

SOUTH DAKOTA BIRD NOTES

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Whole No. 95



Red-winged Blackbirds

—Wayne Trimm

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President's Page

IN THE last issue of "South Dakota Bird Notes our readers were informed of the impending retirement of the present Co-editors, Don Adolphson and Winona Sparks. I am sure you will all join me in expressing our sincere thanks and appreciation for their work over the last three and one-half years. The Board of Directors has been searching for someone who can take over and we expect to come to a conclusion very shortly.

We are sure everyone will help make this change a smooth transition.

Most of our readers have not had editorial chores so few can appreciate the time and energy required. Some time ago I read a short paper on costs of publication in a national herpetological journal. Of course our problems are

rather different, but the figures are still interesting. If all the free labor were paid for, their price per page of print was \$72!! Of this costs which occurred BEFORE printing (which are often never paid for) were \$42. We can, however, keep our costs below these in various ways, but in our case the proportions would probably be similar. In other words, although we all feel we are helping publish our journal when we pay our dues, EVERY dues payment is more than matched by the time given by our editors. We need the effort of our authors, but before their words are preserved for posterity, we need and value our Editors.

At a time of change of Editors, some consideration can be given to other features of the journal. It is not my point here to suggest more difficulties for anyone taking over the reins, but to

consider changes which may be helpful editorially, scientifically, or for the reader, and which can be implemented reasonably. I might include a few examples. A simple one and one that can be done easily is the change from indicating Volume numbers by Roman numerals to Arabic numbers. Nearly all scientific journals have made this change for the simple reason that errors in citation are especially prevalent with Roman numerals. Anyone who has had to spend hours searching for a reference inaccurately cited can appreciate this change. Another simple change could be the addition of the address of the author at the start of an article to facilitate correspondence by an interested reader. Inclusion of the volume number along with the journal name at the bottom of the page would be a convenience, especially for those using the journal in a library where several volumes may be bound together. Should we avoid "Continued on . . ." ? This might waste space or require starting some articles in the middle of a page. Is the type size used the best? Should we retain the double column format? Should we institute a system of regional reviewers? There are many more that might be considered.

From what I said before, the job of the Editor is busy enough without analyzing these questions and coming to a decision. I believe, however, that some of these or others should be on the agenda of the Board of Directors for consideration with new and past Editors. I believe we have a good journal; it can only be better by giving the matter careful thought. Any ideas you have which should be considered by the Board of Directors can be sent to me or given to other Board members.—Byron E. Harrell



Some Birds of Jackson County, South Dakota⁽¹⁾

by Keith E. Evans and Roger R. Kerbs

(1) CONTRIBUTION OF the Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, Rapid City, South Dakota. Field Station maintained in cooperation with South Dakota School of Mines and Technology; headquarters at Fort Collins, Colorado, in cooperation with Colorado State University.

Birds were counted in a portion of Jackson County from 1966 through 1971. Observations were concentrated on or near 12 selected stock ponds to sample waterfowl and shorebird use on small man-made water developments in western South Dakota. Observations were made once every two weeks throughout the ice-free period of each year. The ponds are located in the area of Jackson County bounded on the north by U.S. 14, on the south by Interstate 90, and on the east by S.D. 73.

FINDINGS

The area was observed 98 times in the six-year period for an average of 16 observations per year. Detailed observation data for 1966 were published in SDBN (Evans and Kerbs 1967). (2)

(2) Keith E. Evans and Roger R. Kerbs. Waterfowl and shorebird use on selected stock ponds in Jackson County: 1966. South Dakota Bird Notes 19(2):28-30, 1967.

Fifty-eight avian species were observed in 1966. The list has increased to 115 species over the six-year period. The bird list has been divided into the following three categories for this paper: (1) waterfowl seen on the study ponds; (2) shorebirds seen on or near the study ponds; and (3) birds seen in the area but not necessarily using a study pond. Individual birds were counted for the first two categories, but not the third.

During the 98 visits to the 12 study ponds, 13,432 waterfowl were counted for

an average of 11.4 waterfowl per pond visit. Mallards, the most abundant duck, accounted for 30.8 percent of all waterfowl observed (Table 1). Blue-winged Teal ranked 2nd in abundance. The eight most abundant species, excluding the Green-winged Teal and American Widgeon, are the most common nesters within the area and, therefore, were counted on nearly every visit. Although the two preceding species are known nesters, the bulk of their total count was tallied during migrations. Migrants such as Lesser Scaup, Common Merganser, Ring-necked Duck, and Bufflehead were abundant during the spring and-or fall counts, but were not observed during the summer. Waterfowl count was highest in 1967 when a peak in teal numbers (1,266) contributed significantly to the 3,010 waterfowl observed. In 1967, 953 Blue-winged Teal and 313 Green-winged Teal were counted. The peak year for Gadwall (216) and Mallard (1,085) occurred in 1968.

During the six-year study period, 1,066 shorebirds were counted on the study ponds for an average of 0.9 bird per pond visit. Most of the shorebirds observed were migrants, and were only seen on two or three visits per season. Killdeer, very common nesters throughout the area and not restricted to marsh or pond habitats, are listed on the checklist but not included in the shorebird count. The Wilson's Phalarope, Long-billed Curlew, and Upland Plover were the other most common nesters. Wilson's Phalaropes accounted for 27 percent of the shorebird count (Table 2). Baird's Sandpipers were the most abundant migrating shorebird.

Sixty-two other bird species observed in the area comprised the largest of the three categorized species lists. Birds in this category were not recorded as being

associated with a particular pond, but were checked on a dated checklist (Table 3).

Table 1.—Species and abundance of waterfowl observed on 12 stock ponds in Jackson County, South Dakota: 1966-71

Species	Percent of total waterfowl counted
Mallard	30.8
Blue-winged Teal	26.5
Pintail	8.5
Gadwall	7.2
Green-winged Teal	6.8
American Widgeon	4.7
American Coot	2.7
Pied-billed Grebe	2.3
Common Merganser	1.4
Shoveler	1.2
Redhead	1.1

Species accounting for less than one percent each of total count include:

Horned Grebe
 Eared Grebe
 Western Grebe
 Double-crested Cormorant
 Canada Goose
 Ring-necked Duck
 Canvasback
 Lesser Scaup
 Bufflehead
 Ruddy Duck
 Hooded Merganser
 Common Goldeneye

Table 2.—Species and abundance of shorebirds observed on 12 stock ponds in Jackson County, South Dakota: 1966-71

Species	Percent of total shorebirds counted
Wilson's Phalarope	27.0
Long-billed Curlew	13.4
Baird's Sandpiper	13.2
Lesser Yellowlegs	11.0
Upland Plover	8.4
Semipalmated Sandpiper	4.3
Great Blue Heron	3.9
Long-billed Dowitcher	3.8
Greater Yellowlegs	2.1
Least Sandpiper	1.9
Spotted Sandpiper	1.7
Pectoral Sandpiper	1.2
Black Tern	1.2

Willet 1.0

Species accounting for less than one percent each of total count include:

Black-crowned Night Heron
 American Bittern
 Sora
 Common Snipe
 Solitary Sandpiper
 Buff-breasted Sandpiper
 Sanderling
 American Avocet
 Northern Phalarope
 Ring-billed Gull
 Franklin's Gull
 Forster's Tern
 Common Tern
 Belted Kingfisher
 Water Pipit
 Sprague's Pipit

Table 3.—Other bird species observed in Jackson County, South Dakota: 1966-71

Snowy Egret (1)+
 Trumpeter Swan(1)
 Turkey Vulture (5)
 Sharp-shinned Hawk (1)
 Red-tailed Hawk (6)
 Swainson's Hawk (6)
 Rough-legged Hawk (6)
 Ferruginous Hawk (2)
 Golden Eagle (5)
 Marsh Hawk (6)
 Prairie Falcon (5)
 Sparrow Hawk (6)
 Sharp-tailed Grouse (6)
 Ring-necked Pheasant (5)
 Killdeer (6)
 Rock Dove (2)
 Mourning Dove (6)
 Great Horned Owl (5)
 Burrowing Owl (2)
 Common Nighthawk (6)
 Yellow-shafted Flicker (5)
 Red-shafted Flicker (4)
 Red-headed Woodpecker (1)
 Hairy Woodpecker (1)
 Eastern Kingbird (6)
 Western Kingbird (6)
 Say's Phoebe (1)
 Horned Lark (6)

(Continued on Page 81)

Band Recovery-Return Distribution of Common Grackles and Robins from South Dakota

by Harold W. Wagar

DURING THE past 39 years I have banded 111 species at banding stations in the following towns of South Dakota: Dell Rapids, Alexandria, Ethan, Pierre, Brookings, Milbank, Winner, Sturgis, Aberdeen, and Cresbard.

I have concentrated on banding the common migrants and local residents, the birds I know best. I have been fortunate in being able to have collected enough returns and recoveries on Common Grackles and Robins which I believe are of value and worth reporting. Also included are out-of-state recoveries of marsh hawk, yellow-shafted flicker, slate-colored junco, cedar waxwing and starling.

Band recovery distribution indicates that grackles and robins migrate from South Dakota south through the Great Plains to their winter grounds in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma.

For this article I have defined that a return is any bird that is retrapped at the same station after the first year of banding. A recovery is a bird that is recovered by any method away from the banding station after the first year of banding.

COMMON GRACKLES

I have banded 988 Common Grackles and have return-recovery data on 78 (see Table 1). In this table, the upper line represents years the birds are known to be alive. A bird banded in 1955 and recovered in 1961 is included in the totals for the between years as well. Three

birds of the 988 are shown to have lived six years after banding. The table also shows that the first year there is the information on the 78 grackles (7.9 percent) and only information on 29 (2.9 percent) the second year. This illustrates the tremendous mortality rate during the first and second years. The chance of having a recovery for 1,000 grackles is only 0.3 percent five years after banding.

Recoveries from out of state include 16 grackles that were banded during the months of May, June, August, and September and were recovered in December, January, February, March, April, and May in the following states: Iowa (1), Louisiana (4), Arkansas (2), Oklahoma (4), and Texas (5). All recoveries were within the first or second year after banding. The wintering grounds of the grackles is in Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. The Iowa recovery was in April which indicates that this bird was migrating northward.

ROBINS

I have returns and recoveries on 37 robins of the 609 banded during the period of 1933 to 1970 (see Table 2). The return-recovery rate after banding was 6.1 percent for the first year, as compared to the 7.9 percent for common grackles. All percentage figures for the robins are lower than those of the grackles.

The oldest robin was six years old and information was received on four robins after four years of banding.

COMMON GRACKLES RETURNS-RECOVERIES

TABLE 1	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	YEARS
1931	8	1	1					
1933	55	6	1					
1934	53	5	2	1				
1935	23	2	1					
1936	2	1						
1940	34	5	4	2	2	1	1	
1941	145	6	2					
1942	42	2	1	1				
1943	33	3	3	2	2	1	1	
1944	57	1	1					
1945	20	1	1					
1946	7	1						
1954	46	6	1	1				
1955	71	6	4	1	1	1	1	
1959	18	2						
1960	22	1						
1961	40	3	1					
1964	28	2	1					
1965	72	5	2	1				
1966	99	9	1					
1967	77	7	2	2	2			
1968	36	3						
Total	988	78	29	11	7	3	3	
Percentage		7.9%	2.9%	1.1%	0.7%	0.3%	0.3%	

ROBINS RETURNS-RECOVERIES

TABLE 2	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	YEARS
1933	5	1	1					
1934	28	5	2					
1935	13	5	2	2	1			
1940	4	1						
1943	2	1	1					
1946	17	2						
1949	10	1						
1953	22	1						
1954	21	2	1	1	1	1	1	
1957	31	3	1					
1960	43	2						
1964	15	1						
1965	167	6	3	1				
1966	95	2	1	1				
1967	79	3	2	2	2			
1969	57	1	1					
Total	609	37	15	7	4	1	1	
Percentage		6.1%	2.5%	1.2%	0.7%	0.2%	0.2%	

(Continued on Page 81)

SDOU Winter Meeting - Brookings

November 4, 1972

ABOUT 40 MEMBERS and friends of SDOU participated in the winter meeting, Nov. 4, 1972, at Brookings, South Dakota. Nelda Holden deserves particular credit for arranging the meeting and for organizing an exceptionally valuable program, with many contributors from South Dakota State University. Presentations in the formal sessions included:

"Effect of PCB on the Ring-necked Pheasant," by Bob Dahlgren.

"Effect of Deldrin and PCB on Japanese Quails," by Dan Call.

"Physiological and Behavioral Effects of DDT and PCB on Pelicans," by Mrs. Yvonne Greichus.

"Woodcock Nest in Brookings County," by John Gates.

"Pelican Rookeries in South Dakota: A Progress Report," by Pat Mc Crow.

"The Nesting Birds of Mohr Prairie, McPherson County, South Dakota," by John Lokemoen.

"A Survey of Burrowing Owls in Mellette County, South Dakota," by Charles Berdan.

"Bird Banding Highlights with Emphasis on Returns and Recoveries," by the State Bird Banders.

"Highlights of AOU and IBBA Meetings," by Nat Whitney.

"An Idea and Some Comments," by Louise Crutchett.

"The Black-footed Ferret," by Dr. Raymond Linder, banquet speaker.

The editors hope the contributors of the above program items, many of them the results of research at SDSU, the Cooperative Wildlife Research Center, and the Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Station, will favor "Bird Notes" with papers for publication.

During the business meeting, Treasurer Nelda Holden announced that

SDOU has 282 members in 1972 and that the organization's financial condition is adequate to meet this year's publication expenses. Continued loyal support through 1973 membership renewals and acquisition of new members should assure favorable operation of SDOU in the coming year. Also during the business meeting, Bill Lemons was elected to serve on the Board of Directors. Bill replaces Dr. Keith Evans, who recently moved to Columbia, Missouri.

Tentative plans call for holding the 1973 spring field-trip meeting somewhere in the southwest quarter of the state. Check the March, 1973 issue of "Bird Notes" for the specific announcement.

REGISTRATION LIST—BROOKINGS

November 4, 1972

Armour—Mrs. Louise Crutchett and Mrs. Victor Hawley.

Brookings—Orena Cooper, Mr. and Mrs. Dick Edie, Les Flake, Gladys Froiland, Mr. and Mrs. John Haertel, Mr. and Mrs. John Gates, Dr. and Mrs. David Holden, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Husmann, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Kieckhefer, Dr. and Mrs. Raymond Linder, Mr. and Mrs. Pat Mc Crow, Carol Peterson and Dr. and Mrs. Charles Taylor.

Clear Lake—Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Harris.

Huron—Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Johnson and Mary Aberdeen Ketelle.

Meckling—Bill Lemons.

Rapid City—L. M. Baylor and Dr. N. R. Whitney.

Sioux Falls—Dr. Willard Rosine and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Trusler.

Vermillion—Dr. and Mrs. Byron Harrell and Mrs. Adelene Siljeborg.

Webster—Herman Chilson.

Jamestown, North Dakota—Mr. and Mrs. John Lokemoen.

—L. M. Baylor, Rapid City

SOUTH DAKOTA BIRD NOTES

Some Birds of Jackson

(Continued from Page 77)

- Barn Swallow (5)
- Cliff Swallow (5)
- Black-billed Magpie (6)
- Common Crow (6)
- Black-capped Chickadee (1)
- Rock Wren (1)
- Catbird (1)
- Brown Thrasher (6)
- Robin (3)
- Mountain Bluebird (2)
- Loggerhead Shrike (6)
- Starling (5)
- Yellow Warbler (1)
- House Sparrow (2)
- Western Meadowlark (6)
- Yellow-headed Blackbird (2)
- Red-winged Blackbird (6)
- Orchard Oriole (4)
- Bullock's Oriole (1)
- Brewer's Blackbird (1)
- Common Grackle (4)
- Brown-headed Cowbird (6)
- American Goldfinch (1)
- Rufous-sided Towhee (2)
- Lark Bunting (6)
- Savannah Sparrow (1)
- Grasshopper Sparrow (5)
- Vesper Sparrow (5)
- Lark Sparrow (4)
- Tree Sparrow (1)
- Chipping Sparrow (1)
- White-crowned Sparrow (2)
- McCown's Longspur (1)
- Chestnut-collared Longspur (5)

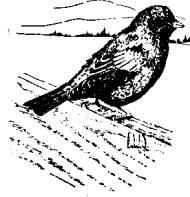
+Numbers in parentheses indicate number of years species was sighted out of a possible six years.



Pine Grosbeak

—E. W. Steffen

STUDY ORNITHOLOGY AT HOME—
The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University is now offering a home study course in ornithology. The nine seminars is a college-level course in a readable style which gives a substantial background for the enjoyment and appreciation of birds and encourages you to undertake study projects on your own. Anyone interested should write for more details to: Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, New York 14850.



Lark Bunting

—E. W. Steffen

Band Recovery-Return

(Continued from Page 79)

Limited recovery information suggests that robins leave South Dakota during September and October for their wintering grounds in Texas. By March they pass through Kansas on their northward spring migration back to the breeding grounds.

OTHER SPECIES

Other interesting returns on other species I have received from out-of-state include a marsh hawk banded on June 6, 1935 at Alexandria, South Dakota that was recovered on April 24, 1939 in Nebraska; a yellow-shafted flicker banded on June 14, 1946 at Brookings and recovered in Arkansas on January 27, 1947; slate-colored junco banded October 9, 1958 at Winner, recovered October 26, 1958 in Nebraska; a cedar waxwing banded in Aberdeen on June 10, 1967, and recovered December 11, 1968 in Texas; and probably the most interesting, a starling banded on April 27, 1961 in Sturgis was found dead December 13, 1961 in New Mexico.—Cresbard, South Dakota

Book Reviews

by J. W. Johnson

"HOW TO Talk to Birds" by Richard C. Davids. Alfred A. Knopf. 1972. 242 pp. Illustrated with 16 pages of photographs. \$6.95.

The subtitle: "and other uncommon ways of enjoying nature the year round," is perhaps a better description of this unusual and entertaining book. But talking to birds is not neglected, starting the embryo just before hatching, through duck and goose calling, to analysis of thrush songs. Methods, meanings, purposes: non-technical, clearly informative.

Some chapter headings: How to identify birds the easier way; You too can grow moths in your closet; Swamp fever—worth catching; How to hunt deer successfully—every time; More birds at your feeder; The lowdown on plants; How to lure kids. Something new, a slant, an idea, or a way of doing in every smooth paragraph. Things you didn't realize you wanted to know.

Davids, a native and resident of northern Minnesota, has been a school teacher, an editor of "Better Homes and Gardens" and "Farm Journal" and, after graduation from the University of Minnesota, wrote a textbook on conservation, the first in the United States.

This is a book to give a nature oriented friend—but, better get an extra copy and spare yourself the pain of parting with it.

"Birds of Europe" by Bertel Bruun. Illustrated by Arthur Singer, consultant editor Bruce Campbell. McGraw-Hill.

1970. 319 pages, including a 14-page index. 2000 full-color illustrations of 516 species. \$6.95.

A full page map shows habitat types by color and another spots the most important sites for observing migrating birds. Small maps in column on the left side of left pages show distribution by color and give general direction of movements by black arrows.

A beautiful book of pocket field guide size, convenient for quick reference or extended study in the field. For one going to Europe—or just dreaming and hoping.

"A Seal In My Sleeping Bag" by Lyn Hancock. Alfred A. Knopf. 1972. xiv + 292 pp. Illustrated with maps and photographs. \$6.95.

This is an account of what it is like to be wife to a wildlife biologist who not only brings his work home but takes his wife out in the field to help do it. Lyn is Australian born but most of their activities are along the west coast of the United States and British Columbia, with particular attention to Vancouver Island and the Wildlife Conservation Center at Sannich Pen, near Victoria.

Wherever headquarters happens to be, a living room cluttered with seals, sea lions, wounded eagles, and such, is a big part of life, sandwiched between spells of bird counting by planes, tree climbing, cliff hanging among unwelcoming birds, and various related activities.

If there were dull moments, we can't see how they found time to work them in.

General Notes of Special Interest

DEARTH OF LARK BUNTINGS IN DAY COUNTY 1971-1972—On May 16, 1971, Russell Fridley, Herbert Krause and I were birding on the western edge of the Waubay Wildlife Refuge.

Herb's eagle eye spotted a female Lark Bunting alongside the road and we glassed it carefully. It perched on the lower strand of barb wire for a minute or two before flying away.

This was the earliest Lark Bunting recorded in our area. I hoped that we would have a nesting record for Day County but summer passed and fall came and this Lark Bunting was the only one I saw in Day County in 1971.

During the season of 1972 I did not observe a single Lark Bunting. Robert Johnson, manager of Waubay Federal Wildlife Refuge, advised me he had seen only one Lark Bunting all year and that was during the Federal Bird Census in June, 1972—Herman P. Chilson, Webster

+ + +

BOREAL CHICKADEE IN BROOKINGS COUNTY—On Sunday afternoon, November 12, 1972, while observing the birds at our feeding station, a Boreal Chickadee, race Hudsonian, came into clear view on the edge of the spruce tree behind the feeder. It was then observed flitting around on the edge branches of our spruce trees behind our house. My husband and son also had excellent views of it at this time. A member of this species was seen a week earlier at Altamont, S. Dak. in Deuel County by Bruce Harris (see his account elsewhere in this issue).

Mrs. Wm. Peterson came down to see it Monday morning, Dec. 13 about 10:45 and

we found the bird visiting my suet stick which was filled with bacon drippings. That afternoon Orena Cooper and Alice Chu came down and the bird was again very cooperative and came to the suet very frequently so they could see all its identification marks. This chickadee is a much browner bird with a brown cap compared to our regular Black-capped Chickadee. It has dark chestnut on the sides of the breast and abdomen. It is a very active bird and flits continuously from branch to branch. Toward dusk of this same day, the bird was seen feeding close to one of my Brenckle warbler traps, baited with sunflower seed and cracked corn. To my great surprise and happiness, it flew into the trap. It was carefully removed and banded. Since it was too dark to take pictures of it that evening, it was held overnight in a netlike container. Several people were telephoned to tell them about the bird including Bruce Harris and J. W. Johnson, Huron. Dr. Raymond Linder, Director South Dakota Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit at South Dakota State University, was contacted and he drove down the next morning and observed the bird in hand as it was being photographed. He confirmed the identification. Several pictures were taken. The bird was then released back into the spruce trees. It was seen later that day at the suet and has been a regular visitor up to this date (Nov. 18).

On Wednesday, November 15th, my mist nets were set up in the afternoon and one of the first birds to get caught was the Boreal Chickadee. It was carefully removed and released again. Its nasal rather buzzy chickadee call was heard

for the first that day also. It seems right at home here and we hope it will stay all winter with us.

The normal range of this chickadee, according to Bent's Life History, is from Northern Alaska, Yukon, Mackenzie, northern Manitoba and northern Quebec south to southern Ontario, northern Michigan, northern Wisconsin, northern Minnesota, northern Montana, and southern British Columbia. Bent says "While not regularly migratory there appears to be an occasional fall movement that extends the range in winter south to southern Michigan (Lansing); northern Illinois (Waukegan Flats); southern Minnesota (Fairmont); and northern North Dakota (Upsilon Lake); . . ." Our home is on the southern edge of Brookings County about seven miles south of Brookings. The Fairmont, Minnesota observation is a bit further south than our observation. So far as we know this is the first time the Boreal Chickadee has been recorded in South Dakota.—Nelda Holden, Brookings

+ + +

BOREAL CHICKADEE IN DEUEL COUNTY—On November 2, 1972 I was working in my office at Altamont, but keeping an eye on the busy feeding station just outside the window. At about 3 p.m. I glanced out and was more than a little amazed to see a Boreal chickadee hopping about on the large spruce tree near the feeding station. It was a species I'd never seen before, but light conditions were fairly good, and the distance was only 30 feet from where I sat. Several Black-capped Chickadees were in area at the time. I called my wife to see the bird, and we both watched it for about 15 minutes as it worked energetically about the outer twigs of the spruce. I expected to see it come to the window feeder for the sunflower seeds that attracted the Black-caps, but the Boreal Chickadee came no closer than a fuel oil barrel next to the window, although the Black-capped Chickadees were going to and

from the feeders regularly. I concluded that perhaps the Black-caps had bullied the wandering Boreal Chickadee away from the feeding station.

After watching the bird for some time, I called Nelda Holden in Brookings, asking if she could come up to verify my find. Nelda and Dave got up to the house with little delay, but it was late in the day when they arrived, and none of the birds were very active about the feeding station. We gave all of the large conifers a good going over, and went through the adjacent woodland, but could not find the Boreal Chickadee.

The following morning I again saw the bird at about 8 a.m. The weather was frosty and foggy, with visibility poor. Kenneth Husmann arrived at the house at about 8:30, and we managed to get a glimpse of the Boreal Chickadee in one of the large conifers. The bird moved about much more than the Black-capped Chickadee, and was rather difficult to keep in view, although at times it would get way out on the outer edges of the spruce trees where it was easily observed.

After spending a good day in the field, Ken and I returned to my home at about 4 p.m., when weather conditions were much improved. We were pleased to have some very nice views of the Boreal Chickadee in full sunlight, and I was satisfied that the bird (new for South Dakota) had been seen by at least one other person. Following the SDOU meeting in Brookings on November 4th and 5th, Mr. and Mrs. James Johnson and Mary Aberdeen Kettele drove up to Altamont to see the Boreal Chickadee, but as so often happens, we could not find the bird. In fact, I could not produce anything of special interest for my visitors, although magpies and scoters had been within five miles of my home during the previous 10 days.

The Boreal Chickadee is a northern species that winters regularly in north-

ern Minnesota, though not at all a common bird there. It has occurred in southern Minnesota on rare occasions almost to the Iowa border; several years ago, a small group of Boreal Chickadees wintered near Morris, Minnesota, but I do not have a reference at hand on this at the present time. The species has only rarely been observed in North Dakota, being rated as accidental in that state (Stewart, "Checklist of Birds in North Dakota"). There is no record of the bird observed in South Dakota, to the best of my knowledge, and the sighting at Altamont thus constitutes a first state record.—Bruce Harris, Altamont.

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WOOD DUCK NESTS ON WHITE RIVER—In the early afternoon of August 8, 1972, noted an adult female Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) and three young on the White River 13 miles east of the U.S. Highway 83 bridge, Mellette County. To my knowledge, this is the first authentic report of a nesting Wood Duck west of the Missouri River. Large cottonwoods in the area would provide suitable nesting sites.—Conrad Hillman, BSFW, Rapid City, South Dakota

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RED CROSSBILLS NEAR WEBSTER—Everett Sewell and Jeff Nelson, both members of S.D.O.U., decided to raise a crop of sunflowers for winter bird food. Sewell offered to furnish the seed if Nelson would prepare the ground and plant it. This one-fourth-acre patch was located one mile south and one-eighth mile west of Webster near a small grove of Scotch Pine and Colorado Blue Spruce.

On August 10, 1972, Jeff Nelson went out to gather some sunflowers for a display at the Day County Fair. He estimated there were 50 to 75 Red

Crossbills on that day. Jeff said they were good acrobats and could shuck the seeds in any position including upside down. The majority were Red Crossbills but there were a few scattered White-winged Crossbills with them.

There were about 40 crossbills when I observed them, and Everett Sewell estimated approximately 20 when he saw them. September 7, 1972, was the last day I saw them in this particular location and the numbers had dwindled to about 15 birds. However, I saw many other interesting birds in this small patch. There were House Sparrows, Purple Finches, one Goldfinch, one albinistic Grackle with a white patch on the back of his neck, one Yellow Warbler, one Myrtle Warbler, several Brown Thrashers, one Solitary Vireo, three Yellow-shafted Flickers, and some Mourning Doves. Surprisingly there were no Blue Jays, chickadees, or nuthatches but 20 to 30 Bank Swallows were flying near a sand pit across the road.

On September 8th and 9th the birds were gone. It seemed strange to me that the birds would leave while some seeds remained in the heads. Upon closer investigation I noticed that these seeds had not filled. I later learned that each seed on a sunflower has an individual flower which must be insect pollinated or it will not fill. The birds only ate the filled seeds.

Sunflowers as a crop are fairly new in northeast South Dakota. Relatively few farmers in our area grow them while entire farms are planted to sunflowers just 100 miles north of us in North Dakota.

Has the increased acreage of sunflowers in North Dakota brought more crossbills into that state? It would be interesting to hear from some of our North Dakota birders.

As I was reviewing my field notes and writing this article on November 21, 1972,

I heard the familiar two and three note song of the crossbills: Clip, clip, and clip, clip, clip. There were 10 Red Crossbills eating seeds in the cones on the top of my neighbor's Colorado Blue Spruce tree. Three beautiful males were prominent among the drab immature and female birds.—Herman Chilson, Webster

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SIGHT RECORD FOR SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER AND MAGPIE IN DEUEL COUNTY—On May 24, 1972, I observed a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher near Altamont, Deuel County. There had been a severe lightning storm the previous night, and Lynn Stoltenberg, from a neighboring farm, had asked me to help him check cattle in their pasture, because they were worried that some animals might have been struck by lightning during the storm. We drove into the pasture on Stoltenberg's tractor at about 11 a.m., going east from the farm to some scattered trees about one-eighth mile north of the paved road. When we were about 40 yards from the trees I noticed a familiar bird on a lower dead branch of one of the trees. Light conditions were very good, and I at once noticed the long tail of the bird.

I said to Lynn, "There is a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher." He asked me if they called it a Scissor-tail because of the forked tail on the bird. I had seen Scissor-tails many times when we lived in New Mexico about six years ago—in fact, we had a nest of one of these birds in our back yard at Carlsbad, just before we moved to South Dakota in 1966. So there was no doubt in my mind that the bird we saw near Altamont was actually a Scissor-tailed flycatcher. Lynn and I watched the bird for about five minutes before it flew over a hill in a northerly direction. When I got home about one-half hour later I immediately told my

mother what we had seen, asking her to have my dad check on the bird as soon as he got home, as I was not sure whether the bird was supposed to be found in South Dakota. Dad didn't get home for another half hour, and I was not around to tell him about the bird, but he got out and scoured the country for more than an hour, with no luck in finding it. The weather that afternoon was very unsettled, and it's likely that the Scissor-tail moved some distance away.

When my father received his copy of *The Loon* (published by the Minnesota Ornithologists Union) for Summer, 1972, he was much interested in seeing a fine photo of a Scissor-tailed flycatcher on the cover, with a story about a bird observed at Duluth, Minnesota on May 24, 1972, the exact date of my observation in Deuel County! Dad says that Scissor-tailed flycatchers have been observed in South Dakota on only three other occasions (SDBN: December, 1969, p. 86).

Another interesting bird record turned up on October 21, 1972, when I spotted two Magpies near Rush Lake, Deuel County. I was with Dad at the time, and he also saw the birds. Two days later Dad and I saw single Magpies at Lake Alice and Lake Francis; as both of these areas were within three miles of Rush Lake we assumed the birds were the same as those observed on October 21st. Two magpies were again observed at Rush Lake on October 29th. Dr. John Gates, of the Department of Wildlife Management, SDSU, Brookings, also reported seeing two magpies near Rush Lake. Dad thought there were only two magpies in Deuel County until November 3rd, when he was driving by the Crystal Springs Ranch with Kenneth Husmann, of Brookings. On that date Mr. Husmann saw five magpies in one group! Dad says that magpies have been reported in the northeastern counties from time to time, but they are considered rare birds in this part of the state.—Mark Harris, Altamont

PRAIRIE FALCON IN DAY COUNTY— I was driving to our summer home at Pickerel Lake on September 6, 1972, about 6:30 p.m., when I sighted a light tan or grayish hawk flying in the pasture bordering Day County Highway Number One.

I had just passed the intersection of the Grenville road with Day County Highway Number One when I stopped the car for a better look.

At first I thought it was a Peregrine Falcon, but this bird was too light colored for that. The long tail, pointed wings, and dark patches in the wings close to the body identified it as a Prairie Falcon.

Driving down the road another one-fourth mile I arrived at the exact spot where Fred Staunton, former manager of the Waubay Federal Wildlife Refuge, and I had seen a Prairie Falcon some 12 years ago on April 6, 1960. (See Bird Notes Volume XIX, Number 4, page 90.)

This was the second Prairie Falcon I had seen in Day County during my lifetime; to see both of them within a half mile of each other was quite a coincidence.

That evening I called Robert Johnson at Refuge headquarters to alert him that a prairie falcon was in our area and to watch for it. Bob told me that during his tenure at the Refuge he had seen only one Prairie Falcon.—Herman P. Chilson, Webster

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FOX SPARROW OBSERVATIONS IN THE HURON AREA—According to our records the Fox Sparrow is not a very common bird in this area. It seems to be cyclic in its fall appearance. We have only one spring record: one got in the sparrow trap April 12, 1966 and was banded.

Since 1963 they have appeared in our yard on the dates shown below. Rarely,
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in the early 1950's, one would be identified in roadside cover in the area. For a considerable period prior to 1963 none were sighted anywhere.

Of the 18 subspecies given in the 1957 A.O.U. Check-List only *P.i.zaboria*, the Yukon Fox Sparrow, seems to have a migration route likely to impinge on this area. The Check-List notes that it winters "chiefly east of the Great Plains." In this migration pattern there may be a clue to the near absence of spring observations: the normal migration route lies farther east and we see only the occasional straggler. The fall movement, when a large proportion would be birds of the year, would be expected to be both more numerous and more scattered.

Being early warned that this species has been mistakenly identified as Hermit Thrush by the unwary, even one banded at least, we were careful always to make sure that the bird had long, red breast stripes and that the red on the back was not confined to the tail before calling it a Fox Sparrow. Hence we do not believe the records below include any Hermit Thrushes.

On October 8, 1965 a Fox Sparrow was trapped and banded. It was observed on the following days indicated, returned to the trap October 10, and was last observed October 15. The second individual seen October 8 was not observed on later days.

Year, month and day:

1963—10-28.

1964—10-3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 25.

1965—9-30, 10-5, 7, 8 (2) (one banded and observed 10-8, 9, 10 11, 12, 13, 15,— returned to trap 10-10).

1966—9-30.

1967—10-7.

1968—

1969—10-7, 10, 11, 12.

1970—10-11.

1971—10-8, 29, 30, 31.

1972—9-19, 10-21.

—J. W. and Lucille Johnson, Huron



Blue-winged Teal in Jackson County

—Photo by Roger R. Kerbs

COVER PICTURE

The Red-wing Blackbird illustration is another of the fine drawings of Wayne Trimm. Mr. and Mrs. Herman Chapman, Sioux Falls, were kind enough to share this with us.