DOWNY WOODPECKERS AND DEFINITELY MORE HAIRY WOODPECKERS THAN OTHER YEARS. MORE NORTHERN JUNCO'S BUT LESS CHICADEES.

ON APRIL 9 IN COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA I SAW A FLOCK OF PURPLE FINCHES. ABOUT 20 BIRDS BUT WAS ABLE TO SPOT ONLY ONE MALE, ALL THE REST FEMALES.

ON APRIL 15 HERE IN SPENCER 4 FOX SPARROWS. WE HAVE A GOOD WINTER POPULATION OF SONG SPARROWS BUT THEY DON'T COME TO THE FEEDERS. THEY APPARENTLY FIND PLENTY OF FOOD DOWN ALONG THE RIVER, BUT YOU CAN TAKE A WALK DOWN THERE ALMOST ANY DAY AND SEE SEVERAL.

SAW NO REDPOLLS AT ALL THIS WINTER, AND NO CEDAR WAXWINGS IN SPENCER. DID ONE FLOCK OF ABOUT 30-35 IN THE I.G.L.R. ON FEB. 18

NOT AS MANY SNOW BUNTINGS AS OTHER YEARS BUT DID SEE ONE FLOCK OF 75-100 BIRDS ALSO ON FEB. 18 NEAR OCHEYEDAN, IOWA.

SINCERELY CONRAD F. SCHLEMMER