

BLW

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Iowa
Spring 1987

Species	#	Date	Notes
Turkey Vulture	1,	March 20	Mills County
Swainson's Hawk	2	Apr. 17	Wearin Prairie, Mills County
The two hunted over the prairie as we burned it, trying to get food from things flushed by the fire.			
Bobwhite	1	early May	A page county farmer found on ambitious bird incubating 16 quail + 4 pheasant eggs.
Piping Plover	2 nests	by end of May	Settling Ponds, Council Bluffs
Woodcock	2♂'s	March 1	Willow Slough
Least Tern	3 ⁺ pairs	by end of May	Settling Ponds, Council Bluffs
Robins	many died as a result of the March 28 Blizzard in S.W. Iowa. Deaths may not have been immediate.		

March 31 (after roads + shoulders had been plowed following the storm) I drove Highway 34. In the 16 miles between L66 + I-29, I saw 11 in the morning. In the afternoon, I saw an additional 12 on the 7.5 miles of divided highway there that I couldn't check in the morning. Thus, a total of at least 23 Robins died between the last snow plowing* and my trip on a total of 23.5 miles of pavement on Highway 34. That's approximately 1 Robin per mile. Though they of course died of vehicles, the cause of their being hit was probably starvation + exhaustion resulting from the cold weather.

Large numbers of Robins apparently also died along other roads. I found a number of Highway 6 + 92 on other days shortly after the storm.

Mockingbird -	1 pair	May 9 + after	3 miles north of Bradleyville, Page County. Territorial
Loggerhead Shrikes	- seem to be present in good numbers in Southwest Iowa		
Warblers	- warbler migration was a bust. I hope that is due to good weather that allowed them to travel through without bunching up, + is not due to any drop in their population.		
Fox Sparrow	2	April 13	Hawleyville Cemetery, Page County
Harris Sparrow		March 24	1st seen on the farm - normally they winter, but they didn't this year Mills County

divided 2 lane road
Highway 34

* If the Robin carcasses had been on the road or shoulder before the plow went by, they would have been plowed up.

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Norris Sparrow

May 5 last seen on Wilson Farm,
Mills County

Bobolinks have seemed numerous, but that may be
just because they are in all our pastures this year
Eastern Meadowlark 1 May 31 Sioux City
identified by voice only

Brown-headed Cowbird 1 May fledged from a
bluebird box on our farm. One bluebird nestling
also made it

Pine Siskin 1 May 7 Wilson farm. Note:
They have been ^{relatively} common in C. Bluffs + Omaha + have
nested.

American Goldfinch 61 March 9 Wilson farm -
at finch feeder. Quite a surprise

Weather has been mild + dry all spring, with the
obvious exception of the March 28 blizzard and
the 2 weeks of rain (including flooding) in late May.
Interesting birds have been around but I've been
too busy to see them.

Have I ever sent you so brief a report?

Bob Wilson