

Field Reports of Bird sightings  
Spring, 1996

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137 51st St.  
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Species	Number	Date	Location
Western Grebe	1	13 May	Long's Pond, Guthrie County
White-faced Ibis	9(?)	13 May	Snake Creek Marsh
Great Egret	1	6 April	Warren Cty, just n. of Indianola
	1	20 April	Saylorville Reservoir
Greater White-fronted Goose	2	9 March	Bay's Branch
	24	20 April	Jester Park
Wood Duck	39	24 March	Gray's Lake
Green-winged Teal	4	10 March	Raccoon River Park, WDM
Northern Pintail	8	10 March	Raccoon River Park, WDM
Northern Shoveler	2	13 March	Raccoon River Park
	6	24 March	Gray's Lake
	25	27 March	Gray's Lake
	6	9 April	Gray's Lake
Canvasback	8	13 March	Raccoon River Park
	4	27 March	Gray's Lake
	2	1 April	Maffitt Reservoir
Redhead	12	18 March	Raccoon River Park
	12	23 March	Gray's Lake
	24	24 March	Gray's Lake
	65	29 March	Gray's Lake
Common Goldeneye	6	10 March	Raccoon River Park, WDM
	12	10 March	Gray's Lake, Des Moines
	5	18 March	Raccoon River Park
	3	1 April	Maffitt Reservoir
Bufflehead	2	11 March	Walnut Woods State Park
	6	24 March	Gray's Lake
	4	27 March	Gray's Lake
	3	1 April	Maffitt Reservoir
	2	20 April	Saylorville Reservoir
Hooded Merganser	11	23 March	Gray's Lake
	4	24 March	Gray's Lake
	15	27 March	Gray's Lake
	24	29 March	Gray's Lake

Common Merganser	150	10 March	Raccoon River Park, WDM
	6	18 March	Raccoon River Park
	8	23 March	Raccoon River Park
	2	29 March	Gray's Lake
	✓1	13 May	Saylorville Reservoir
Red-breasted Merganser	✓5	13 March	Raccoon River Park
	12	23 March	Gray's Lake
	7	24 March	Gray's Lake
	75	27 March	Gray's Lake
	✓183	29 March	Gray's Lake
	1	1 April	Maffitt Reservoir
	13	4 April	Raccoon River Park
	12	9 April	Gray's Lake
	2	21 April	Terra Pond
Ruddy Duck	1	24 March	Gray's Lake
	31	4 April	Raccoon River Park, WDM
	2	9 April	Gray's Lake
	1	20 April	Saylorville Reservoir
✓Turkey Vulture	1	16 March	137 51st St. Des Moines
Osprey	1	10 April	Raccoon River Park, WDM
	5	✓20 April	Saylorville Reservoir
	1	✓13 May	Big Creek S.P.
Harrier	1 male	3 March	Big Creek State Park
	1 male	7 April	Chichaqua _____
	1	21 April	Guthrie county
Cooper's Hawk	1	20 April	Big Creek State Park
	1	20 April	Raccoon River Park, WDM
Mississippi Kite	1	15 May	137 51st, DM
	(This bird came over the yard at a low enough height that even without binoculars it was identifiable as a Mississippi kite. With binoculars, it was an adult bird--clear breast, solid gray wings, dark tail, flaring at the tip.)		
	1	16, 17, 19, 22 May	137 51st St, DM
(Each of these sightings was of a single adult, soaring over the area. Commonly seen in late afternoon--5:30--7:00pm.)			
	1	18 May	Rock Creek State Park
(This bird was soaring over the campground at Rock Creek around 9 am. I had it in view for approximately 5 minutes, during which time I studied it with 8x,42mm binoculars. It was a classic adult Mississippi kite in almost every way: solid gray breast and belly, solid gray underwings, light head, dark, square-cut tail, flaring at the tip, tail being actively twisted this-way-and-that as a rudder. The exception was that twice the bird wheeled in such a way that the white patches on its upper-wings should have been visible, but I never saw them.)			
	2	20 May	Olivet Baptist Church

(This pair was in the nest tree used last year. (Last year's nest is gone from the tree, apparently blown down.) One of the birds perched in a crotch high up in the tree, and there seemed to be the beginnings of a nest present.)

	1	21, 30 May	Olivet Baptist Church
Broad-winged Hawk	4	4 May	137 51st St, Des Moines
	1	7 May	137 51st St, DM
	3	5 May	Greenwood Park, DM
(Two of these birds were sitting in trees in the park; the third sighting was of a bird soaring over the area.)			
	16	8 May	In a 'teapot' over 51st Street
	2	16 May	137 51st St, DM
American Golden Plover	8	✓ 21 April	Bay's Branch
Semipalmated Plover	1	21 April	Terra Pond
	6	✓ 21 April	Bay's Branch
	4	✓ 29 May	flooded field, Polk County
American Avocet	5	✓ 20 April	Jester Park
Greater Yellowlegs	1	✓ 24 March	Gray's Lake
	1	20 April	Raccoon River Park, WDM
Solitary Sandpiper	2	8 May	Raccoon River Park, WDM
Willet	1	✓ 20 April	Polk City Wildlife Area
Spotted Sandpiper	1	✓ 20 April	Polk City W.A.
	1	21 April	Raccoon River Park
Upland Sandpiper	1	✓ 13 May	Guthrie County
Hudsonian Godwit	4	✓ 20 April	Polk City Wildlife Area
	2	✓ 21 April	Bay's Branch
	4	✓ 13 May	Snake Creek Marsh
✓ Marbled Godwit	1	20 April	Big Creek State Park
(Godwit sized bird; long, slightly up-curved bill; uniform buffy color, unlike the two-toned appearance of the Hudsonian godwits seen earlier in the morning.)			
Wilson's Phalarope	2	✓ 21 April	Bay's Branch
	7	✓ 9 May	Errington Marsh
Franklin's Gull	1	✓ 23 March	Gray's Lake
(Somewhat early. This was a hooded gull with a noticeable eye-crescent; medium gray wings w/ black tips; a white border separating the black wingtips from the gray of rest of the wing; a white border along the trailing edge of the wing; mantle same gray as wings.)			
	1	24 March	Waterworks Park, Des Moines
	1	29 March	Gray's Lake
	5	20 April	Big Creek State Park

	65	4 May	Big Creek State Park
Caspian Tern	4	✓ 4 May	Saylorville Lake
	3	✓ 29 May	Cottonwood Access, Saylorville
Long-eared Owl	1	✓ 16 March	found dead along road n. of Indianola
Common Nighthawk	1	✓ 7 May	Dallas county office park
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	11 April	137 51st St, Des Moines
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	8 April	137 51st St, DM
Brown Creeper	1	11 April	137 51st St, DM
✓ Hermit Thrush	1	24 March	56th St., Des Moines
<p>(Possible record earliest. This bird was sitting along the street at a railroad crossing. As I drove by, it flew up into some low trees. As it did so, its reddish tail caught my attention. I stopped and looked at it with 8x, 42 mm. binocs; it was probably 20-30 feet away. It had its back to me, and its tail was quite red (red-tailed hawk red, I remember thinking). I got out of the car and walked to a position where I could see the front of the bird; it had a grayish head and gray cheeks; a thin, robin-like bill; it was spotted down the sides of the breast, with the spots forming indistinct lines on the sides of the lower breast. The belly of the bird was a clear cream color. I watched it for 30 seconds to a minute before it flew away.)</p>			
	3	20 April	Saylorville Reservoir
Gray Catbird	1	7 May	137 51st St, DM
American Pipit	1	✓ 27 March	Gray's Lake
Northern Parula	1	13 May	Sycamore Acces, Saylorville
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1	16 May	Walnut Woods S.P.
Magnolia Warbler	1	15,16 May	Walnut Woods S.P.
Black-throated Green Warbler	1	15 May	51st, St. Des Moines
Blackburnian Warbler	1	15,16 May	Walnut Woods S.P.
✓ Yellow-throated Warbler	1	13 May	Ledges S.P.
Blackpoll Warbler	1	15,16 May	Walnut Woods S.P.
Black-and-white Warbler	1	5 May	137 51st St, DM
Prothonotary Warbler	1	✓ 13 May	Sycamore Access, Saylorville
✓ Mourning Warbler	1	16 May	137 51st St, DM
<p>(Early record for Polk County. Warbler, dark upper-side, bright yellow belly, dark gray head, throat, and upper breast. No eye-ring. I didn't notice much contrast</p>			

between the gray of the throat and the dark upper-breast area, which is noticeably darker on some Mourning Warblers.)

	1	17 May	Walnut Woods S.P.
	1	21 May	Olivet Church, Windsor Heights
Common Yellowthroat	2	15 May	Walnut Woods S.P.
Wilson's Warbler	1	16 May	Walnut Woods S.P.
Indigo Bunting	1	13 May	Sycamore Acces, Saylorville
White-throated Sparrow	Last: 12 May. High: 15, 27 April.		137 51st St.
Great-tailed Grackle	3	✓ 21 April	Long's Pond, Guthrie county
Purple Finch	2 females	17 March	137 51st St, Des Moines
	1 male	25 March	137 51st St, DM
	1 female	10 April	137 51st St, DM
	1 female	4 May	137 51st St, DM
	1 female	7 May	137 51st St, DM
	2 females	8 May	137 51st St, DM
	2 f., 1m.	9 May	137 51st St, DM
	2 f. 1 m.	10 May	137 51st St, DM
3 f. 1 m.	12 May	137 51st St, DM	

Pine Siskin

regular at feeders throughout spring; as late as 10 May there were still multiple birds around (3 on feeder at once); a single bird was seen daily until 23 May. I haven't had a chance to watch for it since then.

*In late breaking news I had a Pine siskin @ the feeder this morning, 31 May, 7:50 am.*