

Rt 1 Box 41
Hastings, Ia 51540
2 June 1986

Dear Bob,

Well, Bob, the report is done. I will mail it as I run a fledgling Keatrel to a Raptor Rescue Team vet in Council Bluffs this afternoon. Sorry the report is so long - you'll have to skim it + pick out the few valuable bits. I suppose I could have put the whole useful part on one page, but it's fun to look up when I found things.

Weather was incredibly nice in March + early April. Day after day of mild temperatures + sun shine. As a result, early flowers bloomed ^{very} early - as much as 2 weeks before ~~average~~ ^{average} for Wild Plum, Lin told. Birds returned early too. No record early dates, but quite a few in the "first three" ~~from~~ ^{from} Iowa Birds. Winter birds left early, too.

April 14 + 15 ~~day~~ brought a hard freeze + snow. Killed the flowers + leaves that were out. The plants lived, of course, but the Wild Plum + PawPaw crops will be nonexistent this year, I believe.

Then things returned to moderately warm. We got enough rain to refill the nearly dry marshes here, + Yellow-headed Blackbird, Coot, Pied-billed Grebe, + ducks are breeding here.

As spring progressed ~~the~~ weather became more normal (though wet) + later birds ~~was~~ didn't ~~see~~ arrive earlier than normal. The warbler migration fizzled here. No concentration of birds, no oddities, no great variety. I suppose that's normal, but we'd been treated to ~~some~~ diversity the last few years + we liked it. Sandpiper migration was a bust too. Lots very early on mudflats that were too far away, + then the marshes filled + the sandpipers mostly didn't shift to flooded fields.

Good luck with the spring report. I think it must be the hardest of all to compile.

- Barb Wilson

Barbara Wilson
Hastings, Ia

Iowa
Spring 1986

Settling Pond - Power plant, Soft Canal
Bluffs
Farm - Wilson farm, NE Mills County

Species	Date	#	Place	
Common Loon	May 1	1	Settling Ponds	winter plumage only one I see this season
Eared Grebe	April 1	1	Willow Slough	first
"	May 10 ¹⁰	14	" "	peak
"	May 15	1	" "	*last
Horned Grebe	April 12	1	Willow Slough	first
"	May 5	2	Settling Ponds	last
White Pelican	April	1	Willow Slough	first
"	May 10	150	Settling Ponds	last + Peak
Double-crested Cormorant	May 15	1	" "	last
"	April 2		Lake Manawa	first
Great Blue Heron	Just 7 birds seen, Mar. 18 - Apr. 26. Fewer than normal.			
Great Egret	April 17	1	Lake Manawa	only one seen
Cattle Egret	May 10	20	in + near Forney's Lake in + near Forney's Lake	
"	May 31	1	Settling Ponds	
Snowy Egret	May 31	1	" "	with Cattle Egret
documentation enclosed.				
White-fronted Goose	Mar 9		Willow Slough	- first seen
Snow/Blue Goose	Feb 28		"	"
"	May 14	1	Settling Ponds	last
Canada Goose	Mar. 3		Willow slough	first
Wood Duck	Mar 10		"	"
Green-winged Teal	Mar 9		"	"
"	April 24		Settling Ponds	last
Pintail	Mar 3		Willow Slough	first
"	May 10	1	Riverton	last
Blue-winged Teal	Mar 16	5	Willow Slough	first early?
Shoveler	Mar 10		Willow Slough	last
"	May 31	1	Settling Ponds	
Gadwall	Mar 3		Willow Slough	first
Canvasback	Mar 3	5	"	"
"	May 22 (+later?)	16?	"	"
Greater Scaup	Mar 3	1-5	"	"
	Mar 19	8	"	"

over for descriptions

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Greater Scaup - 1 of the five birds Mar 3 was identified as Greater by its rounded head. On ~~Mar~~ Mar 9, the males had rounded heads with green gloss.

Lesser Scaup	Mar 10		Willow Slough	First seen
Red head	Mar 3		Settling Ponds	"
"	April 29	1	Willow Slough	last
Ring-necked Duck	Mar 3		Settling Ponds	First
	may be summering			
C. Goldeneye	Mar 3		Willow Slough	last
Bufflehead	Mar 4		"	First
"	April 12		"	last
Hooded Merganser	Mar 21		"	First
"	April 21		Settling Ponds	last
C. Merganser	Mar 3		Willow Slough	first
"	April 24		Settling Ponds	last
Red-breasted Merganser	Mar 30	4	Willow Slough	first
"	May 10	2 immatures? or females?	Settling Ponds	last
Ruddy Duck	Mar 4	1	Willow Slough	First
	may summer			
Turkey Vulture	Mar 28	1	farm	first
N. Harrier	3 seen, Mar 7 (Willow Slough) to April 26 (# same place)			
Swainson's Hawk	April 18	1	Willow Slough	adult
"	April 30	1	Council Bluffs	"
"	May 18	1	Greene County	"
Am. ♂ Redstarts	numbers seem OK. 2 fledglings found in the town of Anderson, Fremont Co., late May.			
C. Moorhen	May 9 + May 11	1	Willow Slough	
Am. Coot	Mar. 3	1	Settling Ponds	First
Black-bellied Plover	May 14	2	" "	
L. Golden Plover	April	4	Willow Slough	
Semipalmated Plover	May 19	1	Settling Ponds	
	only one seen			

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Piping Plover	April 11	4	Settling Ponds.	
There are 6 nests at the ponds. One had hatched at least 3 chicks by May 31.				
Am. Avocet	April 15	3	Willow Slough	first + only
Spotted Sandpiper	May 4		"	"
Upland Sandpiper	April 26, 30, May 10 (2)	- total 4 birds in SW Iowa in 3 as many locations. (2 in Fremont, 1 in Mills County, 1 in Pottawattamie County). Relatively a lot. (Well, more than I expected, anyway)		
Hudsonian Godwit	May 16	4	Cass County	
"	May 18	2	"	
Ruddy Turnstone	May 14	1	Settling Pond	
"	May 18	1	Guthrie Guthrie County	
Dowitcher sp	April 1	3	Willow Slough	
Short-billed Dowitcher	May 18	2	Guthrie County	
buffy orange below, white patches below				
Long-billed Dowitcher	May 10		Riverton	
Cinnamon below, no white except in undertail coverts below				
	May 18	1	Cass Co.	
Darker ^{below} than the ones we saw earlier in the day				
C. Snipe	March 26	2	Willow Slough	first
Am. Woodcock	March 9	2+	"	courting "
"	May 18	1	"	courting
Franklin's Gull	Mar 22	1	"	first
"	May 31	1	Settling Ponds	last
Bonaparte's Gull	Apr. 15		Lake Manawa	
Ring-billed Gull	Mar 9	7	Willow Slough	first
"	Mar 31	1	Settling Ponds	
Herring Gull	Mar 6	1	Willow Slough	only one I see
Caspian Tern	May 10		Settling Ponds	First
"	May 31	43	"	last + peak
Common Tern	May 31	1	"	
black wing tips. Adult				

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Forster's Tern	Apr. 17		Settling Ponds	First
"	May 31	1 immature	"	last
Least Tern	May 11		" seen by Loren + Babo Padelford	First
"	May 13		" seen by Ross Silack et al.	"
"	May 19		" courtship flights	"
"	May 31		" "	"
Black Tern	May 9		Willow Slough	First
Black-billed Cuckoo	May 9	1	farm	First
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	May 13	1	"	"
C. Night hawk	May 6		"	"
Chuck-will's Widow	May 10	2	singing at the usual location north of Waubesa Park	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	May 28	1	farm	First
"	May 30	1	"	only other one
E. Pewee	May 10		"	First
Alder Flycatcher	May 28	5	"	First
"	May 30	3+	"	"
That's relatively a lot of Alders, I think. "Fee-beer" song				
Least Flycatcher	May 6		farm	First
"	May 28		"	last
Emp. Iorax sp	April 26	1	Forney's Lake.	
Called "whit!" but never sang. Eye ring. Tanya Tanya Bray + I suspect it was a least, but we can't really identify a non-singing Emp. Iorax.				
E. Phoebe	Mar 26	2	farm	First
On May 24 Tanya Bray + I found a Phoebe nest on limestone at Coldsprings State Park. There the Nishnabotna river cuts through some limestone + the nest was nestled under some overhanging rock about 8' above above the water. Around here it's unusual to see a phoebe nest that's not under a bridge.				
Great Crested Flycatcher	May 7		Sw Iowa	First
Western Kingbird	May 2	1	Mills County	"

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Eastern Kingbird	May 1	1	Miller County	first
Tree Bank Swallow	April 26		S. W. Iowa	"
Cliff Swallow	April 24		Settling Ponds	"
Barn Swallow	April 19		Willow Slough	"
House Wren	April 19		farm	"
Sedge Wren	May 2	3	farm	"

Usually Sedge wren ~~are~~ show up here briefly during migration and then disappear until late summer - late July. This year they are in long grass in marshes, fields, prairies, all over S. W. Iowa through at least until late May. Why?

Golden-crowned Kinglet	Mar 22	1	Willow Slough	first
"	April 4		farm	last
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	March 28	1	Willow Slough	first
"	April 20		farm	next-to-last
"	May 18	1	Springbrook S.P.	last
Veery	May 10		farm	first
"	May 24		S. W. Iowa	last
Wood thrush	April 26		S. W. Iowa Waubesa State Park	first
Gray Catbird	Apr May 6		farm	"
Brown thrasher	April 6	1	farm	"
Mockingbird	May 18	1	Elk Grove, Guthrie Co.	

Cedar Waxwings seem to be staying around late like last year, ~~probably~~ presumably breeding here.

Loggerhead Shrikes - numbers look good in S. W. Iowa, but then I've been out a lot this year + so I see them.

Bell's Vireo	May 11		farm	first
Solitary Vireo	May 2 - May 11		farm	first + last
Yellow-throated Vireo				
Warbling Vireo	April 25		farm	first
Yellow-rumped Warbler	April 16		"	"
"	May 4		"	last
C. Yellowthroat	April 26		Fremont County	first
Starling	May 18		Fremont	
			Cass County - first fledging.	

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Rose-breasted Grosbeak	Apr. 26		Fremont County	First
Blue Grosbeak	May 31	♂+♀	Settling Ponds	"
Indigo Bunting	May 10		S.W. Iowa, several places	"
Dickcissel	May 4		Farm	"
Rufous-sided Towhee	Apr. 11		farm	"
Tree Sparrow	April 1		Willow Slough	last
Chipping Sparrow	April 6		farm	First
Clay colored Sparrow	April 26	2	Fremont County	first
"	May 2	3	farm	
"	May 19	1	"	last
Field Sparrow	March 26	1	"	First
✓ Vesper Sparrow	March 28		"	"
Savannah Sparrow	April 4		Willow slough	"
"	May 13	1	farm	last
Fox Sparrow	Mar 17	1	"	first
"	April 7		Willow Slough	last
Lincoln Sparrow	Apr. April 24		farm	First
"	May 10		Riverton	last
Swamp Sparrow	April 7		farm	only one
White throated Sparrow	April 7		Willow Slough	first
"	May 6	1	farm	last
White crowned Sparrow	Mar 13		Lake Manawa	first
"	May 18	1	Cass Co.	last
"	May 2, 3		farm ^{obvious} peak of migration	
Harris Sparrow	May 10		farm	last
definitely left the area early				
Juncos	April 19		farm	last
also left early				
Bobolink	May 6		farm	first
W. Meadowlark	May 18		Cass Co. - first fledgling	
Rusty ♂ Blackbird	Mar 1	3	farm	first
"	April 19		Willow Slough	last

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Great-tailed Grackle	Apr. 26 ^{5 birds} , May 10 ^{36 birds}	Forney's Lake	
	On both dates, ♂'s were displaying	to females	
Orchard Oriole	May 2	S. & W. Iowa	first
Northern Oriole	Apr. 26	Fremont County	"

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Reports from other people

Carl Priebe, Sidney, Iowa

1 Ibis sp. at Riverton, Week of April 6. Could not be identified to species

Evening Grosbeaks at a feeder in Sidney week of April 1.

At least 2, probably 4 kestrel boxes on I-29 in ~~the~~ SW Iowa ~~was~~ in use by kestrels by the end of April 1986. Starlings used the others.

William De Graw, Omaha, NE

While netting sparrows, Dr. De Graw caught a Brewer's Blackbird at our farm May 3.

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Dear Bob,

I forgot to tell you - about May 24 Rosemary
Dougherty found a checker on their farm. Origin
unknown. Patti Johns photographed it.

- Barb Wilson

Lenox, Iowa