

Dennis Carter  
319-382-3754

P.O. Box 531  
Decorah, IA 52101  
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## FIELD REPORTS - SPRING 1996

### WEATHER

It was best characterized as cold, cold, cold. A bitterly cold north wind seemed to be blowing during much of the period. On 25 May, the cold rain and wind made it feel more like 25 March. Winnebago County missed the heavy rains that plagued much of Iowa in May, and precip. was actually below normal here.

### GENERAL TRENDS

Much time seemed to be spent in waiting for the arrival of migrant and summer resident species. Ponds did not open up until 1 April or later. An exception was the small, spring-fed <sup>overflow</sup> pond at the Decorah Fish Hatchery which attracted a variety of waterfowl. The main pond at Cardinal Marsh was still low which limited numbers of individuals but not number of species of waterfowl seen. However, unlike recent springs, extensive mudflats were not present so few shorebirds were seen. Low water level at the Decorah Fish Hatchery pond in late April and early May did result in mini-mudflats which attracted a few shorebirds.

Arrival dates of landbirds ranged from late to very late; e.g. Great Crested Flycatcher not found until 19 May, Red-eyed Vireo on 17 May and Am. Redstart <sup>on</sup> 15 May.

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## GENERAL TRENDS (continued)

The main push of landbirds did not reach Decorah until 13 May. A ~~new~~ old-fashioned type warbler wave was noted at Decorah on 16 May, and warblers remained relatively numerous to 23 May. The warbler migration was the most impressive of the seven springs that I have lived here. However, thrushes (with the exception of Swainson's) and vireos were late and scarce.

Feeder watchers were thrilled with the appearance of numbers of Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, and Baltimore Oriole in May.

All records are from Winneshek County.

## SPECIES DATA

✓ American White Pelican: My only record was of 18 at Cardinal Marsh on 17 April.

✓ Double-crested Cormorant: First and most were 40 at Cardinal M. on 13 Apr; 2 were still there on 30 May.

✓ Snowy Egret: 1 was at Decorah from 20 to 22 Apr and 2 were at Cardinal M. from 27 Apr. to 1 May.

All 3 were adults showing jet black beaks with yellow at the base and black legs with bright yellow feet. They were seen by other observers, including Tex Sordahl.

✓ Black-crowned Night-Heron: An adult was seen at Decorah on 27 Apr.

✓ Snow Goose: 1 (white phase) appeared at a farm pond near Burr Oak on 3 Apr and remained through the end of the period. It could fly and showed no signs of injury.



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## SPECIES DATA

✓ Green-winged Teal: High count was 54 at Cardinal M. on 17 Apr.

✓ Mallard: High count was 2200 at Cardinal M. on 2 Apr.

✓ Northern Pintail: A pair was still at Cardinal M. on 30 May.

✓ Ring-necked Duck: High count was 300 at Cardinal M. on 4 Apr; a pair was still there on 25 May.

✓ Lesser Scaup: Last were 2 at Cardinal M. on 25 May.

✓ Osprey: 2 May records of singles

✓ Northern Harrier: More than usual, present at Cardinal M. from 4 Apr to 1 May.

✓ American Coot: Many at Cardinal M.; 170 were still there on 22 May.

✓ Sandhill Crane: Lindsay Lee saw a flock of 12, flying north over Willowglen Nursery, near Burr Oak on 25 May.

✓ Semipalmated Plover: 2 seen at Cardinal M. on 15 May.

✓ American Avocet: 4 were at Cardinal M. on 23 Apr.

✓ Solitary Sandpiper: 4 records of 7 individuals during the first week of May.

✓ Least Sandpiper: 10 were at Cardinal M. on 15 May.

✓ Pectoral Sandpiper: My only record was 2 at the Decorah Fish Hatchery on 17 Apr.

✓ Stilt Sandpiper: 5 were seen at Cardinal M. on 15 May.

✓ Wilson's Phalarope: 2 females were at the Decorah Fish Hatchery, from 1 to 4 May.

✓ Bonaparte's Gull: 2 were seen at Cardinal M. on 13 Apr.

✓ Black Tern: Last were 2 at Cardinal M. on 30 May.

✓ Cuckoos: none found

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## SPECIES DATA

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Singles were seen at Decorah on 23 and 31 May.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: 1 was seen at Decorah on 19 May.

Winter Wren: First were 2 at Lake Meyer on 9 Apr; 1 at Decorah on 6 May was late.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: High count was 34 at Decorah on 30 Apr.

Gray-checked Thrush: 1 was at Decorah on 12 May and 1 at Lake Meyer on the same date.

Hermit Thrush: My only record was 1 at Lake Meyer on 2 May. The rusty tail which it slowly raised and lowered was clearly seen. I fully agree with your comments on the occurrence of thrushes.

Cedar Waxwing: Small flocks of up to 36 were present throughout the period.

Solitary Vireo: My only record was 1 at Cardinal M. on 15 May.

Philadelphia Vireo: 1 was seen at Decorah on 19 May.

Northern Parula Warbler: Singles were at Lake Meyer on 16 and 21 May, also 1 at Decorah on 17 May.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: More than usual.

Magnolia Warbler: More than usual. High count was 8 at Decorah on 17 May.

Cape May Warbler: A male at Decorah on 16 May was my first spring record.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: High count was 55 in Winneshiek Co. on 12 May; last were 2 at Cardinal M. on 25 May.



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## SPECIES DATA

✓ Palm Warbler: Not found until 13 May, when 4 were seen at Decora, also 6 on 17 May at Decora.

✓ American Redstart: High count was 26 in one Decora locality on 19 May.

Ovenbird: Very few; first was not found at Decora until 12 May.

✓ Mourning Warbler: First were 3 at Decora on 17 May.

✓ Canada Warbler: First were 2 at Decora on 17 May; most were 4 in Winneshiek Cr. on 23 May.

✓ Wilson's Warbler: Last were 2 at Decora on 27 May.

✓ Lincoln's Sparrow: 1 was seen at Lake Meyer on 2 May; 1 at Decora on 17 May was late.

✓ Swamp Sparrow: High count was 30 at Cardinal M. on 23 Apr.

✓ White-crowned Sparrow: As usual, they appeared at Lake Meyer Nature Center during the 2nd week in May; high count was 3 on 12 May.

✓ Harris' Sparrow: 1 was at Lake Meyer Nature Center, 13 to 16 May.

✓ Purple Finch: Frequently noted both at and away from feeders during April; last were 4 at Burr Oak on 11 May.

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