

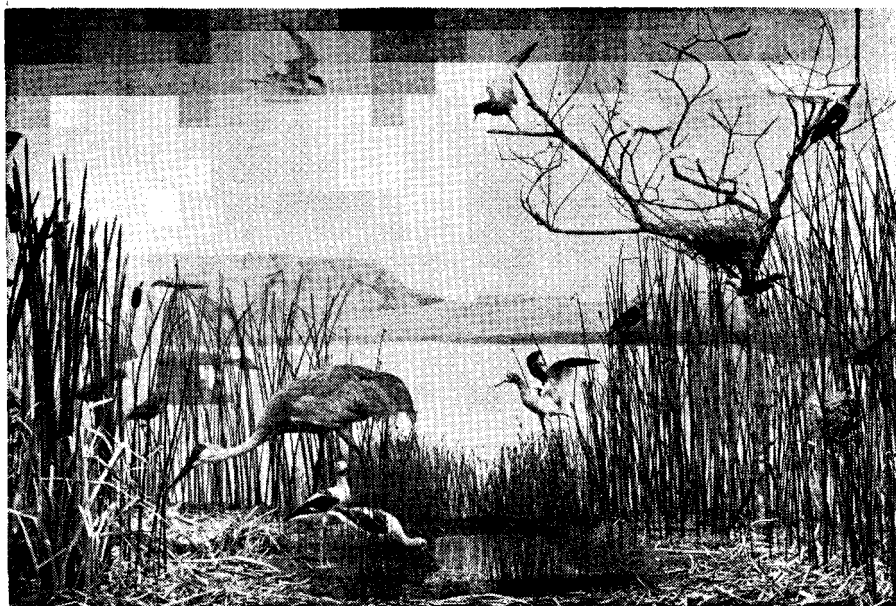
SOUTH DAKOTA BIRD NOTES

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Whole No. 23



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President's Page



RECENTLY I had a pleasant visit with the James W. Johnsons at Huron and was interested in the unusual feeding station Mr. Johnson had built from plans found in an old bird book. The top, ends and bottom were

made from 10 inch boards and fitted over the window sill. The window was raised, the feeder put in place, and the window lowered onto the top of the feeder. The inner end is double glazed to prevent frost forming, and the part of the top inside the room is hinged for placing food and water.

The well-used bath was a saucer-shaped basin of concrete, 30 inches in diameter and maximum depth of 2½ inches, sunk to ground level. It was placed in an open part of the lawn,—some distance from trees and bushes that could conceal predators, an important point. It is easily cleaned and filled from the garden hose.

* * *

Mr. Johnson arranged for a visit to the J. J. Kouf farm, on the bank of the James River in a grove of native timber, to see the J. M. Kouf

collection of birds. The birds were collected by J. M. Kouf and mounted by Mrs. Kouf and consist of many owls, hawks and wild fowl, a few shore birds and many other species. It is a fine collection and may add to our South Dakota list.

Another collection made many years ago by H. J. Hinderman is housed in the basement of the Redfield city hall. It is in fairly good condition with much of it locked in glass cases. Not all the specimens are tagged but many have tags marked "South Dakota" although no date or site is given.

* * *

Herbert Krause has completed his gargantuan task, the index to the first five volumes of Bird Notes, which will be a handy tool for all who refer to these back issues. A copy of the index will be sent to all members as soon as it is printed.

* * *

Herman Chapman, chairman of the Membership Committee, has many problems and the bete noire is getting renewals from some of our members. The collection of the annual dues, due January 1st, has required too much time and effort. They are payable in advance and a prompt remittance will assure the receipt of the March number of Bird Notes, and will allow the committee to devote its efforts to gaining new members, its prime purpose.

—J. O. Johnson, Watertown, S. D.

Sandhill Crane Flight

ARTHUR R. LUNDQUIST, Webster, S. D.

I HAD HEARD of the annual concentration of Sandhill Cranes near Pollock, S. D., and had decided to see them this Fall and to take some movies. Then on September 27, 1954, Arthur S. Huber, a farmer who lives near Herreid, S. D., wrote that the cranes were coming south in considerable numbers. However, I could not get away from my home in Webster until Saturday noon, October 9, when Carl Sundahl, State President, Izaak Walton League, and I packed our sleeping bags and started the trip.

We got to Herreid about 3:30 P. M. and John Reidlinger, Jr., Izaak Walton League State Director, guided us to the Missouri River northwest of Pollock and less than two miles from the North Dakota line. He pointed out large sand-bars in mid-stream that are used by the cranes for night roosts. On the way from Pollock to the River we saw several large flocks in the fields and flocks of 300 were not unusual.

At evening we unpacked our sleeping bags and bedded down on a grassy knoll about a mile from the sand bars. In the semi-darkness after sun-down we could hear the cranes even when a mile or two away, as they kept winging in. Most of the flocks were small ones of about 20 birds, although occasionally a much larger one would fly over. A flock of about 500 crows also flew over like a large cloud, when it was nearly dark, perhaps to some nearby roost.

The next morning we got up at the first sign of daybreak. About six o'clock a single crane flew overhead. A flock of 10 soon followed. A few seconds later hunters on the oppo-

site bank of the river shot a few times and the sky filled with cranes going in all directions. By seven o'clock none was left on the sand-bars.

During the day we drove several miles looking for the cranes and found a flock of about 1000 on a large piece of grassland, and I got quite close to some of them. We saw other flocks here and there from the North Dakota line to about 8 miles south of Herreid.

Perhaps now that I know the lay of the land, I can go again another Fall with enough time to get some good close-up pictures.

In places where the river bottoms are narrow, migratory waves of small birds seemed to be concentrated,—many Sparrows, Warblers, Longspurs, Mourning Doves, Meadowlarks, Sparrow Hawks, and what-have-you. Neither of us saw Whooping Cranes but there were reports of two or three being seen with the Sandhill Crane a day or two before we were there.

It is hard to estimate the total number of Sandhill Cranes in the area but it is very safe to say there were some thousands. State Game and Fish Department biologist Ray Murdy estimated 6000 Cranes on the River during our visit. Mr. Huber thought there were 50,000. A farmer near the Missouri said "half a million", but that estimate may be a trifle high.

☆ ☆ ☆

Mr. Frank Fenner, Iroquois, has an albino that he believes is a House Sparrow because it acts like one and hangs around with them. It is a pure white bird with pink eyes.

Pioneer Prairie Ornithologists

ALEX WALKER

In 1908 Alex Walker and I were young men in Armour, both fascinated by birding, and so it was only natural that we became well acquainted and spent much time together. I remained in Armour and Walker developed his interest in Nature and has become one of our Prairie Ornithologists who followed his early inclinations to the professional level, although he is now located far from the prairies.

Back in the early days Alex made a collection of the eggs of Douglas County birds, did bird photography, studied taxidermy and mounted birds, displays of which won prizes at several Douglas County Fairs.

In 1911 he collaborated with Rev. E. C. Ford in writing a booklet on Birds of Douglas County, South Dakota, for use in the schools of the county. Only about 200 copies were printed and it is very doubtful whether collectors now will ever be able to locate a copy.

Soon after this, in 1912, the Walkers left Armour for a new home in Oregon where Alex spent two years working for the Oregon State Game Commission collecting birds and animals, and making a biological survey of the state. At times he worked alone, and at others in a field party with Stanley G. Jewett, R. Bruce Horsfall, the bird artist and other biologists under the leadership of Vernon Bailey, U. S. Chief Field Naturalist.

After the job with the game commission was finished, Alex worked at cheese making, and he returned to that trade when he got back from overseas service in World War I.

His spare time was occupied by taxidermy and occasionally more field work in different parts of the state.

During these years he accumulated a fine collection of birds and animals, which he disposed of in 1928 to the University of California at Los Angeles after he had qualified for a position of Bird Reservation Pro-



tector. However, before receiving a federal appointment, he accepted a position on the field staff of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History and spent several years in the field in Oregon, California and Arizona, and was able to send many specimens back to the Museum's ornithology department. Mrs. Walker and their two boys accompanied him in the field. Mrs. Walker also collected over 400 mammals many of which went to the museum.

After this work with the Cleve-

land Museum was finished, Alex began building up another personal research and reference collection of birds and mammals. A part of this fine collection has been placed on indefinite loan in the Museum of Natural History at Oregon State College and more will be deposited there later.

Accompanied by a friend, in June, 1951, Alex made a trip to Hudson Bay to study the natural history of that region. There, nesting at timberline and on the tundra beyond, he found many of the species of birds that he had known 40 years before as migrants or winter visitors to the Dakota prairies. In 1935 he made a field trip to northeastern Montana and again felt prairie sod under his feet and renewed acquaintance with some avian friends of the past, but he has not been back in South Dakota since 1912.

Alex did not limit himself to field work and collecting but contributed notes on Douglas County birds, and others, to *The Condor* and *The Oologist*; numerous notes and photographs of birds, nests and eggs, and of mammals were contributed to Gabrielson and Jewett's *The Birds of Oregon*; to Bailey's *The Mammals and Life Zones of Oregon*; to Bent's *Life Histories of North American Birds*; and to other publications. He has been a member of the Cooper Ornithological Club for 44 years, and he regrets that there was no SDOU when he lived in South Dakota.

One of his sons teaches biology at the College of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington, and the other teaches in the physics department of Oregon State College.

The Walker home has been near Tillamook, Oregon, for most of the time since 1914. At present Alex is Curator of Natural History at the

THE COVER

The picture on the cover of this Bird Notes is of a habitat group in the Tillamook (Oregon) County Pioneer Museum, prepared by Alex Walker, the subject of the article on page 57 by SDOU Director C. P. Crutchett. The species in this group of Oregon birds are all known in South Dakota as breeding birds or migrants, except the Snowy Egret which occasionally wanders into the State in the late summer.

In addition to the Egrets and nest and eggs, the group includes Sandhill Cranes with nest, eggs and young, Avocets and nest, Black Tern, Forster's Tern, Red-wing Blackbird, Yellow-headed Blackbird and nest, Yellowthroat, Marsh Wren and nest.

☆ ☆ ☆

Just as the copy was received from Mr. Crutchett for his article about Alex Walker, our attention was called to two 1912-13 articles by Mr. Walker that appeared in *The Curio Collector*. One was a list of Ducks and the other of the Raptores of Douglas County. Then Mr. Walker lent us his file of the publication and we find other articles by him on Nests of Shovelers, Notes on the Dickcissel, Some Notes on the Marsh Hawk, Notes on the Nest and Eggs of Kennicott's Screech Owl; and also an article by Dr. W. H. Over, Notes from Northwest South Dakota.

Tillamook County Pioneer Museum where he has spent the past three years making what is probably the best natural history exhibit in the Pacific Northwest. Now the exhibit includes nine habitat groups and as many large display cases of birds and mammals, of which Alex has reason to be proud for he did nearly all the work from the collecting to painting the back-grounds.

by Charles P. Crutchett

Books and Articles About Birds

INTRODUCTION TO ORNITHOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE by Mary Ferguson Coble, 1954, paper covers, 94 pp. American Book Institute, Los Angeles 53. \$1.50.

Primarily (75%) this publication is a dictionary of the scientific names of ornithology. Spelling and pronunciation of the Latin or Greek roots of the scientific names of genera and species are shown, followed by the English pronunciation. However, the reverse arrangement (English first) is lacking in this and other sections. There is no index.

Short preliminary sections include the Latin or Greek names for structural characteristics as well as for color, markings, habitat, characterizations and food. There is an alphabetical list of names of persons who are referred to in the scientific names of birds, with short biographies.

While this small volume is not recommended as light reading, it surely will make heavy reading lighter for the amateur birdwatcher.—**H. F. Chapman.**

* * *

BIRD GUIDE: LAND BIRDS EAST OF THE ROCKIES by Chester Reed, 1951, Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York. \$1.50.

It is good to see that old standby, Reed's Bird Guide in a new format, with revised descriptions, new plates and a new introduction. Included is a portion of the original preface but such appendages as subspecies are omitted. Instead, family designation is included for each species.

As the publishers point out, the "common and scientific bird names used" are those "currently favor-

ed by the AOU committee", and I find that the Short-billed Marsh Wren is now the Sedge Wren; the Canada Jay is the Gray Jay; and Wilson's Warbler is now the Black-capped Warbler.

While the new edition is fresh and crisp in make-up, I wish the plates had the sharp clarity of the earlier editions. The illustrations on the glazed paper of the tattered, dog-eared copy of the 1915 issue before me, have a sharpness of color and detail which the present edition lacks on its unglazed pages. In some instances the colors are exaggerated beyond any usefulness as marks of identification. The Bay-breasted Warbler in the 1915 edition is a remarkable likeness; the same bird in the new edition does not represent either diagnostically or realistically the colors of that species.

Nevertheless, this is, as always, a handy little pocket book on any field trip.—**Herbert Krause.**

* * *

STRAY FEATHERS FROM A BIRD MAN'S DESK by Austin L. Rand. 224 pages. Doubleday, 1955. \$3.75.

This is a very readable book by the Curator of Birds, Chicago Natural History Museum, with cartoons by Ruth Johnson. The 60 short chapters cover such wide range of believe-it-or-not data as Snowy Owls As a Trade Index, Bird Apartment Houses, How Many Feathers Has a Bird, Sight Identification, Walled Wives of Hornbills. There is also a list of references and an index. A fine book for pick-it-up-and-lay-it-down reading.—**J.S.F.**

Christmas Bird Count 1954

	Armour Lake Andes	Brandt	Brookings	Canton	Hot Springs	LaCreek Martin	Madison	McCook Lake	Milbank	Platte	Rapid City	Sioux Falls	Springfield	Wall Lake	Watertown	Webster	Vermillion	Yankton
x — Species Reported																		
Grebe, Pied-bill											1							
Swan, Whistling						1												
Goose, Canada	225					x				1000								65
Mallard	20000					10193	700	x	12	80000	1276		1					622
Gadwall											75							
Pintail										2	1							
Teal, Green-wing										1								
Wood Duck											1							
Redhead											2							
Canvas-back						3					1							
Scaup, Lesser						5												
Golden-eye, Amer.	1					44					63							
Merganser, Amer.											6							
Hawk, Cooper's										1			2					1
Red-tail								x										
Rough-leg	2		2			13				2	2	2	3					3
Marsh	1					9				2								
Sparrow								x										4
Falcon, Prairie						x					1				1			
Eagle, Gold				1		3					3							1
Bald						1												
Grouse, Sharp-tail						x				3	5							
Ruffed											1							
Partridge, European			8						14					15				
Pheasant	1	9	31	21		143	189		90	6	8	95	4	34	20	x		61
Turkey												1						
Dove, Mourning									14	1		32	12					
Owl, Screech						1												
Horned	2	3		1		5	1	2				3						2
Snowy				1		1	1		5						2			
Long-ear								1										
Short-ear										1		1						
Kingfisher			1										9					
Flicker, Yellow-shaft								2	1	1		3	12				3	7

Editorial Comment

We were "sold" on the Mid-west Hawk Flight by the description in the June, 1954, Bird Notes and decided to see it en route on a fishing trip to the Minnesota-Canadian Border. We drove through rain to Duluth on September 18 only to find visibility "zero-zero".

The next morning a cold north wind. Visibility was better. Hawks were flying and at the observation point were 143 watchers from 9 states and Canada. Plans for counting the hawks had been well made and were well carried out.

The day was one of their best for Sparrow Hawks, although actually there were more Sharp-shinned. There were comparatively few Buteos, mostly Broad-winged and Red-tailed. There were two or three each of Golden and Bald Eagles. Outstanding (in our book) were the Duck Hawks and Ospreys. Altogether, there were nearly 2700 hawks of 12 species, and a few miscellaneous migrants like Turkey Vultures, Wilson's Snipe and a Chimney Swift.

We are still "sold" on the Duluth hawk flight, and if you ever want to look **down** on a hawk, we suggest going to Duluth in mid-September.

* * * *

The tabulation of the Christmas Bird Counts is interesting both for the species listed and for those that were not seen. Surprises are the Pied-billed Grebe wintering at Rapid City, a Swan at LaCreek Refuge, White-winged Crossbills and a Turkey at Sioux Falls. Equally surprising is the small number of Snow Buntings identified, few Meadowlarks seen, and that the only King-

fishers were at Rapid City. Probably observers in each section are surprised at the species in the other sections, and all are surprised so many species are found in South Dakota in mid-winter.

* * * *

This winter there are many reports of Oregon, Montana and Pink-sided Juncos and it reminds us of Roger Tory Peterson's admonition when discussing Oregon Juncos in Field Guide To The Birds, "The Western ones intergrade and mongrels between **oreganus** and the Slate-colored are frequent, especially in the Plains. Just call them Juncos."

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LEARNING

We study first the pictures and the print,
And then go forth to find a painted bunting,
Or redstart, to identify by dint
Of constant watching and persistent hunting;
But if sometimes we meet a mountaineer,
Who, with one dart of quick and practiced eye,
Can name whatever bird may disappear
Before we see it, we are oddly shy.
Booklearning is of course to be preferred
To none, but there's a difference in the look
Of those who know the book without the bird
And those who know the bird without the book.

Jane Merchant
in the Glen Ridge, N. J., Paper.

General Notes of Special Interest

AMERICAN EGRET—Six years ago 6 Egrets were reported on the Co-teau Lakes near Altamont, S. D. Then about May 3, 1953, one was found dead near Eden, S. D., by Walter A. Rose of the State Fish and Game Department. It was a good specimen in the flesh. On May 15, 1954, there were many Pelicans and Cormorants on Lake Herman but 2 American Egrets were more important to me because they were another "first." A group of noisy young people drove them beyond sight before I was done with them.

Near Tunerville, S. D. sight records were made for 1954, the same birds being visited day after day,—(9|12, 8; 9|13, 8; 9|14, not seen; 9|15, 8; 9|16, 7; 9|17, 7; 9|18, not out; 9|19, 7; 9|20, 7; 9|21, 3; 9|22, 4;)—until I took leave of the birds to spend nearly two weeks in Iowa, after which I saw the birds no more. Residents of Tunerville told me the Egrets were first seen on Sept. 8, and last on Sept. 28. A farmer living near a small lake 4 miles northeast of Tunerville said 4 Egrets remained on the lake a short time in 1953, perhaps attracted by the "mud puppies" (salamanders) that are over-abundant there.—**Alfred Peterson, Brandt, S. D.**

* * *

NOTE FROM SE CORNER OF S. D.—This Fall the Red-breasted Nuthatches are here and in Sioux City again after an absence. I saw them first on October 2.

Old Squaw ducks are rare birds in this area and I would hesitate to report a November 20 sight record of one on the Missouri River near Gayville, S. D., if I had not had 2 in hand last year.

There were 2 American Egrets in Loblolly Slough about the end of August. I saw them there each Sunday until October 10, when I assume they went south. William Youngworth saw 2 on September 26 on Lake Goodenough in Union County.

Two years ago right after the big flood of the Missouri (April 15, 1952), one American Egret was seen near my home several times, but that is my only Spring record. Last year my only Egret record was a dead bird found in the same slough on October 15, 1953.

On October 22, 1954, I had a nice close-range view of 18 or 20 Avocets flying in tight formation down the Missouri near Gayville.

I can add only a little to the American Pipit record. They were quite common during the last half of October up the River near Gayville.—**W. R. Felton, Jr., McCook Lake, Jefferson, S. D.**

* * *

NOTE FROM CENTRAL SOUTH DAKOTA—We have had Red-breasted Nuthatches in our yard this year. The first came on October 5 and ran up and down the trunk of a cedar tree about 15 feet from our kitchen window. It was an unusual visitor here on the prairies, although we hear there are unusual numbers of them this year.

Our flock of Slate-colored Juncos which visits the bird bath daily includes two unusual individuals. The tail of one appears to be all white until close observation shows a dark streak in the middle. The other has pink sides like an Oregon Junco but has a slate colored back instead of the brown of the Oregon Juncos.—**Charles A. Nash, Platte, S. D.**

SNOWY OWLS—I was quite interested in the Snowy Owl Report in Bird Notes, (No. 20, March 1954) because I saw a Snowy Owl on November 11, 1954, on the old cormorant rookery in the middle lake, Lake Andes. This is the earliest date I ever saw one of these owls in South Dakota.

During the summer of 1953 I was at Pitt Point on the north coast of Alaska. It was a good lemming year and there were many Snowy Owls that had successful nestings. This winter should be another good one for Snowy Owls in South Dakota.—**C. H. Fiscus, Tucson, Arizona**

On November 20, 1954, we saw a fine Snowy Owl a few miles southeast of Dell Rapids. It was a little darker than many because the black V's on the white feathers of its back were broader than they often are. However, its face was pure white and its under parts were very light.

It was on a hay stack in an alfalfa field and about 200 yards from the road. We watched it through a 25x spotting scope and 7x50 binocular, and then walked toward it and were able to get within about 35 yards before it flew to the ground. This time we got a little nearer, perhaps 30 yards, before it flew and lighted in a plowed field about 75 yards from the road. We watched it again from the car. It was still there when we thought it time to go home.—**Mr. and Mrs. Scott Findley, Sioux Falls, S. D.**

* * *

MOURNING DOVE DATA—My first sight of a Mourning Dove last Spring was on March 28, 1954, which was a week later than my first 1953 date, my earliest since 1947.

A pair of doves elected to nest in our cedar hedge less than six feet above the ground, but concealed so well only my husband and I knew that the nest was there.

At no time did we see any of the building operations which resulted in the nest some place between sketchy and near bottomless. The job must have been done in the first week of May as by the 11th the female was obviously brooding. On the 12th I saw the two eggs.

One of the eggs had hatched by May 30, and the other soon after. On June 6 the 2 young doves left the nest directly after I had watched them peeking from under the breast of the parent bird.

The parent birds relieved each other on the nest during the brooding time. We did not see them feeding their young, nor did we see the young after they had left the nest.—**Adelene M. Siljeborg, Vermillion.**

* * *

AMERICAN PIPIT—The American Pipit is a so-called "erratic",—now you see it and now you don't,—such as the Crossbills. It had been many years since I had seen one until on October 14, 1953, I found 16 at Round Lake north of Goodwin, S. D. Eight of them were lined up on a telephone wire, not at all timid. Then on October 17th there were many; the 18th, about 100; the 22nd, the same; the 25th, not so many. Walking, flying, or settled on the wires, they gave me many good times to get better acquainted with them.—**Alfred Peterson, Brandt, S. D.**

* * *

While Over and Thoms say in Birds of South Dakota the American Pipit "though not common, is found locally over the state" it was not until April 29, 1954, that we identified any. That day, a couple of miles south of the Stephan corner (SD 34 and 47) we saw a flock of 12 feeding along the grassy edge of a shallow roadside puddle. All the markings and characteristics, except the tail wagging, were clearly observed.—**H. F. & Lois Chapman, Sioux Falls.**

TENNESSEE WARBLER—On August 26, 1954, we watched a bird new to us industriously search the stem and leaves of a large sunflower plant near our bird feeding tray, apparently looking for worms or other food. It was smaller and trimmer than the House Sparrow that was on the tray. There were no very definite marks although there was a yellow line above the eye and a dark line through it, and an indefinite wing bar that might easily be overlooked. A wash of yellow over much of the body made the back look rather greenish and the underparts pale yellow. The under tail coverts were white. It appeared rather like a Philadelphia Vireo except for its warbler's bill. It searched the sunflower carefully so that we had considerable time to study it at a distance of 10 feet. Then after checking with the descriptions in the books, we were sure we had a Tennessee Warbler—Mrs. M. elvin Wheeler, Sioux Falls, S. D.

(Over calls the Tennessee Warbler a rare migrant over the State. Bent gives several South Dakota dates, all in the southeast except one listing a late Spring departure from Faulkton on June 5. There was one on June 6 from Sioux City. An early Fall arrival was listed at Lennox on August 30, probably one of Judge Malory's reports.—Ed.)

* * *

PINE GROSBELLS—A small flock of Pine Grosbeaks visited Lowry Elliott at Bird Haven, Milbank, S. D., on November 5, 1954. They were very tame but they stayed only a few days.

At Worthington, Minnesota, 100 air miles south and 42 east of Bird Haven, Carl M. Johnson reported a flock of Pine Grosbeaks in a grove of spruce and pine trees on November 9. They remained a few days but were gone on the 13th.

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL—The White-winged Crossbill was not a complete stranger to me but it was not until the cold north wind of November 1, 1954, brought them that I had them in my own backyard.—Wm. Youngworth, Sioux City, Ia.

On November 6, 1954, in Woodlawn Cemetery, I saw a bird among the cones of spruce and heard a soft, rapid "chif, chif, chif". The white wing bars, yellowish rump, crossed mandibles, and streaked olive body indicated the female White-winged Crossbill. With this female was another and a gray streaked bird which I identified as an immature. Later, a male joined the three. Willard Rozine, Biology Department, Augustana College, corroborated my observation. On November 11, I saw 7 females and immatures and 5 males feeding with 15 Red Crossbills; and on the 20th, 1 male and 2 females. On the 21st there were 3 males and 9 females which were also seen by Mr. and Mrs. Herman Chapman.—Herbert Krause, Sioux Falls, S. D.

* * *

NOTE ON SEED CRACKING—We welcome all visitors at our feeding station but we wish the House Sparrows would not try to take over, especially the glutton that tries to make it his exclusively. Those sparrows appear to roll the sunflower seeds in their bills to crack them. The chickadees hold the seeds down with their feet and peck them to crack them open.

The Cardinals scatter the Sparrows and then shell the seeds with an expert flick-of-the-bill technique; but once when Senor Cardinal flattened his crest as a warning to intruders, it was a Blue Jay that landed. The red had to retreat before the blue and the coldly beautiful Jay gulped a dozen uncracked seeds in a moment.—Adelene M. Siljeborg, Vermillion, S. D.

BLUE JAYS AND MAGPIES—September 12, 1954, was cloudy with light showers and we (Mrs. Johnson, Judge B. B. McClaskey and I) saw very little bird activity of any kind till a flock of 15 Blue Jays flew over us in a gulch in the moraine southwest of Wessington, S. D. Another flock of about the same size joined them and all lighted in a clump of trees and were joined by stragglers until there were about 40 birds.

A short time later and less than a quarter of a mile away we counted another flock of 15 birds in the air but these were Magpies that lighted in a tree near enough for good observation and identification.

We were interested in seeing these flocks, particularly of Magpies so near the eastern limit of their usual range.—**J. W. Johnson, Huron, S. Dak.**

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AMERICAN MAGPIE—On November 14, 1954 while I was back for a visit at Armour, S. D., I did some birding with C. P. Crutchett at the old haunts. One bird that we listed 6 miles west of Armour was an American Magpie. We learned it had been there all summer, but it was the first I had seen in Douglas County and Mr. Crutchett said it was the first he had heard of in the County.—**C. P. Fiscus, Tucson, Ariz.**

On November 7, 1954 we were with the Scott Findleys when we all saw a Magpie on the Iowa side of the Sioux River about 15 miles southeast of Sioux Falls. This was much farther east than we had ever before seen a Magpie.—**Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Wheeler, Sioux Falls.**

(Among other East-River records: 2 three miles southwest of Canistota and 1 near the Jim River south of Alexandria reported by hunters on different dates in the Fall of 1936; 1 on the Sioux Falls Christmas Bird Census 1948; a flock of 8 near St. Lawrence Sept. 4, 1950—Ed.)

Some Things Unusual

On December 1 the postmistress, Mrs. W. W. Lewis, described a tiny bird feeding in Evergreen trees behind the post office. I identified it tentatively as a female Golden-crowned Kinglet and was able to confirm it when I saw the bird on December 7.

Mrs. Lewis said she had picked up the bird and it chattered continuously until it hopped out of her hand and resumed feeding near her in the lower branches of the trees, apparently unafraid of people. It preferred cookie crumbs to the oatmeal Mrs. Lewis offered.

I did not try to pick the bird up although I am not convinced that I could not have done so. I preferred to avoid frightening it. It was almost incredibly unafraid and approached within one foot of me as I watched it. It did not appear injured. Perhaps it may have been exhausted from a journey in high winds, when Mrs. Lewis picked it up.

A Song Sparrow was at my feeding station regularly for several weeks prior to December 5. One wing evidently had been injured as it hung lower than the other, and it could not fly. However, it certainly could get over the ground and snow by hopping very fast. It got quite tame and I hoped it would escape all its enemies, but I have not seen it since December 5.

Two, and sometimes 5, Harris's Sparrows feed regularly at the station, and two of them have become very unafraid. They will feed within six feet of my window even when I am at the window observing them. It is interesting to see them scratch like chickens in the leaves or in the snow, or even when standing on the feed in the feed container. They eat sunflower seed and chick scratch

feed consistently. They are still here on December 8.

January 5, 1955. Mrs. Lewis showed me a dead bird that she thought was the Kinglet we had seen a few weeks ago, but it was a male Golden-crowned Kinglet, not a female. Now we surmise that the male was killed and the female stayed around for some time before finally leaving.

The Song Sparrow came back and is still about. Its wing seems to be mending.

W. B. Mallory, Canton, S. D.

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BIRDS AT THE WATER HOLE—It was dry this summer in the southern Black Hills. There was little pasture and water for livestock, and doubtless the birds, too, suffered. On July 8 we were on a narrow road a few miles east of Moon. An earthen dam across a roadside ditch had collected some water and a few inches of it remained in an oval area about 30 feet long and 12 wide. We stopped by the pool to watch some white-winged Juncos drink. Other birds came to drink and bathe during the few minutes we sat in our car and watched; Slate-colored Juncos joined the White-winged, a female Red-shafted Flicker drank 10 feet away and watched us suspiciously, many Chipping Sparrows were around, a Western Tanager was in the shrub near the car radiator, Audubon's Warblers came and went, four Canada Jays held a caucus, flew away through the woods and returned noisily, two Pinon Jays came more quietly, drank and left, a Townsend's Solitaire came cautiously, retreated, returned to a pond-side stick and drank, there were Robins with no white on their tails, a Lazuli Bunting took a quick bath at the side of the pond, and a red-eyed Vireo completed the show. Perhaps if we had stayed a Three-toed Woodpecker would have

come and we would have seen the bird we missed. **Mrs. J. S. Findley, Sioux Falls, S. Dak.**

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RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES STORE SEEDS—On Sept. 12, 1954, while in Woodlawn Cemetery searching for returning warblers, I came upon five Red-breasted Nuthatches "yahnk-yahnk-yahnking" their nasal calls at the top of a blue spruce where the thickly clustered cones were tan colored and ripe. They were busy pecking at the cones and the scales flew widely. Soon some of the birds darted to the trunks of nearby American Elms where they remained for about twenty seconds, then flew back to the top of the spruce. I watched this activity for five minutes. They were carrying the spruce seeds to the elm trunks to hide them in crevices or under projecting bark. After a little prying, I found several of the brown seeds. As far as I could tell the activity went on for the two hours I was in the vicinity.

I've seen Black-capped Chickadees in winter stuff suet from a feeding table into empty seed pods of lilacs, and I caught one hiding a sunflower seed in the curl of a hanging leaf. I've seen them return for the food they had put away, but I've also found the lilac pods in spring with bits of suet still in them. I wondered whether the Nuthatches would find all the seeds they were hiding or would, like squirrels, apparently forget the hiding places before snowfall; and whether this activity meant they were preparing to remain for the winter. Perhaps it is only their custom to store spruce seeds wherever they find ripe seeds, regardless of the possibility that weather or other conditions might entice them to other areas before they retrieve their winter caches.—**Herbert Krause, Sioux Falls.**

EVENING GROSBEAK

Two Evening Grosbeaks have been feeding regularly at the feeding station of the Maynard Pearson's, Sioux Falls, since early December. They are a male and a female that are seen daily and make a striking sight with the Cardinals and Harris's Sparrows that also are regular boarders, not to mention the Tree Sparrows, Slate-colored Juncos, Chickadees, Downy Woodpeckers, Blue Jays.

These Evening Grosbeaks have been seen by several observers. Then on January 16, 1955, they were photographed by Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Halbritter and Herbert Krause, who next visited Woodlawn Cemetery to do some more birding and there found another Evening Grosbeak.



This picture of Evening Grosbeaks is used in Bird Notes through the kindness of Dr. W. J. Breckenridge, Director of the University of Minnesota's Museum of Natural History, who made the drawing. The cut was first used in Robert's Logbook of Minnesota Birds, published by the University of Minnesota Press.

RED-SHAFTED FLICKER IN S. E. SOUTH DAKOTA—On October 3, 1954, I saw a male Red-shafted Flicker in Woodlawn Cemetery. It was feeding on the ground with five Yellow-shafted. The gray and brownish nape without the characteristic red crescent of the Yellow-shafted was noticeable and when it raised its head I saw the red "whiskers" of the male Red-shafted, and the red on the wing edge. When the birds were flushed, the redding flash of the Red-shafter's wing linings was in vivid contrast with the yellow of the other birds. When perched on a tree trunk, the red on the wing edge and the tail was very noticeable. Later this individual perched on a telephone wire. Mr. and Mrs. Herman Chapman and Mr. and Mrs. Scott Findley verified my observations.

Over and Thoms list the Red-shafted Flicker as a western form. Larson lists it over a period of ten years (1906-16) as seen occasionally in summer in the Sioux Falls area. Based

on reports from at least 1928, Stephens and Youngworth conclude (1947) that this species is "an uncommon winter visitor in this region". In six years of bird observation (1948-54) in Minnehaha and adjacent counties as well as in trips along the eastern tiers of counties to the North Dakota border, I have never previously encountered this species, although I have checked hundreds of individuals. On the basis of a somewhat longer period the Findleys and Chapmans report same experience.—**Herbert Krause, Augustana College, Sioux Falls.**

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Miss Janet Rogge, Junior at Carleton College and secretary of the Natural History Club, participated in Carleton's cooperation with Louisiana State University's project making observations of fall migrations as the birds cross the field of a telescope trained on the full moon. She also went on the Club's annual week end field trip to Sand Lake and Waubay Refuges.