

Summer - 1967

AFN-notes

IOWA

FIELD REPORTS.

May was a cold month with an average daily temperature deficiency of 3.5° at the Des Moines Airport, and rather dry with 80% of the month's rain falling after the 26th. High winds prevailed. Eldon Bryant estimates 50% of the nests in his area were damaged or destroyed, and eggs were chilled in May. His comment on the nesting season was "Disastrous." June was also cold but wet; Des Moines had 7.4" of rain. July was dry with little rain until the last week, and the month was unusually cool.

Grebes, Cormorants, Herons. There were numerous Pied-billed Grebes on W. Twin Lake late in July, some with young being carried on the parents' backs. Cormorants were breeding north of Clinton with 65 being counted. This figure includes young, (N. Ward, fide PP). There was no mention of herons. Few have been seen in Polk Co. with no report of Yellow-crowned Night Herons which have nested in recent years.

Ducks. Wood Ducks are seemingly continuing to increase. More than usual have been observed in Polk Co. A Ruddy Was seen in mid-July at Lock 15 by Larry Dau, (PP). A small flock was on W. Twin Lake on 23 July.

Hawks. This has not been a good breeding year for Red-tails in Scott and Muscatine Co., where fewer than usual have been seen, (PP), but 4 nests in the township appear successful, (GB). There has been no mention of Red-shouldered. Swainson's failed to nest near Plainview where they nested in two previous season, (PP). There were 3 in one field all day on 12 May with several later observations but no nesting observed, (DG). Only one pair of Sparrow Hawks has been observed nesting, but they were successful, (GB).

Bobwhite, Pheasants. Bobwhites have been plentiful with good hatches, (GB), and are the most abundant in 20 years, being seen and heard on every farm, (DG). Pheasants are in all parts of the township with 11 or 12 young seen with each hen, (GB).

Shorebirds. Killdeers are very scarce, (GB), but are beginning to appear in numbers in Polk Co. A Woodcock was flushed on 20 and 21 June, (DG); one was seen 6 July in Jester Park; and a nest near Tipton in the first week of June was deserted, (PP). There are an encouraging number of reports of Upland Plovers: the population in north Scott Co. is "strong", (L. Blevins, fide PP); 1 observed on 16 July, (FK); 2 on 9 July near Des Moines; 1 pair reported but none seen in the usual places, (GB); 1 seen, apparently a summer resident, (EB); and, the usual number in several different locations, (DG).

Gulls, Terns. There were 4 straggler Ring-bill Gulls on the Mississippi at LeClaire on 20 June, (PP). Black Terns are numerous at Goose and E. Twin Lakes, and there have been several sightings in Polk Co.

Doves, Cuckoos. Doves may be fewer with smaller numbers of nests located, (GB), but, plentiful as usual, (MK). Reports on cuckoos are varied: almost non-existent with only one Black-billed heard, (GB); both below normal, (PP); late in arriving and very few, (FK); first not seen until 22 June, (MK); Yellow-billed heard regularly after 8 June, but no Black-billed, (PL); Yellow-billed heard regularly, but 2 Black-billed on 3 June were the only ones seen or heard, (WHB); only one Black-billed, (DH). There appears to be a smaller number of "measuring worms" and this might affect the cuckoo population.

Owls. ^{Two} A nests of Barn Owls was found in Davenport, and 3 young banded ^{from one} on 29 June, (PP). Only one nest with one young has been located, but Great Horned have been heard in several areas, (GB), and one young banded in Davenport on 14 April, (PP). A Saw-whet was found on the late date 11 July near Sharon in the Iowa City area, (Roy Coy, fide FK.)

Nighthawks, Swifts, Hummingbirds, Kingfishers. There appears to be only one pair of Nighthawks nesting, (GB). Chimney Swifts are about the same as last year but not as plentiful as five years ago, (GB). Hummingbirds are: scarce (DH); none seen since migration, (GB). One of the few Des Moines

observations was one of 5 seen by Albert Berkowitz in a Buckeye tree.

Kingfishers are scarce, (DH, WHB).

Woodpeckers, Flycatchers. Flickers are plentiful, (GB). The Redhead population is up, (FK); numerous along back roads, (WHB); seen throughout the township with dead Elms possibly a factor, (GB); seen more often than five years ago and increasing, (DG). Western Kingbirds are scarce, (DH). Traill's: breeding in good numbers in northern Scott Co., (L. Blevins, fide PP), but appear few in Polk. Say's Phoebes are again at Akron.

Swallow, Chickadees, Nuthatches, Wrens. Tree Swallows have been around all summer with as many as 100 at Swan Lake, (FK). Nesting Barn Swallows are down at almost every barn checked, (GB), but are thought plentiful, (MK). Cliff Swallows are occupying 49 nests under the bridge where they were found last year, (GB), and a colony under a bridge also, (MK). Martins: fewer pairs, (GB); up slightly but not in usual numbers, (MK); and not as many as two years ago in Polk Co. Chickadees had a poor nesting season due to predation, (GB). Nuthatches are few and far between, (GB). House Wrens are down with only about half as many banded as last year, (GB). Carolina, reported twice: 1 netted at Wildcat Den on 17 June, (PP), and 1 heard, (PL). Short-billed ^{Marsh wrens} showed up as usual in July with none found in May and June, (FK).

Mimic, Thrushes, Shrikes. The only Mockingbird nest found was lost due to predation, (GB). Catbirds are scarce, (DH), and not plentiful, (G). Thrashers are also scarce, (DH), but thought abundant, (GB). Robins are fewer than usual, (FK), and the same or fewer, (GB), while the later broods seemed more successful than the earlier ones, (WHB). Bluebirds: Harrison Moore of Mt. Pleasant reports numerous sets of 6 and more raising all 6, (PL). They are very scarce, (MK, DH), and fewer than 50% of the number banded in 1966 because of fewer boxes occupied and rate of predation high. However several pairs were seen nesting in woodpecker holes in Elm trees, (GB). Shrikes: down, (L. Blevins, PP, FK, WHB).

Vireos, Warblers. Vireos are almost non-existent with only 2 pairs of Bell's, (GB), and all species seem down in Des Moines. Red-eyed; only 1 record, (DH); down considerably and Warbling conspicuous by its absence (MK). A territorial Blue-winged Warbler seen and heard on 17 June, (PF Yellow, again very scarce, (WHB). A Blackpoll was well seen on 9 June, (PL). Yellowthroat, abundant, (GB, MK, WHB). Chat, none located, (GB, Redstart, scarce, (DH), and almost none summering after a heavy migration.

House Sparrows, ~~FINCHES~~ Icterids, Tanagers. House Sparrows are down on many farms without any trapping or poisoning, (GB). Meadowlarks are abundant but Redwinged not as plentiful, (GB). There have been several late nestings of Grackles with young leaving the nest as late as 21 July, (PL). They continue to increase in Des Moines. Tanagers are late and very few, (PF Scarlet Tanager, reported once but no nest found, (WHB). The only mentions of the Summer Tanager: 1 each, (DH, PL). A pair came to a feeder in Des Moines early in the summer for a short time only, and no nest was located.

Finches, Sparrows. Cardinals, previously plentiful in towns, are extending into farm areas, (EB). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, more than usual, (HM), and numerous, (GB). Blue Grosbeak nested in Akron, (DH). Indigo Buntings: plentiful, but not more than last year, (MK), more than usual, (HM, WHB), fairly numerous, (GB). Dickcissels, abundant, (GB, WHB). Goldfinches: up, (FK); a good year and more numerous than House Sparrows (MK). Savannah Sparrows were seen 2 July and a number of times later, and apparently nesting, (MK). Grasshopper Sparrows seem to have had a very good year, (PP). Swamp Sparrows: many heard singing on 20 July and thought nesting, (MK).

Contributors: Gladys Black, Pleasantville; Eldon Bryant, Akron; Donald Gillaspey, Lamoni; Mrs. Darrell Hanna, Sioux City; Milford Keele, Mason City; Fred Kent, Iowa City; Pearl Knoop, Marble Rock; Peter Lowther, Burlington; Howard McKinley, Russell; Peter Petersen, Jr., Davenport. Woodward H. Brown, 4815 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines, 50312.

Audubon Field Notes - Summer 1967

May was cold and dry; June, also cool but wet, over 7" rain and 18 days with measurable precip; July, also cool and very dry with only .8" rain.

Hérons - Few Great Blue or Green. Almost no Black-crowned and no Yellow-crowned Night Herons reported. These last have nested fairly regularly.

Wood Ducks are having a good come-back and numerous broods seen.

Hawks. No Red-shouldered seen, and probably no Broad-winged nesting. No Marsh Hawks and Sparrow Hawks were few until late in July.

Hummingbirds. I've seen none. Al. Berkowitz reported seeing 5 in a Buckeye tree then in bloom.

Kingfishers. Fewer.

Redheaded Woodpeckers plentiful on all side roads.

Flycatchers. Probably usual numbers, but I've seen or heard no Traill's.

Martins. Maybe more than last year, but still down.

Robins. Many young observed from second or third nestings.

Shrikes - down.

Starlings - again up.

Vireos. Fewer Yellow-throated, Red-eyed and Warbling.

Warblers. Prothonotaries nested unsuccessfully due to rising water. Yellows and Redstarts down despite big spring migration. No Chats.

Icterids. Bobolinks up some, Grackles way up.

Tanagers. Very few of either and no nests reported.

Finches. Indigo Buntings and Dickcissels plentiful, also Goldfinches. Towhees still down.

W H Brown
Des Moines