

May 29, 1988

Dear Bob,

An interesting spring season. Here are the highlights. Unless otherwise noted all reports are from the Saylorville area. BC = Big Creek.

c. loon: first on 4/1, seven on 4/7.
horned grebe: two on 4/24.
eared grebe: three on 4/2, one on 4/9 all at BC.
w. pelican: first on 3/25, only one hundred by 4/3.
d.c. cormorant: first on 3/25, 710 on 4/23 near dam.
g.b. heron: first returned to the colony on 3/9.
b.c. night heron: two on 4/25.

geese made an impressive showing.

g. white fronted goose: fifty appeared on 3/11, and numbered 1715 by 3/19.
snow goose: first on 3/5, and numbered 2500 by 3/19.
Ross' goose: at least one on 3/18 and two on 3/19.

Ducks were also spectacular. First returnees appeared on 2/26. Highlights include probably 100,000 of 24 species on 3/18 and 26 species in all:

gadwall: 142 on 3/13.
canvasback: 600 on 3/11.
g. scaup: two first appeared at BC on 2/26.
oldsquaw: one was present on 3/13 & 18. Another bird appeared at BC on 4/30. This bird appeared to me to be a female, with brown head white cheek, and no tail, but others felt it was a male. The earlier bird was a male with long tail.
harrier: very common this spring.
Swainson's hawk: one was at BC on 4/10.
peregrine: one flew over on 4/22. The next day (4/23) another (the same?) made a spectacular mid air kill of a blue-wing right in front of me off Sandpiper beach. After lugging the duck to the beach, the peregrine was immediately attacked by a harrier. It left the beach and hauled the teal to the far side. The harrier giving up about half way across.
turkey: this species has exploded here. I have seen turkeys on a dozen occasions this spring.
sandhill crane: one was present on 3/15 at BC. (thanks to Steve Dinsmore.)
golden plover: one appeared on 3/25 at BC.
piping plover: one at Oak Grove on 4/23, but I have not seen since.
willet: 17 on 4/23.
upland sandpiper: two on 5/5 at Moekly.
hudsonian godwit: 3 at BC on 4/24, 12 near 17 bridge on 5/13.
marbled godwit: one at Fisher pond 4/22.
western sandpiper: three at 17 bridge on 5/13, with clear rusty markings.
white-rumped sandpiper: 5 at 17 bridge on 5/13.
dunlin: 3 on 5/13 near 17 bridge.
stilt andpiper: 3 at BC on 5/8.
woodcock: first on 3/11.
wilson's phalarope: one on 4/23.
franklin's gull: first on 3/11.
bonaparte's gull: first on 3/26, 626 on 4/21.
caspiant tern: first on 4/21.
common tern: one on 4/30.
long-eared owl: 5 on 3/11.
alder flycatcher: one calling on 5/24.
mockingbird: one on 5/5 NW of BC.

hermit thrush: first on 4/7.

veery: first on 5/15, two singing on 5/29.

prothonotary warbler: 3 near the heron colony 5/6.

blue-winged warbler: One on 5/8.

cerulean warbler: five singing in their colony site on 5/29.

yellow-throated warbler: one male and a pair in the sycamores near the heron colony on 5/6.

orchard oriole: one at BC on 5/8.

clay colored sparrow: one at BC on 5/8.

Bern Engelsen