

Fall-1967

AFN-notes

IOWA

14 Dec.

Dear Pete:

A rather uneventful fall. The Snow Buntings were the only thing of real interest. For some reason we seldom have these, and there has never been a flock in my 25 years here. Most I'd seen was 3 with several records of one or two. Fred Kent had a flock at Coralville for some time.

Wood

Audubon Field Notes, Fall 1967

Des Moines.

Weather, generally cool and continued abnormally dry.

Ducks. Migration very poor. Possibly mild weather further north kept birds from moving. There have been a very few Canvasbacks whereas none was seen in the spring.

Hawks. No concentrations of any species noticed. A Harlan's on 12 Nov.

Shorebirds. Few, due to lack of mudflats.

Woodpeckers. Red-headed seem to have left early and almost completely. Frequently a few remain.

Thrushes. Poor migration and few seen.

Kinglets. A wave of both sp. on 5 October, otherwise about normal.

Vireos. Good migration of Solitary, others average to lower.

Warblers. Waves on 31 Aug., 3 Sept., and 7 Oct. A late Black-throated Green on 6 Nov. seen by Wm. Boller. Not nearly the numbers of Myrtles in other years.

Finches. 5 LeConte's seen by Mrs. H. Peasley on 7 Oct., a rainy day with the good warbler wave. Another on 22 Oct. by Mary Ellen Warters. Fox Sparrows seemed few, but Harris' were very numerous. A flock of 30-50 Snow Buntings located on 23 Nov. by Berkowitz and Brown were seen as late as the 26th.

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FIELD REPORTS.

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The three-months' period ending 31 October was cooler than usual according to readings at the Des Moines Airport, and there was a shortage of rainfall in each month; that in August being the greatest. Although there were a number of unusually windy days, there were no reports of "strangers" appearing as a result of the hurricanes to the south.

Grebes, Pelicans, Cormorants. There were no reports of grebes other than Pied-billed, of which 35-40 were still at Blue Lake on 20 October, (DH), and which peaked at 52 on 2 October at Union Slough, (PF). There were 7 White Pelicans on 22 September and the last left on 20 October, (PF). Unusually large flocks of 46 and 52 Cormorants were at Union Slough on the 10th and 23rd of October but both left within 48 hours.

Herons. The only Great Blue was at Blue Lake on 5 October, ^(DH) and but one was seen at Lamoni on 26 August. There are usually several herons of some kind there every fall, (X). Common Egrets: 12 August, (FK), and 16 August, (JK). A total of 46 Black-crowned Night Herons on 4 September, (PF). A late American Bittern was at Goose Lake, 22 October, (JF).

Geese, Ducks. The ~~first~~ earliest observation reported was of 27 Canada and 2 Blue on 21 September at Union Slough. The peak was reached in the week 13-19 October with 120 Canada, 6 White-fronted, and 115 Blue and Snow. (PF). The first flock was seen 30 September with a good migration the last two weeks of October, (J). There were a number of flights of Blue and Snow on 4 October, (DG). The pinioned Canadas at Red Rock Refuge had attracted a flock of 200 or more by 11 October, (CB). There was no concentration of Blue-winged Teal as in other years, and only a scattering of others, (PF). From Union Slough: there was a movement of Blue-winged into the area from 25 to 28 August, and a large migration of muddle ducks on 21 and 22 September. On 27 October numbers were still rising with divers and puddlers coming in and the peak not reached. Maximum populations were 11,000 Mallards and 3,300 Wood Ducks.

migration spotty, (JK); scarce, all kinds, (MF); a scarcity, (FK); all kinds very scarce in September, occasional Red-tailed or Marsh in the first half of October, (CB). David Fulks at Denver saw 10 Sharp-shinned and 3 Cooper's early in October, (RH). Harlan's were seen by L. Blevins rather early, 2 in late September, and 1 on 5 October, (PP). Red-shouldered; reported from two places. 2 at Wyth Park on 10 October seen by Florence Spring, (RH), and several sightings at Russell, 12 August, 3 September and a pair on 10 September, (HMCK). Flocks of Broad-winged were 150 on 23 September, (RH), 60-70 near Mt. Vernon by Geo. Marsh on 23 September, (DH). There was a movement of these in early October, (PP). Some Rough-legged were noted early in October, (PP). The only Bald Eagle was one seen four times in September, (PP). Marsh Hawks were thought down, (EB), way down, (IF), but, perhaps as many as usual, (Geo. Marsh, fide DH). Ospreys appeared more numerous than in other recent years: observed 16 September and 21 October, ^(RH) 18 August by Annette Heffner, 26 August and 2 on 18 August by Glen Bloomfield, (RH); 1 October at Easter Lake near Des Moines, seen by Albert Berkowitz; 7 October near Jefferson, (JF); and 7 October and another from 16 to 26 October, (PP). A Peregrine was seen at Denver by David and Mike Fulks, (RH). Figeon~~s~~ Hawks: seen on 13 September (AM), and by David Fulks, no date given, (RH). Sparrow Hawks: there was thought not the usual concentration in September this year, (EB); 10-15 were seen in one day in the last week of September, (PP); and there was some migration the first week in September at Union Slough. They have been few in Des Moines.

Partridges, Bobwhites, Pheasants. Partridges and Pheasants are down, the reason being excessive rains at nesting time, (EB). Bobwhites are the most abundant in many years, (D-). Pheasants are abundant, many just changing color denoting a late hatch after destructive spring rains. (JF).

Shorebirds. The consensus is that shorebirds were few, but the reasons differ. Shorebirds poor due to the lack of rain to make mudflats, (JK); most of the better places around Des Moines dried up before the migration was well under way;

rather dry since 1 July, (DP); on the other hand, rains early August eliminated mud flats and no waders, (PK); and, fewer this fall, water covering the mudflats, (PF). An exception was Goose Lake with good mudflats, (JF). ~~(KX)~~. No explanation but, almost non-existent, (LK); and not much luck this fall with waders, (MS). There was a good population of rails at Union Slough with peaks of 202 Virginias, 500 Soras, and 1600 Coots, the latter beginning to move out at the end of October. There were 500 Coots at Sweet's Marsh early in the month, (RH). Killdeers: plentiful, a flock of 25 on 28 July, and some seen or heard through September, (MK); 20-25 at Blue Lake on 22 October, (DH); and 48 at Union Slough in mid-September, (PF). A flock of 10-12 Golden Plover in mid-September reported by L. Blevins, (PP). A Ruddy Turnstone was at Brown's Slough on 14 September, (Hick). There were 3 Woodcock observations, the last on 20 October, (PP). Snipe peaked at 14 the last week in September, (FF). Upland Flowers were; 2 near Des Moines on 16 July, and 5 in one field on 12 August, (FK). A rather late flock of Pectorals was in a hayfield on 5 October, with 25 counted, (D). A flock of 50 Dowitchers and 2 Western Sandpipers were at Goose Lake in September, (JF). Two reports of Avocets: 3 on 3 October at Rock Creek Lake, (MS), and 1 on 18 October at Union Slough, (PP).

Gulls, Terns. Scattered Ring-billed and Herring Gulls have been present since 10 September, (PP). Union Slough had a peak of 3000 Franklin's.

A Bonaparte's was seen on the Mississippi on 12 August, (FL). Two reports of Caspian Terns; 10 on 3 October, (MS), and 6 on 8 September, (DG). The peak of 54 Black Terns at Union Slough seems low.

Cuckoos, Owls. Numbers of cuckoos improved noticeably over last year with the last seen on 21 October, (PP). There were very few Black-billed at Des Moines. A Short-eared Owl at the Des Moines Imp. Res. was the first reported in some time. Saw-whets were banded on three dates in October with one recapture, (PP).

Whip-poor-wills, Lighthawks, Swifts, Hummingbirds. A late
was found by Geo. Marsh on 8 October, (DH). (Other observations, 7 September
by the P. Davison's, (DH), 16 September, (PK), and banded 5 October, (PP).
Migrating Lighthawks were: 35 on 29 August, (GB); 10 on 8 September, (DH);
150 on 4 September and 300-400 on the 17th, (DH); 300 on 16 September and
3 on the late date 15 October, (W). About 1200 Chimney Swifts were seen the
first of October, (W. Dau), and the last were 500 on 10 October, (PP). A late
observation was 2 on 15 October, (RH). The only Hummingbirds, 16 and 25
September, (JP), and 2 on 13 September, (DH).

Woodpeckers, Flycatcher, Swallows. Flickers were very common in September,
(PL). A good migration in Des Moines, also. Redheaded were more than ever
before, (EG), but appeared to have left Des Moines rather early. A late
report mentions a Western Kingbird seen on 14 June at Wilduff, (AN), and
there were also observations on 11 and 13 October, (EF). Say's Phoebe seemed
down, (EB). Only large flock of mixed swallows was seen on 29 August, (CB).
Bank Swallows left a week early, (EG). There was a very heavy flight of Cliff
Swallow from 20 to 27 August, and a good migration for another week, (EF).
There were estimated to be 1000 Purple Martins in Morningside alone from mid-
August to 10 September, (DH).

Jays, Nuthatches, Creepers, Wrens. Flocks of Blue Jays were seen on 8
October, (PK). A Red-breasted Nuthatch on 15 October, (PK), is the only report.
Brown Creepers on 24 ~~September~~ and 26 September, with 6 on the latter date, were
rather early, (JK). There has been a strong movement of Winter Wrens from
10 September on, with 9 banded on 5 October, (PP). A Bewick's Wren came to a
feeder, (EG). Carolina Wrens were heard on two dates in August at the Scout
Camp near Boone by A. C. Berkowitz. Both Short-billed and Long-billed ^{MARSH} Wrens
were numerous at Goose Lake in September, (JP), and also near Des Moines on
7 October according to Mrs. Peasley.

Mimics, Thrushes, Kinglets, Pipits. A late Brown Thrasher was banded on
23 October, (PP). Robins: down, (JK); have seen very few, although a neighbor
reported a flock of 600, (GB); plentiful with 200 plus on 10 October, (PK);

Flocks noted on 8 October, (FK). There was a small wave of Swainson's Thrushes from 10 to 13 October, (MK). A good migration of Veeries from 27 to 30 August, (PP). Bluebirds were scarce with small groups seen on only five days, (CB), but, very abundant on 9 October, (AM). There was a wave of kinglets at Des Moines on 5 October, and one on the 6th, (FK), with many seen on the 8th and for several days, (CB). Golden-crowned were plentiful, but Ruby-crowned few, reversing the spring migration, (MK). Petersen banded 77 Ruby-crowned on 5 October. There were 2 Water Pipits seen on 5 October, (DG).

Waxwings, Starlings, Vireos. Waxwings were scarce all summer and fall, (MK), but flocks were seen on 8 October, (FK). Starlings are over-increasing, (DH). All vireos seen down considerably, (MK). There was a good migration of Solitary at Des Moines, and Philadelphia had a good year, (PP).

Warblers. There were a number of waves with some variation according to location. These were designated as: late August, (FK); 26 August, (MK); 31 August, (JF); 31 August, 3 September and 7 October, for Des Moines; 4 September, (HMCK); 9-12 and 22-27 September, (PP); 15 and 30 September, (FK); 8 October, predominantly Nuthatches, (CB, AM). Prothonotary: one of few Folk Co. fall dates, 3 September, by A. C. Berkowitz. Golden-winged: 4 September, (HMCK). Orange-crowned: in a big wave on 11 October, more than seen in years, (MK). Black-throated Blue: banded 5 October, (PP). Nuthatch: a wave 6 October, (FK), a big wave on 11th and another on 20th October, (MK), but only seen for a few days after 6 October, (PL). Black-throated Green: a good year and an early one on 29 August, (PP). Cerulean: 2 on 24 September, (AM). Bay-breasted: an early arrival on 29 August, (PP). Connecticut: one on 1 October, (AM). Redstart: 40-50 in one flock on 28 August, (FK), few seen, (DH).

Icterids, Finches. There are two large roasts in Sioux City, one with thousands of Grackles, Starlings, Robins, and Doves. A Brewer's Blackbird was seen on 22 October, (JF). Reports on the sparrow migration vary: not many, (FK); lots, (HMCK); very good migration for three weeks, (JF); lacking, (AM), and heaviest from 10-16 October, Song, Chipping, White-throat, and Fox only abundant, (FK).

usual, (DH), but plentiful, (GB). ^{585 kin 10-9-RH} LeConte's: 5 on 7 October seen by Mrs. ^{GF - Fewer than}
Peasley, and 1 on 22 October by Mary Ellen Warters. Junco: first seen a few
days earlier than last year, (PL), on 3 October, (DH), but very few, (GB).
A Clay-colored noted on 15 October, (RH). Harris' have been unusually numerous:
(HMCK, JK, CB, WHB). White-crowned: those seen have been immatures, (WAB).
White-throated: 100 seen on 10 October in Wyth Park by Florence Spring, (RH);
abundant as usual, (MK). Fox: lots, (HMCK); more than usual, (MY); but seem
fewer in Des Moines. A very early Lapland Longspur was seen at Goose Lake
on 30 September, (JF).

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