

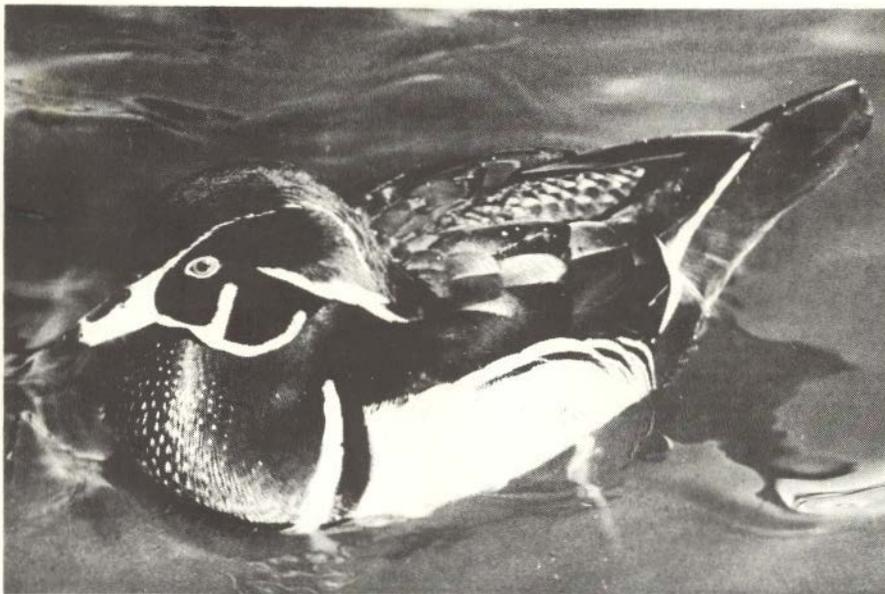
South Dakota Bird Notes

Official Publication
of
SOUTH DAKOTA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION
(Organized 1949)

Vol. 26, No. 4

DECEMBER, 1974

Whole No. 103



Wood Duck

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President's Page

THE DECEMBER meeting in Pierre was a very successful one, thanks to the work of Conrad Fjetland and the group who worked with him to organize the gathering. Conrad came up with an interesting array of speakers; the program went well from start to finish. Highlight of the meeting for many was undoubtedly the opportunity to observe a Glaucous Gull in South Dakota, along with Snowy Owls, White-winged Scoter and other interesting species.

Several parties also reported seeing a Gyrfalcon.

The business and directors' meetings brought about changes which should economize costs of publishing BIRD NOTES, and allow us to get back to a 20-page

publication as in past years. Inflation has hit SDOU, as it has affected most of us in many ways. During the past year we reduced the number of pages per issue to 16, from 24 to 30 pages per volume. This reduction eliminated a proposed new section for a summary of seasonal reports, a section which would have been of general interest and information for all members.

Your Board of Directors voted to take several steps which should save money in publishing costs: getting bulk rate mailing rather than first class for BIRD NOTES; eliminating use of an envelope for mailing BIRD NOTES; cutting back the number of copies printed per issue from 800 to 600. These changes should result in enough savings to enable us to continue with a 20- or 24-page magazine.

B.J. Rose has offered to compile highlights of the seasonal reports during the year, and has asked that copies of reports sent to the new regional co-editors of "American Birds" (SDOU members Esther Serr and Richard Rosche) be forwarded to him in Pierre. See a note elsewhere in this issue for more information regarding this. An agreement was also made to give some financial assistance for postage to the regional co-editors.

The members in attendance voted to join the South Dakota Environmental Coalition in their efforts to protect and upgrade the quality of the environment in the state. The Coalition includes among its member organizations such diverse groups as the Izaak Walton League, The Wildlife Society, USD Ecology Committee, James Valley Nature Club, and Citizens Observing the Oahe Project. Although some problems with which they deal will be controversial for us, I believe SDOU should broaden its base to participate in SDEC programs. Quantity and quality of birdlife is directly dependent on the habitat available, and this habitat is disappearing at an alarming pace, particularly during the past 10 years. All SDOU members should become more aware of the problems facing the environment; there are good articles in such publications as "National Wildlife" and "Audubon Magazine," as well as other nation-wide magazines.

Our Spring Meeting will be held at Webster, where Herman Chilson has offered to host the gathering. The northeast corner of the state is excellent birding at all times of the year, and we hope to have another good turnout in 1975. The date of the meeting will be decided later.—Bruce K. Harris



SDOU Meetings: 1949-1973

L.M. Baylor

IN SOME respects the South Dakota Ornithologists' Union is still such a young organization that looking back upon its history may be presumptuous. On the other hand, SDOU now has a history of 25 years, and its contributions to South Dakota ornithology are not without significance. In addition to the regular publication of SOUTH DAKOTA BIRD NOTES, a sustaining factor in SDOU's history has been the pattern of regular meetings throughout the state—meetings that bring members together to share information about South Dakota birds, to engage in field trips, and to conduct the organization's business. Thus, the following synopses of SDOU meetings may serve a useful purpose by providing one report for convenient reference. This account results from my reviewing meeting reports in past issues of BIRD NOTES and from a few personal memories. In addition, Dr. N.R. Whitney Jr. shared materials to fill the gap of a report on the 1959 meeting.

January 15, 1947—at Sioux Falls—the organizational meeting: Herbert Krause, in his tribute: "H.F. Chapman," BIRD NOTES, 13:60-63, 73 (Sept., 1961), gives a valuable impression of this first meeting and the central role of the late Herman Chapman as the "founding father" of SDOU. In addition to establishing SDOU's purpose, as well as undertaking the necessary administrative details of organization, the founders started a charter membership drive that, by July, 1949, resulted in one honorary member, 150 active members, and 14 junior members. Appropriately, Herman Chapman became SDOU's first president. E.R. Lamster was named the editor of BIRD NOTES, with the first issue appearing in July, 1949. Nonetheless, as Krause notes, Chapman

was actively involved with producing the first issues and setting editorial standards to challenge succeeding editors.

January 16, 1950—at Huron: Principal business included: (1) adoption of new by-laws with 15 elected directors delegated to elect officers from the directorship; (2) a decision to incorporate SDOU in South Dakota as a non-profit organization; (3) a decision to hold annual meetings each May and to include field trips. Gerald B. Spawn was elected president, and Herman F. Chapman moved to the official capacity as editor.

May 20-21, 1950—at Brookings—the first spring meeting: The field trip on May 21 was at Oakwood Lakes State Park, with 82 species reported.

May 5-6, 1951—at Vermillion: The field trip on May 6 focused on the Missouri River woods and sloughs and the Vermillion River near the location of Audubon's field camp of 100 years earlier. Notable observations included hundreds of Tree Swallows and a Red-Bellied Woodpecker, the latter apparently a rarity for that time. In all, 76 species were reported. J. Scott Findley became the new president.

May 30-31, 1952—at Chamberlain: The field trip on May 31 was in the valley of the White River near its confluence with the Missouri River. Despite a heavy rain the previous night, 76 species were observed. Kenneth Krumm was named president.

May 23-24, 1953—at Pierre: At the business meeting, Herb Krause won a two-volume set of Bent's WATERFOWL for submitting five new SDOU memberships. Field trips in the rain to the Oahe Dam site and to Farm Island produced a list of 133 species. Cecil P. Haight became the president.

May 30-June 1, 1954—at Spearfish: Dr. and Mrs. L.B. Nice, from Chicago, were distinguished guests. Field trips ranged from Spearfish Creek near the college to the prairie and Spearfish Canyon, with a picnic at Roughlock Falls. Special species to delight the eastern visitors included Dipper and nest with young, White-throated Swift, Violet-green Swallow, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, Macgillivray's Warbler, Lazuli Bunting, and "the ubiquitous Mountain Bluebirds." J.O. Johnson became the new president of SDOU. After five years as editor of BIRD NOTES, Herman Chapman retired, and J. Scott Findley assumed the editorship for the next five years, starting with Vol. 5, No. 2, June, 1954.

May 14-15, 1955—at Sioux City, Iowa—a joint meeting with the Nebraska and Iowa Ornithologists' Unions: Field trips ventured into the three states, with 91 species listed in South Dakota and 122 species reported for all three states.

May 26-27, 1956—at Watertown: Field trips focused on the Waubay National Wildlife Refuge. Carl Johnson banded a Black-billed Cuckoo and a Canada Warbler, and a Scarlet Tanager thrilled picnickers. The species list numbered 102. Charles P. Crutchett succeeded J.O. Johnson as president.

May 18-19, 1957—at Martin and La-Creek National Wildlife Refuge: While the report indicates an outstanding paper session, the heavy rains in the gumbo country contributed to unusually memorable field-trip efforts. Despite the difficulties with movement about the area, 128 species were reported. Herbert Krause became the new president of SDOU.

May 17-18, 1958—at Sioux Falls: Curiously, this meeting is the first one not clearly reported in BIRD NOTES. Since it was the first meeting that I attended, my copy of the program and memory may serve as well. The paper session had a central theme of problems

of bird study in South Dakota, with presentations by Kenneth Krumm, Alfred Peterson, Ruth Habeger, Howard Huenecke, Willis Hall, N.R. Whitney Jr., J. Scott Findley, and Sven Froiland. N.R. Whitney Jr. was elected president. J. Scott Findley concluded his editing of BIRD NOTES with Vol. 10, No. 4, Dec., 1958.

May 16-17, 1959—at Yankton—a joint meeting with the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union: Again, BIRD NOTES carries no explicit account of this meeting. The program reflects an interesting variety of papers, especially Herb Krause's "Notes on the Nesting Behavior of a Pair of Canada Warblers." Dr. Walter J. Breckenridge spoke on the "Natural History of the Central Canadian Arctic." For some of the 121 participants, the highlight of the field trips was a boat trip on the Missouri River. With the March-June, 1959 (Vol. 11, Nos. 1 & 2) issue, J.W. Johnson began his 10-year editorship of BIRD NOTES.

May 29-30, 1960—at Rapid City: Joseph Taylor from the Bausch and Lomb Optical Company was the principal speaker, and paper sessions covered a wide spectrum of Black Hills natural science. The field-trips list of 88 species included a number of distinctly western birds to delight observers from eastern areas. Ruth Habeger was elected SDOU's next president.

May 20-21, 1961—at Watertown: Featured speaker was Dr. P.B. Hofslund. Field trips to Bitter Lake, Rush Lake, and Waubay Refuge accounted for 148 species—the largest species list for an SDOU meeting. Members finally acknowledged that they were trying to accomplish too much at annual meetings with formal business affairs, paper sessions, and field trips. Thus, from the 1961 meeting came the decision to hold semi-annual meetings, with the spring meeting devoted to field trips and the winter meeting devoted to paper sessions.

January 27-28, 1962—at Sioux Falls—the first winter meeting with more elaborate formal paper sessions: Of the many items of interest, two presentations deserve special note: Les Berner's "Effects of Dams and Canals on Wildlife" and a panel discussion on the Sandhill Crane problems in northwestern South Dakota. As a result, the members adopted resolutions that encouraged (1) the government to cease draining wetlands and (2) the establishment of a refuge for Sandhill Cranes near Pollock, S.D. (Members who went to Pollock during the 1972 meeting were pleased to see the crane refuge.)

May 26-27, 1962—at Pierre: Les Berner led prairie field trips to see Prairie Chickens boom and Sharp-tailed Grouse dance. Other field trips concentrated on the birds at Farm Island and the Bad River Valley. J.W. Johnson's eloquent account of the field-trip experiences is in BIRD NOTES, 14:45-46 (June, 1962). After serving as treasurer from mid-1955, Dr. L.J. Moriarty advanced to the presidency of SDOU, with Nelda Holden assuming her long and loyal role as treasurer, the office for many years being that of secretary-treasurer.

January 19-20, 1963—at Brookings, with the temperature at 20 degrees below zero: Among the varied and interesting papers was Dr. Willard Rosine's significant technical presentation, "Organisms Airborne by Wildfowl."

May 25-26, 1963—at Webster: Dr. Dwain Warner, guest speaker, gave a fascinating account of new techniques in radar and radio tracking of birds. Field trips naturally concentrated on the Waubay Refuge and other lake areas. While BIRD NOTES does not offer a species list for the meeting, J.W. Johnson, in his report on the meeting, noted a limitation in the variety of warblers observed. Members passed resolutions: (1) to support a congressional bill to curtail use of chemical pesticides; (2) to seek South

Dakota legislative support for research and laws on chemical pesticides; (3) to support the National Wildlife Refuge System; and (4) to support the Wilderness Bill.

January 18-19, 1964—at Huron: Presentations featured Willis Hall's memorable slides on nesting Red-tailed Hawks, L.J. Moriarty's report on the Canada Goose, Paul Springer's explanation of the Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit at SDSU, Nat Whitney's "Birds of the Black Hills," J.W. Johnson's account of bird-banding at Huron, and Warren Jackson's report on his work with Sharp-tailed Grouse and Prairie Chickens in south-central South Dakota.

May 16-17, 1964—at Pierre—another field-trip pilgrimage to Farm Island and LaFramboise Island, with 118 species listed. While these synopses are necessarily limited and selective to the exclusion of much that others may consider important, the brief accounts should bring to participants special personal memories. Relative to this Pierre meeting, for example, I fondly recall the gracious hospitality of Fern Barber; the delightful birding companionship with Mary Hyde, Gertrude Bachmann, Goldie Burton, and Mary Mickle; the numerous Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Scarlet Tanagers at Farm Island; the accommodating Piping Plover on the dike at La Framboise Island; and a Hudsonian Godwit observed northeast of Midland, S.D., on the way to the Pierre meeting. At this meeting Herbert Krause accepted another one-year term as president of SDOU.

January 23-24, 1965—at Sioux Falls: The paper session featured presentations by Willard Rosine, N.R. Whitney Jr., Charles and Gladys Rogge, Nelda Holden, and Warren Jackson. Pre-meeting activity included Arthur Allen's classic movie, "The Bald Eagle," and species identifications with specimens from the Augustana collection. Members

approved resolutions in opposition to increased bounties on fox and in support of the GF&P biologists for their management of the fox-pheasant situation.

June 17-20, 1965—at Sylvan Lake: SDOU and the Black Hills Audubon Society hosted the 46th Annual Meeting of the Wilson Ornithological Society. This meeting naturally centered upon the formal paper sessions of the Wilson Society. SDOU members in attendance will have their individual memories of this special occasion, but surely all will remember the role of their own Herbert Krause as banquet speaker, speaking on the "History of the Northern Great Plains with Special Reference to Ornithology." They should remember, too, the SDOU business meeting in the serene setting under the pines when Herman Chilson was elected to succeed Krause as SDOU president.

October 9-10, 1965—at Huron: This meeting marked a change from January winter meetings to avoid cold weather conditions and conflicts with semester endings that prevented students from participating in the meetings. In this instance the meeting came early in the fall so that members could gather on the evening of October 8 to witness Roger Tory Peterson's Audubon Screen Tour Film, "Wild Europe." Features of the paper sessions included Paul Springer's "Survey of the Flora and Fauna on the Altamont Prairie" and a symposium on the status of biology and ornithological study at South Dakota colleges.

May 14-15, 1966—at Brookings: Field trips emphasized birds at Oakwood Lakes and the migration of shore and water birds. Memory adds that song birds, especially the warblers, also provided particularly rewarding observations.

November 26-27, 1966—at Vermillion: The paper session was distinctive because of the reports on research by a number of graduate students from USD

and SDSU. Then Dr. Alfred Grewe gave the banquet address on "South Dakota's Bald Eagles." For further details on these presentations, see Herman Chilson's remarks in BIRD NOTES, 18:75, 99 (Dec., 1966). Members adopted Herman Chapman's resolution urging the South Dakota Regents of Higher Education to designate the USD museum as the William H. Over Museum (a name change that the Regents subsequently adopted).

May 20-21, 1967—at Belvidere: This meeting in a small rural community was exceptional in many ways, with a special feature in the way residents of Belvidere opened their homes to provide accommodations for meeting participants. The species list was 138, with a male Cinnamon Teal at Lake Belvidere perhaps commanding the most attention, for this teal is seldom observed in western South Dakota.

November 18-19, 1967—at Madison: Confronted with increased publishing costs, SDOU had to raise its dues, the first dues increase since SDOU's 1949 origin. L.M. Baylor followed Herman Chilson as president of SDOU.

May 18-19, 1968—at Highmore: June Harter served as local hostess to perhaps the least forgettable of all SDOU field-trip meetings, for Saturday morning greeted participants with snow and ice, and rain and cold wind persisted throughout most of the day. Nevertheless, the species list of 126 attests to rather good birding for the hardy members.

November 23-24, 1968—at Sioux Falls, in the new Gilbert Science Center at Augustana College: This meeting holds special memory for those in attendance, for it was the last meeting that Lois Chapman was physically able to attend. Our having both Herman and Lois present was rewarding for all. Members approved resolutions, introduced by George Jonkel, with respect to opposing channelization of the Big Sioux River and

encouraging greater regulation of mining on public land.

May 17-18, 1969—at Webster: The field trips in excellent weather produced 146 species—the second highest species list for all SDOU meetings through 1973. Particularly memorable were the running-on-water mating displays by Western Grebes and the variety of warblers—16 warbler species. After months of endeavoring to escape the chores of editorship, J.W. Johnson insisted that BIRD NOTES for June, 1969 (Vol. 21, No. 2) would be the last issue that he would edit. Don Adolphson and Winona Sparks became the co-editors with Vol. 21, No. 3, September, 1969.

November 15-16, 1969—at Huron—the 20th Anniversary Meeting: Titles of the various presentations at the paper session are listed in BIRD NOTES, 21:87 (Dec., 1969). Highlight of the meeting, however, was Jean Jonkel's organization of a founders' recognition ceremony, and one pleasantly recalls the presentation of a corsage to founding member, Ruth Habeger. Retired editor Johnson was not long unemployed, for we put Jim back to work as the president of SDOU.

June 6-7, 1970—at Bison—another meeting in a small rural setting, this time with Gertrice and Alfred Hinds and the Bison Business Club as local hosts: The field trips in Harding and Perkins Counties turned up 130 species, with the highlight being Bruce Harris and Paul Springer's identification of a McCown's Longspur in northern Harding County.

November 14-15, 1970—at Pierre: Of the various papers presented, one deserves special mention for its technical excellence: Dr. Gilbert Blankespoor's "Significance of Nest and Nest Site Microclimate for the Dickcissel." Banquet speaker Don Hunter spoke on raptors and displayed a Gyrfalcon, Prairie Falcon, and Red-tailed Hawk.

May 22-23, 1971—at Aberdeen: The field trips ranged throughout Brown County with special efforts devoted to the Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge. The

species list numbered 144, with the Yellow-Crowned Night Heron being perhaps the most notable species.

November 13-14, 1971—at Vermillion: While all presentations deserve some mention, one in particular must be noted here. David Holden's "Natural Areas of South Dakota Worthy of Identification and Preservation" represents a valuable study, and one longs to see again his remarkable slides from this project. Byron Harrell succeeded J.W. Johnson as president.

June 3-4, 1972—at Mobridge: Field trips dispersed widely into the varied habitats of Campbell, Corson, Dewey, and Walworth Counties and produced a species list of 123. Banquet speaker Byron Harrell reviewed his studies of the flora and avifauna in a cloud forest of Mexico.

November 4, 1972—at Brookings: Again the paper session benefited by presentations of research from the Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit and from other science departments at SDSU. John Lokemoen, from the Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Station, brought a valuable report on nesting prairie birds in McPherson County. Dr. Ray Lindner provided the banquet address on the Black-footed Ferret.

May 26-27, 1973—at Martin and LaCreek National Wildlife Refuge: Again in 1973, as in 1957, the rain made a gumbo mess of the roads, and more than one SDOU member is indebted to Harold Burgess, Con Fjetland, and Greg Koeln for tows with the Refuge's four-wheel-drive vehicle. Despite the weather and road conditions, participants accounted for 115 species. The now well-established Trumpeter Swan population at LaCreek Refuge delighted observers, and B.J. Rose, with his penchant for locating oddities, found a Curve-billed Thrasher. After the banquet, Rolf Wallenstrom provided a thorough account of the previous winter's duck disease tragedy at Lake Andes. Editors Adolphson and Sparks concluded their services with the

publication of the March, 1973 (Vol. 25, No. 1) issue of BIRD NOTES, and June Harter became the editor with the next issue, June, 1973 (Vol. 25, No. 2).

November 10-11, 1973—at Sioux Falls: Again the paper session featured a number of technical reports representing substantial research. The titles are listed

in BIRD NOTES, 25:62 (Dec., 1973). Thanks to the efforts of Herbert Krause, the special speaker was Dr. Walter J. Breckenridge, who favored the group with his excellent film, "Minnesota Valley Saga." Bruce Harris, one of the few still-active SDOU charter members, became the new president.—SDSM&T, Rapid City, S.D.

Chimney Swifts: Fall Records, 1965-1974

A. Louise Flett

IT WAS the fall of 1965 when I first noticed the migrating Chimney Swifts using a large chimney in the business district of Milbank, Grant County. Subsequent observations were made from a parked car—a practice that was facilitated later by the installation of a parking lot.

Counting the birds as they dropped into the chimney was fascinating, but there were times, of course, when the count could not be exact.

Keeping a record of fall arrival dates was not feasible, but I did learn that the birds begin to gather in August with peak numbers occurring about the middle of September.

The weather column in the table describes prevailing conditions for the period covered by the last week of August and most of September. Blank spaces represent the days when I was not in Milbank; the last column has my return dates for those periods. Swifts were not seen on or after those dates.

FALL RECORDS, 1965-1974

Year	Weather	Date and Peak Number	Last Date and Number	None Seen
1965	Mostly rainy, cold	8-22— 75	9- 9— 2	
1966	Mostly clear, mild	9- 4—200	9-20— 2	
1967	Rainy	9-19—140		9-22
1968	Mostly rainy	9-19— 71	9-23— 7	
1969	Mostly warm, clear	9-14—105	9-16— 4	
1970	Mostly mild			9-23
1971	Mostly clear, cold	9-19—107	9-23—15	
1972	Warm, sunny			9-17
1973	Cloudy	9-22— 57	10-1—21	
1974	Mostly warm	Birds flying around 8-13-14, but none entered the chimney	8-25	

—Milbank 57252

SDOU 1974 Winter Meeting

Conrad Fjetland

SDOU'S WINTER Meeting was held in Pierre on December 6, 7 and 8, with 47 persons registered for the scientific sessions. The theme for the meeting was "Endangered Species."

The first paper, presented by Maurice E. Anderson, was entitled "The 1973 Endangered Species Act." Anderson is a biologist with the Fish and Wildlife Service in Pierre. The second presentation, "The State's Role in Endangered Species Management," was made by Jerome Lounsberry, Endangered Species Coordinator for the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks.

Bruce Harris, president of SDOU, followed with "The Smith's Longspur in South Dakota," a report on the known South Dakota records for this seldom observed bird. John T. Lokemoen, from the Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center in Jamestown, North Dakota, then presented "Nesting Ecology of the Ferruginous Hawk in McPherson County, South Dakota." Lokemoen accented his interesting paper with slides of the hawks and their habitat.

The next speaker was Harold Burgess, manager of the LaCreek National Wildlife Refuge, with the topic "Will Success Endanger the Trumpeter Swan?" Burgess discussed the advantages and disadvantages of removing the Trumpeter Swan from the endangered or threatened category. Nelda Holden, Brookings, gave a paper entitled "Amount of White in Tail Retrises as an Aid in Sexing Slate-colored Juncos" in which she summarized her observations on hundreds of juncos captured in her banding operations.

For a change of pace, the group was shown a film, "Planning for Floods," that stressed flood plain management and the consequences of unwise use of flood plains. Following the film, Harold Duebbert, also from the Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center, spoke on the subject, "Relationships Between Nesting Ducks and Upland Habitats." Duebbert pointed out the necessity for tall and rank nesting cover to maintain high waterfowl nesting success and densities. The final paper of the day, "Why Isn't the White Pelican an Endangered Species?" was presented by Conrad Fjetland of Pierre. It was a discussion on the status of the White Pelican in relation to its ecological characteristics and the factors which usually lead to the extinction of a species.

Forty-two people attended the evening banquet. The program after dinner featured "Birding in the Northeast United States and Maritime Provinces, Summer 1974" by B.J. Rose. He showed over 700 slides of the marathon trip he and his wife, Lois, made to cover the area. The quality of the slides was excellent and the program was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

At the business meeting the SDOU voted to join the South Dakota Environmental Coalition. Webster was selected for the site of the 1975 Spring Meeting, and it was also agreed that we would accept the invitation to meet in Custer in the spring of 1976. Board members whose terms expired in 1974 were re-elected, and Conrad Fjetland was elected to fill the unexpired term of Lee Eberly.—Pierre



—Photo by Willis Hall

Goshawk Feeding on a Cottontail Rabbit

Registrants at the Meeting:

Maurice E. Anderson
Fern Barber
Mr. and Mrs. Harold E. Burgess
Herman Chilson
Harold Duebbert
Norma Eckman
Esther Edie
Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Fjetland
Mr. and Mrs. Willis Hall
Carroll Hanten
Mr. and Mrs. Byron Harrell
Bruce Harris
Tom Hays
Nelda Holden
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth H. Husmann
Enid Hyde
Warren Jackson
Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Johnson
Vi Kooyman

John T. Lokemoen
Leonard L. McDaniel
Jocelyn Mortimer
Dr. and Mrs. L.R. Palmerton
Richard C. Rosche
Mr. and Mrs. B.J. Rose
Elizabeth Sahr
Mrs. Bill Sahr
Esther Serr
Karen Steenhof
Galen L. Steffen
R.V. Summerside
Edith Vanderwaal
Mr. Nel Wagner
Dr. and Mrs. N.R. Whitney
Robert Whyte
Rick Wilt
Mr. and Mrs. Lenord Yarger

Snow Bunting Records, 1973-74

June Harter

THE CALL for Snow Bunting observations for the winter of 1973-74 (BN, 26:26) produced worthwhile data for comparison with published records of the species in South Dakota. The numbers and locations, along with those of other reports, support the speculation that a major irruption did occur.

Snow Buntings have appeared by the thousands in the eastern half of North Dakota (e.g., 3583 in the Jamestown 1970 Christmas Count, "American Birds," 25:400), but they come down into our state in much smaller numbers. They usually are found in the northern and

extreme eastern counties. In Nebraska, the Christmas Counts for 1970 through 1973, reported in "American Birds," include only one record for Snow Buntings—three birds at Beatrice in 1970.

The 1973-74 Snow Bunting records in South Dakota are in the table. An unusual Nebraska report is included because of the proximity of the location to South Dakota. Parenthetical initials represent reporters and compilers.

A similarity between the numbers of Snow Buntings present during the winter of 1968-69 and 1973-74 could be connoted by the 1968 Christmas Counts (BN,

SNOW BUNTINGS—1973-74

Date	Location	Number Seen
12-15	Three miles east of Vermillion (KJH)	6
12-15	Sioux Falls Christmas Count (GB)	20
12-20	Codington County (BKH)—Eight flocks in 10 miles . . . totalling	100
12-20	Waubay NFW Christmas Count (KH)	35
12-22	Aberdeen Christmas Count (LL)	12
12-22	Brookings Christmas Count (NH)	3
12-23	Near Gann Valley (GBa)—Three flocks . . . totalling	70
12-24	Near Gann Valley (GBa)—One flock	80
12-26	Near Gann Valley (GBa)	11
12-26	Wilmot Christmas Count (BKH)	50
12-27	Madison (RB)	4
12-28	West of Wessington Springs (GBa)	50
12-29	Few miles south of Fort Pierre (RVS)	350
12-30	Pierre Christmas Count (BJR)	362
1- 2	Spearfish (TH)	45
1-19	Oglala National Grasslands, Sioux County, Nebraska, about 10 miles south of Ardmore, Fall River County, South Dakota (RCR)	200

Additionally, there were five on the Webster Christmas Count (HC); three flocks between Highmore and Miller on January 1 (RH); large flocks in Deuel County on 1-8, tapering off by 2-28 (BKH); and a peak number of 30 at Waubay NWR on 1-20 (RRJ).

(Continued on Page 75)



Snowy Owl

—Photo by Susan Sindt

WHEWWW! Only a Mile to Go . . .

The Snowy Owl perching on the Interstate 90 sign was photographed on Dec. 21, 1973, by Susan Sindt, Fort Collins, Colorado. She also reported that Don Higgins saw a Snowy Owl on the same day, one-fourth mile east of Caputa. Susan has worked as a naturalist at the Badlands National Monument.

General Notes of Special Interest

COMMENTS ON THE SNOWY EGRET REPORTED FROM LAKE COUNTY—As I read Dr. Haglund's note (SDBN 26(3):58-59, Sept., 1974), I was reminded of several birding experiences in Texas and Florida that require a second-look at all "Snowy Egrets" identified in flight. In late March of 1964, while birding along the Rio Grande River near the Santa Ana Refuge, I saw several white herons that were not familiar as they flew by the car. Dark beaks and dark legs suggested immature Snowy Egrets so I stopped for a better look. No buffy feathers were in evidence anywhere, but the heavy "jowls" suggested immature Cattle Egrets. My suspicions were confirmed shortly thereafter when several adults with wax-yellow beaks (which darken to an orange-red later on, just before breeding) and buffy plumes joined the immatures and they all fed leisurely together in the grass. Then in late May of 1972, five Avifaunal Club members ran a one-week bird marathon from Minnesota to the Florida Keys (and including the Dry Tortugas) and return. We enjoyed many new lifelist birds and learned much about other species that were infrequent visitors to our northern climes, including the Cattle Egret. This species was abundant in Florida in all plumages except the rich breeding plumage. I chanced to see an immature, with black feet and legs, and dark beak, take flight close by. As it turned and flew away from me, I saw that the soles of the feet were yellow. Another member of our group turned just in time to carelessly call out "Snowy Egret." A brief discussion followed, and we started checking more immatures. We noted that the tops of the feet were dark, but the soles were yellow. Flying toward us they looked like the immature Cattle Egrets that they were,

but flying away from us, they looked like Snowy Egrets! The heavy "jowls" still provided a good field mark, but I would be cautious about identifications performed while the bird was in flight unless seen from front, side, and back for complete coloration notes. Likewise, the black-footed, black-beaked bird seen by Dr. Haglund's party may have been an immature Cattle Egret standing on a muddy bank.—Ronald L. Huber, 2896 Simpson Street, Roseville, Minn. 55113

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RESPONSE TO "COMMENTS ON THE SNOWY EGRET REPORTED FROM LAKE COUNTY"—Mr. Huber's point on the need for careful observation when attempting to differentiate Snowy Egrets and Cattle Egrets is well taken. + + + But I stated that the Lake County egret "trailed black legs with yellow feet." That characteristic was noted by several of us observing the bird in flight.—Brent M. Haglund, Biology, Augustana College, Sioux Falls, S.D. 57102

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RONALD L. HUBER'S RESPONSE— "Thank you for your letter and the copy of Dr. Haglund's reply . . . Our experiences in Florida have a direct bearing on his Lake County observation. Obviously, if they first saw the bird fly over their car, and all of them were in said car, the bird had to be flying away from them when they got out to observe it (unless it hovered over the car like a helicopter, which I doubt). Perhaps the bird flew conveniently in circles around their car, but his article did not so state.

Our Florida experiences suggest that only the plantar surface of the Cattle Egret's foot is yellow, but when flying away from the observer it might appear that the whole foot was yellow—

obviously in error. Thus it follows that "trailed black legs with yellow feet," isn't enough if the bird is flying away from the observer. To be sure, I am in no position to say that Dr. Haglund saw a Snowy Egret rather than a Cattle Egret—I was several hundred miles east at the time—but from the way his note is written, the observation is untenable. An adjudication committee (for example the Toronto group working on the Ontario list) would tear his record apart and dismiss it very quickly. As a matter of fact, I hope Dr. Haglund did see a Snowy Egret because I would like to think that they will eventually be more common up this way. Perhaps it was my fault for not relating our Florida experiences to his Lake County report and my Texas notes to his Lincoln County report (re the black beak)."

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BAY-BREADED WARBLER IN HYDE COUNTY—The bird that stayed in my yard Oct. 22, 23 and 24, 1974, provided adequate opportunities for study and identification. Its size and beak showed it to be one of the warbler family, and a process of elimination narrowed that field down to the Black-poll'd or Bay-breasted Warbler. All markings indicated it was the latter.

With the zoom binocular set to 12x, I had several excellent views of the warbler at 20 to 25 feet. Occasionally it perched in the apple tree at a distance of about 10 feet from me. When the bird fed on the lawn I noted the olive-green head and back, the streaks of a darker color on the back, the buffy underparts and undertail coverts, the barely discernible streaks on the sides, the two distinct white wingbars, and the dark legs. When the bird stood on a small pile of windfall apples and bent over to snatch a fly I noted the two irregular oval patches on the underside of the tail—marks that are typical of the Black-poll'd and Bay-breasted Warblers. The buffy undertail coverts and the dark legs are major

identification marks of the Bay-breasted Warbler.

While the warbler was present I left the pile of apples which it frequently used for a feeding spot. On at least one occasion, the bird had a big fly in its beak.

Reference books used for identification were "Birds of North America" (Robbins, et al) and "A Field Guide to the Birds" (Peterson).—J. Harter.

Snow Bunting Records: 1973-74

(Continued from Page 72)

21:89). Buntings were observed on six counts, with a minimum of two at Rapid City and a maximum of 321 at Yankton. However, there are no published records for the rest of the winter.

Other informational sources for this report were the Christmas Count editions of "American Birds," particularly Vol. 28:428-430; the 1973-74 Winter Season Report, compiled by Esther Serr; and letters to the editor.

Observers and Christmas Count compilers are: Gene Bauer (GBa); Gilbert Blankespoor (GB); Robert Buckman (RB); Herman Chilson (HC); Kent Hall (KH); Bruce K. Harris (BKH); Robert Hawkins (RH); Tom Hays (TH); Nelda Holden (NH); Carolyn J. Hoover (KJH); Robert R. Johnson (RRJ); Lawrence Lynch (LL); Richard C. Rosche (RCR); B.J. Rose (BJR); R.V. Summerside (RVS). The assistance of everyone is greatly appreciated.—
Highmore

Traps for Banders

Dr. Harold W. Wagar, 1020 West Elm Avenue, Mitchell, S.D. 57301, has several good bird traps that he will give to the first bander to come after them. Anyone interested should notify him in advance. Some of the traps were gifts from Lowry Elliott.

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Coming Items . . .

Congratulations

Two SDOU members, Esther Serr and Richard Rosche, are the new regional co-editors for "American Birds," a publication of the National Audubon Society in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. They will edit reports from the Northern Great Plains Region, an area that includes the Dakotas, most of Montana, and part of Canada.

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Seasonal Reports

Publication of seasonal reports in BIRD NOTES will soon be resumed. Preparation of the material will be done by B.J. Rose, assisted by Conrad Fjetland. Beginning with the winter records, reporters who send their accounts to Esther Serr should simultaneously send copies to B.J. Rose, 410 West Capitol Avenue, Pierre, S.D. 57501.

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Christmas Counts

The 1974 Christmas Counts will be in the March issue of BIRD NOTES. Counts that have not been sent to the editor should be mailed as soon as possible to facilitate compilation.

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Inventory Sale of Bird Notes

SDOU will sell back issues of BIRD NOTES to members and libraries until July 1, 1975, at \$1.00 per full year (one volume of four issues). Please send your orders to Mrs. David J. Holden, Rt. 4, Box 68, Brookings, S.D. 57006.