

# South Dakota Bird Notes

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Courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Photo by Kent Olson

## American Kestrel

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## *In This Issue . . .*

President's Page, Bill Lemons . . . . .	3
Whooping Cranes: Two Observations, Maurice Anderson . . . . .	4
The Fall Migration, Compilers: B.K. Harris, G.L. Steffen, J. Harter . . . . .	6
Christmas Count Notes . . . . .	9
Christmas Count, 1977 . . . . .	10
General Notes of Special Interest -- Nest Record for American Woodcock in Marshall County, Archilochus Species Observed in Rapid City, Fall Record for Buff-breasted Sandpiper in Deuel County, Saw-whet Owl in Codington, Band ing Report from Burke . . . . .	17
1978 Spring Meeting . . . . .	20

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## President's Page

During my membership in SDOU over the years I have sometimes been twitted by scientific-minded friends for my enthusiasm for literature in which the author endows nature and nature's creatures with human qualities. That is, I have been accused of biological anthropomorphism (as distinguished from theological anthropomorphism). Literary people too have a negative term -- John Ruskin's "pathetic fallacy" -- for writing that credits inanimate objects, landscape, birds, and animals with the moods, passions, and mental



apparatus of human beings, and I myself recently criticized in one of my classes Sarah Orne Jewett for mentioning "a chattering group of birds, which had gathered for a conference about their early migration," since these birds were

only part of her artificial backdrop of local color scenery.

My scientific friends, however, will not even accept anthropomorphism when nature is used as a poetic metaphor. In "The Oven Bird" Robert Frost, who in many poems emphasizes the difference between nature and human beings (the snow-covered fields in "Desert Places" have "nothing to express"), says that this small olive-colored, inconspicuous bird knows the need for compromise in this life, the value of "strategic retreat," and so he prefers to nest in the middle of the woods away from highway dust that "is over all" and he likes the middle of summer because he knows that spring doesn't last (like romantic ideals): spring leaves soon grow old; spring flowers go "down in showers/On sunny days a moment overcast" and soon

come fall and winter. Unlike other birds, "he knows in singing not to sing" and has coarsened his song appropriately for a hard world in which time always brings diminishment and loss. But his song is loud and vigorous and he endures. Thus the Ovenbird is an emblem through which Frost expresses a philosophy of tough realism, but only the literal-minded would think that the poet believes that the bird thinks such thoughts.

Other writers have a much more intense identification with nature. To Robinson Jeffers the hawk was more real than a man. D.H. Lawrence once grieved over a dead mountain lion he saw, trapped by a Mexican, and reflected that we could more easily "spare a million or two of humans/And never miss them," while in his famous "Ode to a Nightingale" John Keats recognized his own feelings of melancholy in the beauty of the bird's "plaintive anthem." The scientist would object that the male Nightingale sings only to warn defensively other birds away from his territory -- the female does not sing. But does this bird's song express only that? Or as Joseph Wood Krutch asks in *The Voice of the Desert*, is the pathetic fallacy really a fallacy? And he is referring to inert nature -- landscape:

Are we so separate from nature that our states are actually discontinuous with it? Is there nothing outside ourselves which is somehow glad or sad? . . . How can nature's meaning come wholly from man when he is only a part of nature?

Coleridge gave the answer accepted by post-romantic scientists: "Only in ourselves does nature live." Krutch insists that this is "less true than its opposite: 'Only in nature do we have a being.'" -- Bill Lemons, Meckling.

# WHOOPING CRANES TWO OBSERVATIONS

*Maurice Anderson*

At 9:00 a.m. on October 29, 1977, John Kuhl, Conservation Officer, South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, observed three Whooping Cranes flying at about 300 feet over Sully County, S.D. (T114N, R80W, Sec. 19). Again at 1:30 p.m., Kuhl and Conservation Officer Bill Shattuck observed the three cranes on the ground in Sully County (T113N, R80W, Sec. 26). On returning to Pierre, Kuhl and Shattuck reported the observations to me. I went to the area at 4:30 p.m., but the whoopers were not present. That evening Brad Taylor notified John Koerner, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, that at 6:30 p.m., the cranes were in the area where Kuhl and Shattuck had seen them at 1:30 p.m.

Before daylight on October 30, 1977, Chuck Sowards, John Koerner, my son Mark, and I returned to the Sully County site of the last observations. At 6:40 a.m. the whoopers were visible by binoculars and 20x scope -- two adults and one bird apparently of the hatching year (HY). This HY crane had colored bands on its legs above the joints -- green on the right leg and red on the left leg -- and a USFWS aluminum band on the left leg near the foot. The birds were about 400 yards from us in a fall-planted winter wheat field, wet from recent fall rains.

Initially the cranes seemed to resent our presence, but they soon ignored us and started stretching their wings. Facing into the wind, the birds would rise into the air a few feet and then settle back on the ground.

At 7:00 a.m., the cranes flew about one mile to the north-northeast and landed in a winter wheat field adjoining an unpicked cornfield.

Periodically, the birds would run six to ten feet and pick something from the

ground, as if they were feeding. Their source of food was puzzling, for freezing temperatures during the previous days must have seriously minimized available insects. The HY whooper frequently ran to where an adult was pecking on the ground. Seldom did both adults feed at the same time; one bird appeared to have its head up as though it was looking around.

At 7:52 a.m., the cranes flew east about one-quarter of a mile and landed in the same field. Both the flight and the landing were impressively graceful. At about 8:00 a.m., the adults engaged in a brief display with the wings outstretched as they jumped about two feet in the air. Then at 8:05, the birds started walking along the edge of the unpicked cornfield.

One adult appeared somewhat taller than the other. The head of the HY whooper was a darker brown than the fawn-colored brown on its body.

At 8:08 a.m., the cranes flew north (still in the same 1/2 section of land) to a strip of picked corn between fields of unpicked corn. Whether by intention or chance, the adults kept the young whooper between them.

At 8:30 a.m., the cranes flew a short distance south and landed on the edge of thistle-covered land about 150 yards from the wheat field and about 250 to 300 yards north of some farm buildings. The birds continued sporadic feeding, and by 8:55 a.m. the young Whooping Crane was foraging in the thistles about 200 yards from the adults. Then at 9:09 a.m., the birds flew about 400 yards west of the thistle patch and landed near the point where they had been two hours earlier.

*Maurice Anderson is a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 250, Pierre, SD 57501.*



**Photo by Chuck Sowards**

### **WHOOPING CRANES**

The cranes were attentive when two cars stopped at our position, and they were attentive but not distinctly disturbed later when an airplane flew over them at an altitude of 700 to 1000 feet. At about 9:45 a.m., goose hunters' shots sounded in the distance. The cranes appeared to listen but showed no other reaction.

At 10:12 a.m., the whoopers moved 400 yards to the east, and ten minutes later they returned to the wetland where we had seen them at daybreak. Then at 11:10 a.m., they flew to the vicinity of the farm buildings but did not land. Instead, the Whooping Cranes flew back toward the wetland, circled high, and disappeared from our sight as they headed east.

Whooping Cranes were again observed on November 3, 4, 5, 1977, in Hughes County, approximately 11 miles upstream from Oahe Dam (T112N, R81W, Sec. 27). The four adults and one young were first seen by Bill Shattuck at 5:00 p.m. on November 3. The birds, on a State Refuge, were on a curved spit of land that had been exposed by recent water level reductions on the

Oahe Reservoir. The spit was estimated to be three-quarters of a mile in length, and its width ranged from 200 to 400 yards.

The next day at 7:00 a.m., the cranes were sighted by Chuck Sowards. They were about three-fourths of a mile away on the lee side of the spit, and feeding in shallow ponds or walking around. At 8:10 a.m., the birds flew approximately 600 yards closer to the mainland. Their black wing tips were visible. Leg bands were not seen at this time, but a red band was later observed on the right leg of the young crane. A south-southwest wind was gusting to an estimated 30 mph; the sky was clear with an occasional cloud, and the temperature was 41° F.

About 9:40 a.m., the birds moved again, but their position was still one-half of a mile from our car. Thirty-five minutes later an estimated 3000-4000 Canada Geese landed on the mud flat of the spit. The cranes showed little activity until 11:35, when they moved about 400 yards farther out on the spit. When Sowards left the site at 11:50 to return to town, the wind had increased by another 5 to 10 mph and the temperature was an estimated 52°.

On Saturday morning, November 5, the light was dim when Sowards and I arrived at the site at 6:50 a.m., but we were able to find the cranes with the aid of our binoculars, and to note that they were still on the same finger of land they had occupied the previous day. There was about one-half of a mile of relatively bare ground between the birds and the mainland vegetation. The wind at the Pierre Municipal Airport was southeast at 10 mph.

The cranes took off at 7:43 a.m. and flew across the reservoir. When we found them at 10:00 a.m., they were near two small shallow dams and a dugout in a native grass pasture (T5N, R30E, Sec. 16). Airborne again at 10:47 a.m., they circled, gained altitude, and headed south and east. The wind at this time was south at 15 mph.

**(Continued on page 19)**

# The Fall Migration

August 1 -- November 30, 1977

Compilers: B.K. Harris, G.L. Steffen, J. Harter

The total number of species observed during the 1977 fall migration was nearly the same as the total for the fall of 1976, but the numbers of individuals for many of those species were much below normal, particularly for the warblers and most of the sparrows. Late arrival dates were frequent, and banding records in Brookings County show that peak dates for Harris' Sparrow occurred in November instead of October. The paucity of birds may have been due to several factors, but there is cause for the speculation that conditions forced the birds to push on through without stopping.

The first three months of the period were especially nice over most of the state. Fall rains varied from below normal in the north central and northwestern counties to above normal in the south central and southeastern counties. Killing frosts held off until sometime in October, and daytime temperatures were frequently in the 60's and 70's until November. Snow and cold moved into the state on November 8, to remain through the rest of the period, with severe conditions in the northeast counties.

The season was not without its highlights: an increase in hawks, especially the Marsh Hawk, was recorded in the extreme northeast, south central, and southwestern part of the state; Greater Prairie Chickens were seen in Brookings and Deuel Counties; Whooping Cranes in Sully and Hughes Counties gave observers in the Pierre area an opportunity for some close study; a Buff-breasted Sandpiper in Deuel County was a good record; a hummingbird that was either Ruby-throated or Black-chinned, and a Rufous Hummingbird, both in Rapid City, and Pygmy Nuthatches at Piedmont were good Black Hills records; Eastern Bluebird numbers in Gregory and

Yankton Counties were good; a Western Tanager banded in Brookings County was east of its range; there was an excellent distribution of Evening Grosbeaks over the state; White-winged Crossbills, seldom seen in South Dakota, were present in flocks of 20-25 in Brookings, Deuel, and Grant Counties; and the northern finch numbers were a hint of more to come.

## Species List

### LOONS, GREBES, HERONS

- Common Loon** -- 10/18 (1), 11/4 (6), 11/30 (1) Gavin's Pt., WH; 11/11 Angostura Res., Fall River Co. (4) JLM, E M S.
- Loon, sp.** -- 10/27 Bullhead L., Deuel Co. (1) definitely smaller than Common Loon, possibly Red-throated, BKH.
- Horned Grebe** -- Late date: 11/21 Yankton Co., WH; reports from Gregory, Meade, Lawrence, and Deuel Counties.
- Eared Grebe** -- (3) sightings during period, last date 11/10 after a blizzard, Deuel Co., BKH.
- Western Grebe** -- Late dates: 11/23 Gavin's Pt., WH, and Big Stone L., BKH. The latter was still present 12/17, and apparently not a cripple. These are the latest dates on record for So. Dakota. Reports also from Meade and Fall River Counties, and Waubay N.W.R.
- Pied-billed Grebe** -- Late dates: 11/18 Gregory Co., GLS, and 11/11 Fall River Co., JLM, EMS. Reports also from Yankton, Meade, Clay, and Deuel Counties, and LaCreek N.W.R.
- White Pelican** -- Late date: 11/16 Gavin's Pt., WH; peak date: 8/2 (3784) LaCreek N.W.R.; reports from Brookings, Lake, Campbell, Gregory, Grant, and Deuel Counties, and Waubay N.W.R.
- Double-crested Cormorant** -- Late date: 11/13 Buffalo Co., NRW, and 11/23 Big Stone Power Plant, BKH; peak date: 8/2 LaCreek N.W.R. (692) TRT; reports from Yankton, Meade, Hughes, Charles Mix, and Deuel Counties.
- Cormorant, sp.** -- 11/23 Big Stone Power Plant (1) smaller than Double-crested, seen with (4) Double-crested, BKH.
- Great Blue Heron** -- Late date: 11/19 Sully Co., RLH; dates also from Yankton, Clay, Gregory, Fall River, Lake, Day, Union, Deuel Counties.
- Green Heron** -- 8/4 (2), 8/27 (2) Gavin's Pt., 9/9 n.e. Yankton Co., WH; 8/13 Farm Island, Pierre (1) RLH.

**Great Egret** -- 9/5 (8) Campbell's Slough, 9/13 (18) Burns' Slough, (3) Blue Dog L., 9/14 (11) Campbell's Slough, 9/15 (24) Burns' Slough, all in Day Co., KFH; 9/14 (1) L. Alice, Deuel Co., BKH.

**Black-crowned Night Heron** -- 8/27 (4), 8/29 (1) Yankton Co., WH; 8/29 flock of (6) and flock of (9) Deuel Co., BKH.

**American Bittern** -- 8/13 Brookings Co. (1) CAT; 10/10 LaCreek N.W.R. (2) RAW; none in northeast region, BKH.

#### SWANS, GEESE, DUCKS

**Whistling Swan** -- 10/3 (5), 11/17 (17) Waubay N.W.R., MHP; 10/25 Sand L. N.W.R. (1800) RLW; 5 observations during period in northeast, 11/22 Big Stone L., Roberts Co., BKH.

**Trumpeter Swan** -- 10/10 LaCreek N.W.R. (22) RAW.

**Canada Goose** -- Reports from Yankton, Buffalo, Meade, and Gregory Counties.

**White-fronted Goose** -- 10/30 Gregory Co. (150) GLS; 11/12 Waubay N.W.R. (10) MHP.

**Snow Goose** -- Peak date: 10/25 Sand L. N.W.R. (115,000) RLW; reports from Marshall, Lake, Hughes, Gregory, and Deuel Counties; late date: 11/28 Gavin's Pt. (1) WH.

**Mallard** -- 11/3 Burke Lagoon (100) GLS; 11/29 Gavin's Pt. (11,000) WH; build-up to several hundred thousand on Missouri R. Impoundments during third week of November.

**Black Duck** -- 9/1 Gavin's Pt. (1) WH.

**Gadwall** -- Late date: 11/16 Deuel Co., also a peak of (300) at each of four Deuel Co. locations during Oct.; reports from Gregory, Lake, Yankton, and Penn. Counties.

**Pintail** -- 8/27 Yankton Co. (7) WH; 11/3 Burke Lagoon (4) GLS; normal numbers, Deuel Co., BKH.

**Green-winged Teal** -- Late date: 11/23 Yankton Co. (1) WH; Deuel Co., early build-up in September with concentrations of (50-70) in several locations, BKH; reports from Lake and Meade Counties.

**Blue-winged Teal** -- 8/4 (200), 9/2 (117) Yankton Co., WH; unprecedented build-up beginning 8/10 when (1000) were at Singas Public Shooting Area, also in August (2000) L. Cochrane, (1500) near Tunerville, and (300 to 800) at five other locations, all in Deuel Co., most teal were gone by 9/7, BKH; 9/5 Lake Co. (30) RB; 9/28 Farmingdale Res., Penn. Co., JLM; 10/4 Burke L., (80) GLS.

**American Wigeon** -- Late date: 11/12 Butte Co. (100) JLM; reports from Yankton, Gregory, Lake, Fall River, Meade, and Deuel Counties.

**Northern Shoveler** -- Unusual numbers beginning 9/13 (200) Clear L., 10/16 (200) Round L., 10/22 (100) Coteau L., 11/8 (13) all in Deuel Co., 11/23 Big Stone L. (1) BKH.

**Wood Duck** -- Reports from Yankton, Hughes, and Lawrence Counties.

**Redhead** -- 9/16 (500) Deuel Co., 9/18 (200) Grant Co., 11/23 (2) Grant Co., possibly cripples, BKH; 10/10 Burke L. (2) GLS.

**Ring-necked Duck** -- Late date: 11/5 Custer Co. (12) JLM; reports from Gregory, Lake, Meade, and Deuel Counties.

**Canvasback** -- 10/14 Lake Co. (4) RB; poor flight, best count 10/23 (100) Fish L., Deuel Co., 11/23 Big Stone L. (1) possible cripple, BKH.

**Lesser Scaup** -- Poor flight, 11/13 (45), (50) in two areas, Deuel Co., BKH; 11/18 Gavin's Pt. (11) WH.

**Common Goldeneye** -- Reports from Penn., Yankton, Day Counties; 11/23 last date in Deuel Co., BKH.

**Bufflehead** -- Good flight, 10/3 earliest date I have on record, (6) at Lone Tree L., also flocks of (20 to 75) in other areas during period in Deuel Co., 11/23 Big Stone L. (1) free-flying female or imm., the latest date I have on record for So. Dak., BKH; 10/4 Burke Lagoon (5) GLS; 11/11 Waubay N.W.R. (150) MHP; 11/12 Oahe Res., Hughes Co. (3) RLH; 11/13 Gavin's Pt. (16) WH; 11/13 Ft. Thompson, Buffalo Co. (3) NWR.

**Surf Scoter** -- 10/16 (1 imm.) shot on Oahe Res., Hughes Co., I examined the bird and determined it to be an immature Surf Scoter, RLH.

**Ruddy Duck** -- Large concentrations, 10/13 (500) at five locations, 10/23 (400) Clear L., 11/10 (30) Clear L., all in Deuel Co., BKH.

**Hooded Merganser** -- (2) males shot by hunters in late October, Deuel Co., BKH; 11/16 (2), 11/21 (1) Gavin's Pt., WH.

**Common Merganser** -- 11/21 (2), 11/27 (830) Gavin's Pt., WH; 11/22 (30) in flight over frozen Burke L., GLS; few in Deuel Co., 11/23 (13) Big Stone L., BKH.

**Red-breasted Merganser** -- 8/4 (1) cripple that may have stayed all summer, 11/11 (9) Gavin's Pt., WH.

#### HAWKS, EAGLES

**Turkey Vulture** -- Reports from Gregory, Bon Homme, Penn., and Meade Counties, and Waubay N.W.R.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk** -- Late dates: 11/15 Roberts Co., BKH, and 11/21 Rapid City, NRW; reports from Gregory, Hughes, Jackson, Day, Fall River, and Hyde (roosting on eaves trough of house, JH) Counties.

**Cooper's Hawk** -- 9/13 (1) Deuel Co., 10/2 (1) Stanley Co., BKH; 9/14 Hyde Co. (1) JH; 10/15 Lyman Co. (1), 11/16 Farm Island (1) RLH.

**Accipiter, sp.** -- 9/2, 3 (1) probable Cooper's in yard in Sturgis, harassing pigeons, EEM; 9/19 (1), 11/19 (1) Yankton Co., WH.

**Red-tailed Hawk** -- Late date: 11/27 Yankton and Gregory Counties, WH, GLS; better flight than usual in northeast, BKH; reports from Clay, Bon Homme, Lake, and five Black Hills Counties.

**Broad-winged Hawk** -- 9/15 Waubay N.W.R., many migrating through area, MHP; 10/3 Lawrence Co. (1) JLM.

**Swainson's Hawk** -- (3) in Meade and Penn. Counties, JLM, only sightings in area, very low number, BHAS; 9/27 estimate (1000) LaCreek N.W.R., H. Burgess, Refuge manager (fide RAW); 10/2 (166) in ten-mile area, including (130) in one field, Stanley Co., BKH; late dates: 11/19 Bon Homme Co., WH, and 11/4 Gregory Co., BLS; reports from Day, Jackson, Deuel, and Clay Counties.

**Rough-legged Hawk** -- 10/9 to 11/13 (16 total) in four Black Hills counties, BHAS; best flight in seven years in northeast, first observed 10/23, then every

day in the field, usually (3-4) per day, 11/23 (5) in one mile, Grant Co., none in northeast in fall of 1976, BKH; reports from Gregory, Clay, Yankton, Lyman, and Lawrence Counties.

**Rufous-winged Blackbird** -- Reports from Stanley, Deuel, Meade, Lyman, and Jones Counties. LaCreek N.W.R. and Badlands.

**Buteo, sp.** -- 9/6 to 10/19 (12 total) Yankton Co., WH; 10/6 Badlands (8) RAW.

**Golden Eagle** -- 10/25 Sand L. N.W.R. (5) RLW; reports from Lyman, Gregory, Perkins, Clay, and Meade Counties, LaCreek N.W.R. and five Black Hills counties.

**Bald Eagle** -- 10/19 early record in Deuel Co., more sightings than usual, (9) observations during season, including color-tagged imm., BKH; 10/25 Sand Lake N.W.R. (9) RLW; reports from Lyman, Day, Lawrence, Perkins, Yankton, Hughes, and Buffalo Counties.

**Marsh Hawk** -- Late dates: 11/19 Yankton Co., WH, and 11/18 Gregory Co., GLS; peak: 10/10 LaCreek N.W.R. (30); more than usual in Deuel Co.; reports from Clay, Bon Homme, Lyman Counties, Black Hills, and Badlands.

**Osprey** -- Early date: 8/28 Roberts Co., BKH; late date: 10/22 Yankton Co., JW; report from Marshall Co.; total of (6) sightings, more than usual for species.

**Gyr Falcon** -- 11/12, 11/13 (1), sightings five miles apart, may have been same bird, Lyman Co., WCT.

**Prairie Falcon** -- 9/7 to 11/15 Gregory Co. (4 total) GLS; 9/17 Slim Buttes (2), 10/15 Lyman Co. (1), 10/17 Hughes Co. (1), 10/25 Jones Co. (1), 10/30 Sully Co. (1) RLH; 10/6 Badlands (2) RAW; (4) sightings in Deuel Co. during period, BKH; 9/25 Meade Co. (2) JLM; 11/13 Davison Co. (1) NRW.

**Peregrine Falcon** -- 11/25 (1) Crow Creek arm, Oahe Res., Hughes Co., K. Smith -- USF&WS (fide RLH).

**Merlin** -- Reports from Fall River, Harding, and Gregory Counties

**American Kestrel** -- Numbers reported indicate good reproduction. 8/6 to 11/13 total (38) sightings in five Black Hills counties. BHAS; 8/15 to 11/29 total (100) Yankton Co., peak days 8/15, 9/10 (21) each day, also (26) Bon Homme Co., (11) w. Clay Co. during period, WH; good flight, with (25) in 20 miles on 10/3, Deuel Co., BKH; 9/7 Gregory Co. (6) GLS; 10/6 Badlands (16) RAW; 10/17 Slim Buttes, Harding Co. (4) RLH; 10/2 Brown Co. (24) HLS, EM.

**Falcon, sp.** -- 9/4 (1) Yankton Co., 11/19 (1) Bon Homme Co., WH; 10/31 (1) possible Gyrfalcon, 11/7 (1) possible Peregrine, Deuel Co., BKH.

#### GROUSE, CRANES, RAILS

**Greater Prairie Chicken** -- 9/14 (8) flushed from grassy area along Big Sioux R. seven miles south of Brookings, NJH; 11/23 (1) n.e. Grant Co., BKH.

**Sharp-tailed Grouse** -- Reported from most West River areas, population down this year.

**Bobwhite** -- 9/4 (2 ad., 12 imm.), 11/19 (18) Yankton Co., 11/19 (10) Bon Homme Co., WH; 10/10 (5) Minnehaha Co., Spencer Vaa (fide BKH) -- first reported sighting from Minn. Co. in many years.

**Ring-necked Pheasant** -- Present statewide, numbers appear to be slightly over those of 1976.

**Gray Partridge** -- Numbers may be at peak in northeast So. Dakota; reports from Campbell, Brookings, Yankton, and Deuel Counties.

**Turkey** -- 9/4 (13) near Gavin's Pt., M.: Nash (fide WH); 9/17 (17) Slim Buttes, Harding Co., RLH.

**Whooping Crane** -- 10/29, 30 (2 ad., 1 imm.) s.w. Sully Co., Richard Hill, C. Sowards, Jack Kuhl, representing USF&WS and SDGF&P; 11/3 to 11/5 (4 ad., 1 imm.) by Oahe Res., Hughes Co., RLH et. al. (See details on these observations in another part of this issue. - Ed.)

**Sandhill Crane** -- Early date: 9/10 Hughes Co., RLH. Late date: 11/13 Hyde Co., JH. Peak dates: 10/7 e. Custer Co. (2000) BMN; 11/6 Perkins Co., several flocks, AH. Greatest migration numbers occurred over the western tier of counties. Reports from Campbell, Gregory, Lyman, Penn., and Deuel Counties, and Badlands.

**KING RAIL** -- 8/15 LaCreek N.W.R. (4) TRT. Refuge personnel have reported that young were produced on the refuge in 1977.

**Virginia Rail** -- 8/1 LaCreek N.W.R. (10) TRT; 10/18 Farm Island (1) RLH.

**Sora** -- 8/2 LaCreek N.W.R. (20) TRT; 9/13 Brookings Co. (1) CAT; 9/28 Farmingdale Res., e. Penn. Co. (1) NRW.

**American Coot** -- In Deuel Co., early build-up late August, 9/14 flocks of (500 - 1000) at three locations, several still present after Nov. 10 blizzard, BKH; 9/12 (9), 10/4 (15) Burke L., GLS; 10/14 Lake Co. (15) RB; 10/29 (150), 11/23 (4) Gavin's Pt., WH; 11/2 Waubay N.W.R. (140) MHP.

#### SHOREBIRDS

**Semipalmated Plover** -- (1) for 8/27, 9/2, 9/11 Yankton Co. WH; 9/2 Angostura Res. (12) JLM.

**Piping Plover** -- 8/27 s.w. Yankton Co. (1) WH.

**Killdeer** -- Late date: 10/16 w. Clay Co. (38) WH. Peak date: 8/2 LaCreek N.W.R. (218) TRT. Reports from Lake, Grant, Hyde, Brookings, and Yankton Counties.

**Black-bellied Plover** -- 9/2 Angostura Res., Fall River Co. (1) JLM.

**American Woodcock** -- 9/10 Deuel Co. (1) BKH.

**Common Snipe** -- Reports from Yankton, Penn., Hughes, Meade, and Deuel Counties, and LaCreek N.W.R.

**Upland Sandpiper** -- (1) observed 8/28 and 9/10 in pasture north of Brookings, GF.

**Spotted Sandpiper** -- 8/9 to 9/4 Yankton Co. (7 total) WH; 8/13 Farmingdale Res. (1) JLM; 8/17 LaCreek N.W.R. (44) TRT; 8/27 Rapid City (1) NRW.

**Solitary Sandpiper** -- 8/13 Rapid Valley, Penn. Co. (1) JLM; 9/2 to 9/24 (4 total) Yankton Co., WH.

**Greater Yellowlegs** -- Late date: 10/29 Deuel Co., BKH; reports from Day and Custer Counties, and LaCreek N.W.R.

**Lesser Yellowlegs** -- Late date: 10/14 Lake Co. (15) RB. Peak date: 9/16 Waubay N.W.R. (65) MHP. Reports also from Penn., Yankton, and Deuel Counties.

**Pectoral Sandpiper** -- Groups of (20) in several areas in late August. Deuel Co., BKH; 8/27 (69), 9/2 (35)

(Continued on page 13)



# CHRISTMAS COUNT NOTES

These notes are a supplement to the Christmas Count chart in this issue of BIRD NOTES. They contain the names of bird species seen in the count period but not on count day, with explanatory comments on unusual observations made during the count period.

**Pierre** -- (30 observers in 12 parties) The 70 species and 2 additional races, and the 20,531 individuals, are new highs for Pierre and South Dakota. New species for the count: Snow Goose, Long-eared Owl, and Water Pipit. Seen during the count period but not on count day: Red-tailed Hawk, American Wigeon, Bohemian Waxwing, and Swamp Sparrow.

The Snow Goose was a healthy mature bird that was apparently wintering on Capitol Lake with a number of Canada Geese. We had an unusually large number of Snow Geese through this area during the fall migration. This bird was checked by almost all of our observers.

The Long-eared Owls were observed by Fred June, Richard McEntaffer, and the compiler. The size, smaller than the common Great Horned Owls, slimmer lines, and more distinctive lengthwise streaking of breast feathers were observed.

The **Water Pipit** was observed by Rex and Marvene Riis about noon, December 18, 1977, on the Stanley County side of the Missouri River, just below Oahe Dam. It was along a rip-rapped jetty extending out into the open water below the dam. They heard the pipit-pipit call and the bird lit on the shoreline very near the car. It was observed with and without binoculars, at times at a distance no greater than ten feet, as it walked and flew short distances along a rocky and open water shoreline. The legs were described as almost black, the back was unstreaked and very dark, and the white-edged tail wagged as the bird walked. It gave the pipit-pipit call when it took wing. Although the sky was overcast, the light was good and the wind

was no more than 5 mph at the time. Rex Riis has spent some time in Alaska and was familiar with the bird on its summer range.

The fully colored male Yellow-headed Blackbird was with a mixed flock of Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles, wintering near a shelterbelt and cattle feedlot. It was observed by Jerry and Susan Schlesinger, Enid Hyde, Mark Tieszen, Helen Donnan, Ron Schreiner, Wallace Larsen, and Loren Bishop.

A black-headed gull, moving about with Herring Gulls, was observed by two parties, but no positive identification was made. -- R.V. Summerside, compiler.

**Aberdeen** -- (9 observers in 3 parties) Not seen on previous counts: Prairie Falcon, American Kestrel, Gray Partridge, Evening Grosbeak, and White-winged Crossbill. The Prairie Falcon was an especially lucky find -- it flew across the road just as we got to the spot. A half-minute sooner or later and we would have missed it. The "snow bird" numbers were low, probably due to the 12-18 inches of snow cover. -- E.C. Montgomery, compiler.

**Belle Fourche** -- (2 observers) Cedar Waxwings (50) and Evening Grosbeaks (30) were seen in the count period but not on count day. -- Irma Weyler, compiler.

**Brookings** -- Seen during the count period but not on count day: Screech Owl and Cedar Waxwing. -- Nelda Holden, compiler.

**Deuel County** -- (3 observers in 2 parties, and 1 feeder watcher) The 25 species on count day is quite good. With more parties in the field, this could be one of the better counts in the state. New birds for the count: White-winged Crossbill and White-throated Sparrow. Seen during the count period: Rough-legged Hawk. A Rufous-sided Towhee, a regular feeder visitor at Lake Cochrane since December 10, was just outside the count boundaries. -- B.K. Harris, compiler.

(Continued on page 12)

# CHRISTMAS COUNT, 1977

10

	Aberdeen	Beile Fourche	Brookings	Deuel Co.	Higmore	Hot Springs	Lacreek N.W.R.	Mitchell	Pierre	Rapid City	Waubay N.W.R.	Willmot	Yankton
Whistling Swan							11						
Trumpeter Swan							135						
Canada Goose	6						4200		8025				
White-fronted Goose							1						
Snow Goose								1					
Mallard	11					10,600	820	1550		517	1		814
Black Duck								1					
Gadwall								1		30			
Pintail								2		3			
Green-winged Teal						3	8	7		16			
American Wigeon						3				6			
Wood Duck								1		1			
Redhead								1		2			
Canvasback								2					
Greater Scaup								2					
Lesser Scaup								3		6			
Common Goldeneye						10	55	25		63			19
Bufflehead								3					
Hooded Merganser							1						
Common Merganser						1	10	30		1			9
Red-breasted Merganser								7					
Goshawk													1
Sharp-shinned Hawk						2							1
Red-tailed Hawk						1				3		1	8
Rough-legged Hawk	1		6			2	25	2		8		8	4
Ferruginous Hawk							3						
Golden Eagle						7	17	2		2	1		
Bald Eagle						5	7	18					21
Marsh Hawk							10						
Prairie Falcon	1						2	1					
Merlin								2		1			
American Kestrel	1		1			1		5		1			8
Prairie Chicken								1					
Sharp-tailed Grouse							78	38		2			
Bobwhite													11
Ring-necked Pheasant	214		31	6	4	2	1017	8	42	19	15	76	32
Gray Partridge	5		56	68	10						32	33	

SOUTH DAKOTA BIRD NOTES

	Turkey					157			5	169				
	American Coot					2				1				
	Killdeer					1				9				
	Common Snipe					3	3			3				
	Glaucous Gull									2				
	Herring Gull						1			42				
	Ring-billed Gull									2				
March, 1978	Rock Dove	191		197	2	20	147			253	21		55	155
	Mourning Dove									1				6
	Screech Owl						1			1				
	Great Horned Owl	4		10	1	1		3		12	6	2	6	1
	Snowy Owl	1												
	Long-eared Owl			2						2				
	Short-eared Owl							1		3			4	
	Belted Kingfisher					1		1		1	23			
	Common Flicker	3		3			13				9			
	Red-shafted							7		5				
	Yellow-shafted									1			2	37
	Red-bellied Woodpecker													2
	Hairy Woodpecker	4	2	14	2	3	1	2	2	27	21	1	3	17
	Downy Woodpecker	8	2	24	5	2	2	3	3	50	12	11	9	28
	Horned Lark	21		182	3			318	400	3387			47	46
	Blue Jay	7	7	26	6		1			9	59		9	14
	Black-billed Magpie						40	5		11	57			
	Common Crow	4		62	2		7		2	3	27		9	39
	Pinyon Jay						140				118			
	Black-capped Chickadee	16	25	107	16		22	1	2	142	149	26	26	85
	White-breasted Nuthatch	4		11	2	1	3		1	13	13	1	6	9
	Red-breasted Nuthatch	3		7						9	44			
	Pygmy Nuthatch										1			
	Brown Creeper			1			1			6	13		3	
	Long-billed Marsh Wren						1							
	Canyon Wren						1				6			
	American Robin	1		1		1	969	5		72	37			91
	Eastern Bluebird													3
	Townsend's Solitaire		2				26				53			
	Golden-crowned Kinglet										4			
	Water Pipit									1				
	Bohemian Waxwing				1						20			
	Cedar Waxwing						57			10	1			75
	Northern Shrike			2			2	7		13	1		2	
	Starling	361		306	14	200	384	2	200	560	642		350	1590
	House Sparrow	995		1670	200	400	240		200	2126	403	1	450	340
	Western Meadowlark							2		20				2
	Yellow-headed Blackbird									1				
	Red-winged Blackbird			8	6		3	5		176	12			238
	Rusty Blackbird				1								5	
11	Brewer's Blackbird	3												
	Common Grackle	6		2	3					3			1	4
	Brown-headed Cowbird									4				



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## THE FALL MIGRATION

(Continued from page 8)

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- Yankton Co., WH; 9/5 (1) Lake Co., RB; 9/25 (1) Meade Co., JLM; 10/5 (30) Waubay N.W.R., MHP.
- White-rumped Sandpiper** -- 8/27 (1), 9/2 Yankton Co., WH.
- Baird's Sandpiper** -- 8/27 (20) Fall River Co., JLM; 9/4 (2) Yankton Co., WH.
- Least Sandpiper** -- 8/27 (4) Yankton Co., WH.
- Long-billed Dowitcher** -- Late date: 10/10 (15) LaCreek N.W.R., RAW, and (13) Yankton Co., WH. Reports from Lake and Deuel Counties.
- Stilt Sandpiper** -- 10/8 Deuel Co. (3) BKH.
- Sempalmsted Sandpiper** -- 8/27 (9), 9/2 (3) Yankton Co., WH.
- BUFF-BREADED SANDPIPER** -- 8/13 (1) good close study, Deuel Co., BKH.
- Marbled Godwit** -- 8/2 LaCreek N.W.R. (16) TRT.
- HUDSONIAN GODWIT** -- 10/29 (14) all on one small pond, s.w. Yankton Co., WH.
- SANDERLING** -- 8/31 (5), 9/3 (3) Deuel Co., BKH; 9/23 (1) Gavin's Pt., WH.
- American Avocet** -- 8/2 LaCreek N.W.R. (19) TRT; 9/2 Angostura Res. (7) JLM.
- Wilson's Phalarope** -- None reported!
- Northern Phalarope** -- Exceptional flight in Deuel Co., 8/23 (70) Clear L., 8/29 (50) Lone Tree L., 9/10 (36) Clear L., BKH.

### GULLS, TERNS, CUCKOOS

- Herring Gull** -- Peak: 11/24 (25) Missouri R., Yankton Co., JW. Other reports from Gavin's Pt., WH, and Buffalo Co., NRW.
- Ring-billed Gull** -- Late dates: 11/28 (136) Gavin's Pt., WH; 11/23 (1) Grant Co., BKH; 11/21 (1) Day Co., MHP. Unusual concentrations in northeast counties, with (25-50) in six locations in Deuel and Roberts Counties on 11/6 and (150) in Deuel on 11/8. Reports also from Lake, Fall River, Meade, Lawrence, Buffalo, and Grant Counties.
- Franklin's Gull** -- 8/27 Angostura Res. (500) JLM; 9/5 Lake Co. (4) RB; 9/23 (2), 10/6 estimate (50,000) roosting on waters of Lewis and Clark L. just above Gavin's Pt. Dam, birds observed from boat in late evening, 10/19 Gavin's Pt., WH, JW; 10/2 Bon Homme Co. (2000) JW; 9/30 estimate (5000) in Spink Co., fair numbers in Deuel Co. during period, late date 10/23, BKH.
- BONAPARTE'S GULL** -- 8/14 to 11/8 (11 total) in Deuel Co., BKH; 10/18 (9), 11/16 (19), 11/21 (2) Gavin's Pt., WH.
- Forster's Tern** -- 8/2 LaCreek N.W.R. (189) TRT; 8/4 (2), 8/27 (4), 9/23 (16) Gavin's Pt. WH; 8/22 s. Brookings Co. (1) NJH.
- Black Tern** -- Late date: 10/2 Yankton Co. (2) WH. Peak date: 8/17 LaCreek N.W.R. (275) TRT. Reports from Brookings and Deuel Counties.
- Mourning Dove** -- 10/15 Yankton Co. (20) WH; 10/29 Lyman Co. (10) RLH; 11/17 Waubay N.W.R. (1) MHP; 11/22 (4), 11/17 (1) Gregory Co., GLS.

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo** -- 8/6 Pierre (1) RLH; 9/4 Yankton Co. (1) WH.

**Black-billed Cuckoo** -- 8/4 (2), 8/21 (1), 9/4 (1) Yankton Co., WH.

### OWLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

- Screech Owl** -- Reports from Hughes, Brookings, and Gregory Counties.
- Great Horned Owl** -- Present in all areas.
- Snowy Owl** -- None reported for the period.
- Burrowing Owl** -- 8/31 s.w. Meade Co. (3) NRW; 9/5 (4) in prairie dog town, Hyde Co., JH.
- Long-eared Owl** -- 10/15 Hyde Co. (1) JH; 10/19 Roberts Co. (1) BKH.
- Short-eared Owl** -- Deuel, Penn., and Hughes Counties.
- Whip-poor-will** -- 8/25 (1) heard calling at dusk, n. Hyde Co., Mrs. Ziltener (fide JH).
- Common Nighthawk** -- 9/7 Rapid City (15) NRW; 9/17 Burke L. (7) GLS; 9/22 Brookings (1) CAT.
- Chimney Swift** -- 8/30 (38), 10/3 (4) Yankton, WH; 9/16 last date at Brookings, CAT.
- White-throated Swift** -- 9/3 Penn. Co. (10) NRW.
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird** -- Reports from Brookings, Gregory, and Hyde Counties.
- Archilochus, sp.** -- 8/19 to 8/21 Rapid City (1) in yard that was either Ruby-throated or Black-chinned. Both would be good records for the area -- particularly the Black-chinned. NRW.
- Hummingbird, sp.** -- 8/1 to 9/9 Rapid city (7 total) AMB, GRB, EAS.
- Belted Kingfisher** -- Reports from Perkins, Gregory, and Yankton Counties, and from four Black Hills counties.
- Common Flicker** -- 11/29 (1) male Yellow-shafted and (1) male Red-shafted, both in same tree, Burke L., GLS; good flight in late Sept. and early Oct., Belle Fourche, IW; reports also from Yankton and Hyde Counties, and four Black Hills counties.
- Red-bellied Woodpecker** -- Reports from Yankton and Clay Counties.
- Red-headed Woodpecker** -- Late date: 10/20 Gregory Co. (1) GLS; reports from Fall River, Yankton, Brookings, Bon Homme, and Hughes Counties.
- Lewis' Woodpecker** -- Observed in Lawrence and Meade Counties, VBW, EEM, JLM, EMS.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** -- Brookings: 11/20 (1) CAT, 9/6 (1) GF; Yankton: 10/22 (1) JW; Rapid City: 9/18 (1) banded TMH.
- Hairy Woodpecker** -- One to three pairs present at most feeders.
- Downy Woodpecker** -- One to four pairs present at most feeders.

### FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS

- Eastern Kingbird** -- 8/26 (30), 9/4 (5), 9/17 (1) Burke L., GLS; 9/2 Hyde Co. (1) JH; late date and unusual number: 9/27 (11) Gavin's pt., WH.
- Western Kingbird** -- 9/3 Hyde Co. (2) JH; 9/4 Burke L. (1) GLS; 9/19 Yankton (1) WH.
- Great Crested Flycatcher** -- Observed in Hughes, Yankton, Bon Homme, and Brookings Counties, RLH, WH, CAT.
- Eastern Phoebe** -- 8/23 Brookings (1) CAT; 9/2 Yankton Co. (1) WH.

**Say's Phoebe** -- 9/18 Rapid City (1) BLG; 9/21, 22 Perkins Co. (1) roosted in barn, AH.

**Willow Flycatcher** -- 8/24 to 9/28 Hyde Co. (7 total) JH.

**Western Flycatcher** -- 8/13 Rapid City (1) GRB.

**Eastern Wood Pewee** -- 8/14 (1), 8/26 (2) Hyde Co., JH; late date: 10/2 Brown Co. (1) HLS, EM.

**Western Wood Pewee** -- 9/14 Bear Butte L. (1) NRW.

**Horned Lark** -- Present in good numbers in most West River counties, but not seen in large numbers unless snow cover forced them to roadsides.

**Tree Swallow** -- 10/9 Yankton Co. (7) WH.

**Rough-winged Swallow** -- 8/25 (13), 10/12 (3) Yankton Co., WH.

**Barn Swallow** -- Late dates: 10/9 Gavin's Pt. (2) WH; 9/30 Brookings Co. (2) NJH. September from Lake, Hyde, Gregory, and Clay Counties.

**Purple Martin** -- Last dates: 8/28 Brookings, GF, and 8/29 Burke, GLS. Most birds departed in the first two weeks of August.

#### JAYS THROUGH WRENS

**Gray Jay** -- 8/12 Rapid City (2) AMB; 11/11 Custer Co. (3) JLM, EMS; 11/12 Lawrence Co. (3) EEM.

**Blue Jay** -- Some conspicuous movements, more than usual. 9/10 Gavin's Pt. (43) WH; 9/21 Perkins Co. (9) in yard, AH; 9/24 Deuel Co. (flock of 20) BKH; 9/24 Hyde Co. (flock of 12) JH; 10/11 Belle Fourche (7) daily at feeder, IW.

**Black-billed Magpie** -- Reports from five Black Hills counties and Gavin's Pt.

**Common Crow** -- Peak dates: 10/1, 2 Stanley Co. (460 total) BKH; 10/5 to 10/12 Lyman Co. (1050 total) WCT; 10/6 to 10/20 Gregory Co. (3600 total) GLS. Other reports: 9/2 to 11/11 (105 total) in five Black Hills counties, BHAS; 10/6 Deuel Co. (30) BKH; 11/28 Gavin's Pt. (24) WH; 11/29 Brookings (100) NJH.

**Black-capped Chickadee** -- Two to twelve present at most feeders over the state.

**White-breasted Nuthatch** -- Pair present at most feeders. Scarce in Black Hills.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch** -- Early date: 9/1 Hyde Co., with total of (7) between 9/1 and 10/4, JH. Good flight year. 8/13 to 11/13 (21 total) in four Black Hills counties, BHAS; 10/2 Reliance (2) WCT; 10/4 Brookings (1) CAT, CP; Yankton Co. (1) on 10/2, 10/14, 11/27, WH; 10/17 s. Brookings Co. (1) NJH; 10/30 Burke L. (5) GLS; 11/23 Grant Co. (1) BKH.

**Pygmy Nuthatch** -- 10/14 (4), 10/21 (1) Piedmont, Meade Co., DAD.

**Brown Creeper** -- Oct. and Nov. records from Penn., Lyman, Hyde, Yankton, Brookings, Day, and Gregory Counties.

**Dipper** -- 8/13 Spearfish Canyon, Lawrence Co. (3) NRW.

**House Wren** -- Late dates: 10/9 Gregory Co. (1) GLS and 10/4 Hyde Co. (1) JH. (8) banded in Brookings Co., NJH. Reports also from Yankton, Clay, and Penn. Counties.

**Winter Wren** -- 10/6 Deuel Co. (1) BKH.

**Long-billed Marsh Wren** -- 8/4 Yankton Co. (4) WH; 10/15 Lyman Co. (1) RLH.

**Canyon Wren** -- 8/21 (2), 9/30 (2), 10/21 (1) Rapid City, DHK, DSM.

**Rock Wren** -- 8/30 Rapid City (1) LAW.

#### MIMIDS, THRUSHES, SHRIKES

**Gray Catbird** -- Late date: 10/2 Yankton Co. (9) WH, and Gregory Co. (1) GLS. Reports from Penn., Hyde, and Perkins Counties. None during period in s. Brookings Co., NJH.

**Brown Thrasher** -- Late dates: 11/10 Yankton (1) WH, and 10/30 Rapid City (1) NRW. Reports also from Hyde, Butte, Gregory, and Brookings Counties.

**American Robin** -- 9/23 Belle Fourche (100) IW; 10/14 Lake Co. (150) RB; 11/7 (250), 11/23 (300) Burke L., GLS; 11/13 near Spearfish (300) JLM, EMS; 11/19 Gavin's Pt. (453) WH.

**Hermit Thrush** -- 9/5 Rapid City (1) GRB; (1) on 10/4 and 10/23 Brookings, CAT.

**Swainson's Thrush** -- 9/1 to 9/14 (5 total) Hyde Co., JH; 9/10 Brookings Co. (1) NJH; 9/10 Burke (1) only sighting all fall, GLS.

**Eastern Bluebird** -- Late Date: 11/19 Yankton, WH. Reports from Gregory, Bon Homme, Brown, and Brookings Counties.

**Mountain Bluebird** -- 9/17 Harding Co. (25) RLH; 10/10 LaCreek N.W.R. (15) RAW; 10/13 n. Brookings Co. (1) KH; 10/16 Hot Springs (4) LY.

**Townsend's Solitaire** -- 9/17 Slim Buttes, Harding Co. (30) RLH (a good record. - BKH); 8/16 Belle Fourche (2) IW; 9/22 Hyde Co. (1) good view with binocular and nearby for 20 minutes. JH; 9/26 Badlands (3) RAW.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet** -- Late date and unusual number: 11/6 Burke (12) GLS; (3) each observed in Penn. and Custer Counties, NRW. None reported from other areas.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet** -- 9/4 (early date) to 10/14 Hyde Co. (17 total) JH; reports also from Clay, Hughes, and Yankton Counties.

**Water Pipit** -- 9/28 (50) Rapid Valley, Penn. Co., 10/2 (1) e. Lawrence Co., JLM, EMS; 10/10 LaCreek N.W.R., RAW.

**Bohemian Waxwing** -- 11/6 Lawrence Co. (75) EEM; 11/13 Spearfish (12) EMS; 11/16 Perkins Co. (64) in yard, AH; 11/29 Deuel Co. (6) BKH.

**Cedar Waxwing** -- Observed in Penn., Hyde, Butte, Yankton, Brookings, Clay, and Gregory Counties.

**Northern Shrike** -- Early date: 10/15 Deuel Co., BKH. Reports also from Custer, Meade, Gregory, Penn., Yankton, and Hughes Counties.

**Loggerhead Shrike** -- Only two reports: Penn. Co. (2) JLM, EMS, and Gregory Co. (3) GLS.

#### VIREOS, WARBLERS

**Solitary Vireo** -- 9/4 Rapid City (2) NRW.

**Red-eyed Vireo** -- 8/6 Pierre (4) RLH; 9/4 Rapid City (1) NRW.

**Philadelphia Vireo** -- 9/18 Deuel Co. (1) BKH.

**Verbling Vireo** -- Reports from Hyde, Brookings, and Yankton Counties.

**Black-and-white Warbler** -- Late date: 10/2 Farm Island, Pierre (1) RLH; reports also from Hyde, Yankton, and Penn. Counties.

**Tennessee Warbler** -- 8/16, 8/25 (1) Rapid City, NRW, LAW.

**Orange-crowned Warbler** -- Last date: 10/16 in Gregory and Meade Counties. GLS, JLM. Peak dates: 9/29 Rapid City (25) JLM, EMS; 10/2 Hyde Co. (15) JH, and Spearfish (13) JLM, EMS. Reports also from Gavin's Pt. and Brookings.

**Nashville Warbler** -- 9/17 n. Moody Co. (1) LW; 9/18, 20 Brookings (1) CAT.

**Yellow Warbler** -- Reports from Hughes, Penn., Yankton, and Hyde Counties.

**Magnolia Warbler** -- 8/15, 23 Brookings (1) CAT.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler** -- A poor year for this species. Late date: 11/22 Black Hills area, BHAS. Very low numbers in Hyde (only 14 for period) and Deuel Counties, JH, BKH. Reports also from Yankton, Brookings, Clay, Gregory, and Hughes Counties.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler** -- 8/23 Yankton (1) JW.

**Bay-breasted Warbler** -- 9/14 (1) Clear Lake, 9/15 (1) Brookings, BKH.

**Palm Warbler** -- 8/24 (1), 9/22 (1) Hyde Co., JH.

**Ovenbird** -- Late date: 10/29, 30 Hyde Co. (1) JH, plus (3) others during period; 9/7 Brookings (1) NJH.

**Northern Waterthrush** -- 8/27 Rapid City (1) NRW; 8/28 Hyde Co. (1) JH.

**Mourning Warbler** -- 8/30 Hyde Co. (1) JH.

**MacGillivray's Warbler** -- 8/13 Penn. Co. (1) NRW; 9/11 Penn. Co. (1) JLM.

**Common Yellowthroat** -- Last dates: 9/25 Brookings, CAT; 9/24 Rapid City, JLM; 9/22 Hyde Co., JH.

**Yellow-breasted Chat** -- 9/4 Hyde Co. (1) JH.

**Wilson's Warbler** -- Late date: 10/9 Brookings (1) CAT. Reports also from Penn., Hyde, Yankton, Hughes, and Gregory Counties.

**Canada Warbler** -- 8/27 Gavin's pt. (1) WH; 9/24 Brookings (2) CAT.

**American Redstart** -- Reports from Hyde, Brookings, Penn., and Hughes Counties.

#### ICTERIDS

**Bobolink** -- 8/22 Brookings Co., flock of (8) NJH.

**Western Meadowlark** -- Common in most areas until snow and cold of early November.

**Yellow-headed Blackbird** -- Late date: 11/1 Burke (1) GLS. 8/22 Lyman Co., concentration of (500) WCT. Reports from Hyde, Lake, and Penn. Counties.

**Red-winged Blackbird** -- Large flocks in most areas early in period, gradually decreasing in numbers by early November.

**Orchard Oriole** -- Reports from Yankton, Brookings, Hyde, Fall River, and Penn. Counties. Last dates in last week of Aug. and first week of Sept.

**Northern Oriole** -- Reports from Yankton, Hyde, and Gregory Counties.

**Rusty Blackbird** -- Early: 9/14 Meade Co., NRW; reports from Campbell, Gregory, Hyde, and Moody Counties. Flocks of (200) and (80) in Yankton Co., WH.

**Brewer's Blackbird** -- 9/12 Meade Co. (12) JLM; 10/15 Yankton Co. (1) WH.

**Common Grackle** -- Late: 11/30 Brookings (1) CP; Nov. records also from Clay, Yankton, and Deuel Counties.

**Brown-headed Cowbird** -- 9/2 Yankton Co. (15) WH; 10/22 Deuel Co. (37) in one flock, BKH.

**Western Tanager** -- 8/4 to 10/1 (36 total) Penn. Co., 9/2 (1) Angostura Res., BHAS; 8/29 Brookings Co. (1 imm.) banded, NJH.

#### FINCHES, SPARROWS

**Cardinal** -- Reports from Tripp, Brookings, Clay, Yankton Counties.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak** -- Late date: 9/10 Gavin's Pt. (2) WH. August records reported from Penn., Gregory, and Brookings Counties.

**Black-headed Grosbeak** -- Reports from Hughes, Perkins, Butte, and Penn. Counties.

**Blue Grosbeak** -- 8/5 (1 pr.) Burke, GLS; 8/21 (3), 9/4 (1) Yankton Co., WH.

**Indigo Bunting** -- 9/4 Yankton (2) JW.

**Dickcissel** -- 9/4 Yankton Co. (1) WH.

**Evening Grosbeak** -- Good distribution and numbers. 11/13 Spearfish (100) JLM, EMS; 11/15 Penn. Co. (150) CLG; reports also from Meade, Butte, Deuel, Gregory, Day, Brookings, and Yankton Counties.

**Purple Finch** -- Early date: 9/10 Brookings Co. (1) NJH. Some flocks of (12 to 20) were listed in the reports from Hyde, Gregory, Deuel, Moody, Yankton, Day, Lawrence, and Penn. Counties.

**PINE GROSBEEK** -- 11/27 Gavin's pt. (1) WH, JW. Photographed.

**Gray-crowned Rosy Finch** -- 10/19 Rapid City (1) Kovarik (fide EMS); 11/11 Hill City, Penn. Co. (150), Stockade L., Custer Co. (50) JLM, EMS; 11/17 Badlands (100) RAW.

**Common Redpoll** -- A redpoll year. Early date: 10/17 Deuel Co., also observed in flocks of (50-100) through the period, BKH. 10/21 Day Co. (1) MHP; 11/6 Belle Fourche (20) IW; 11/25 Burke L. (3) GLS.

**Pine Siskin** -- Good flight indicated. Early dates: 9/12 Brookings (2) NJH; 10/9 Deuel Co., BKH, and Yankton Co. (2) WH; 10/10 Gregory Co. (50) GLS. Several flocks of (25-50) in Gregory and Deuel Counties during period, and (75) at Angostura Res. on 11/11, JLM, EMS. (50) banded at Burke L., GLS. Reports also from Penn., Lawrence, and Meade Counties.

**American Goldfinch** -- Reports from Penn., Brookings, Yankton, Hyde, and Gregory Counties. None in Deuel Co., BKH.

**Red Crossbill** -- Reports from Penn. and Gregory Counties.

**WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL** -- Early: 10/17 Brookings Co., where there were also (30) on 11/15, and where (6) were banded in Nov., NJH. 11/13 three flocks of (20-25) in Brookings, Deuel, and Grant Counties, BKH.

**Rufous-sided Towhee** -- More records than usual. Late date: 11/14 after blizzard, Deuel Co. (1) minus tail, BKH. 9/6 Belle Fourche (20) IW. Reports also from Gregory, Hyde, Yankton, Hughes, Penn., Brookings, and Clay Counties.

**Lark Bunting** -- 8/24 Deuel Co. (4) BKH; 8/28 s.w. Yankton Co. (2) WH; 9/5 flock of (10) Burke, GLS; 9/25 e. Penn. Co. (2) JLM.

**Savannah Sparrow** -- 9/19 to 10/25 Yankton Co. (21 total) WH; 9/20 (20) good flight in Deuel Co., BKH.

**Grasshopper Sparrow** -- 8/6 Meade Co. (3) JLM.

**Vesper Sparrow** -- Late: 10/17 Deuel Co., BKH, and 10/15 Yankton Co., WH. Good flight, with (55) near Spearfish on 10/3, JLM, EMS. Also observed in Penn. Co.

**Lark Sparrow** -- 9/25 e. Penn. Co. (2) JLM.

**Dark-eyed Junco (Wh.-winged)** -- 9/18 first date in Rapid City, with daily increase through period, BLG.

**Dark-eyed Junco (Sl.-col.)** -- Good flight. Early: 9/20 Brookings Co., where (50) were banded during period, NJH. Gregory Co., (110) banded during period, GLS. Peak: 10/14 Yankton Co. (60) WH. Reports also from Hyde, Hughes, and Butte Counties.

**Tree Sparrow** -- Early: 10/10 Deuel Co., with good numbers during period, BKH, Peak: 10/21 Lyman Co. (50) WCT, 11/1 Yankton Co. (80) WH. Fewer numbers in Gregory Co., GLS. Reports also from Hyde, Brookings, Penn., and Butte Counties.

**Chipping Sparrow** -- Late: 10/25 Yankton Co. (1) WH. Peak: 10/2 Lawrence Co. (50) JLM, EMS. (12) banded in Brookings Co., NJH.

**Clay-colored Sparrow** -- Peak: 9/18 Rapid City, BLG. None in Brookings Co., NJH; a few in Hyde Co., JH.

**Field Sparrow** -- Late: 10/15 Yankton Co., WH. Peak: 8/22 Rapid City (20) LAW. 8/29 Brookings (1) banded, NJH.

**Harris' Sparrow** -- Earliest: 9/22 Hyde Co., 9/30 Rapid City, 10/1 Pierre. Peak dates: 10/15 Gregory Co., 10/20 Lyman Co., 10/25 Yankton Co. (95) WH, 10/25 Belle Fourche (30) IW. In Brookings Co., banding records showed that numbers were low, and the peak occurred in Nov. instead of Oct.

**White-crowned Sparrow** -- None reported from eastern So. Dakota. 9/12 to 10/22 Rapid City (18 total), 10/2 Lawrence Co. (15) JLM, EMS; 10/4 Belle Fourche (10) IW.

**White-throated Sparrow** -- Early: 9/14 Brookings (4) NJH. Peak date: 10/4 Hyde Co. (30) JH. Reports also from Hughes, Gregory, Penn., and Yankton Counties.

**Fox Sparrow** -- 10/12 Brookings (1) CAT; 10/12 Yankton Co. (2) WH.

**Lincoln's Sparrow** -- Dates ranged from 8/26, Hyde Co., to 10/25, Yankton Co. Reports from Clay, Hughes, Penn., Lawrence, Brookings, and Gregory Counties.

**Song Sparrow** -- Reports from Yankton, Brookings, and Penn. Counties, and Sand Lake N.W.R.

**Lapland Longspur** -- 9/13 first date, common by 10/15, 10/24 (1000) in one flock, very early date and flight, Deuel Co., BKH; common during November, Lyman Co., WCT.

**SMITH'S LONGSPUR** -- 10/14 (6), 10/17 (3), identified by usually seeing white wingbar, but always by buffy underparts and unique call, Deuel Co., BKH.

**Chestnut-collared Longspur** -- 8/31 s.w. Meade Co. (1) NRW.

**Snow Bunting** -- Early date: 10/22 Deuel Co., and large flocks by end of period, BKH; reports also from Day, Brookings, Hyde, and Lake Counties.

## CONTRIBUTORS

### WEST RIVER

Black Hills Audubon Society (BHAS) -- Rapid City, Pennington Co.

Members: Gertrude Bachmann (GRB); Dorothy Borelson (DAB); Adelaide Brodsky (AMB); Violet Brodsky (VLB); Darnelle Dunn (DAD); Norma Eckmann (NJE); Gladys Gannon (GMG); Clay Geyerman (CLG); Bonnie Green (BLG); Tom Hayes (TMH); Doris Knecht (DHK); Dorothy McCulloch (DSM); Jocie Mortimer (JLM); Esther Serr (EMS); Elizabeth Southmayd (EAS); Virgil Van Heuvelen (VBV); N.R. Whitney (NRW); Leota Williamson (LAW); Clara Yarger (CY); Lenord Yarger (LY). (AH) -- Alfred and Gertrice Hinds, west Perkins Co. (EEM) -- Ernest E. Miller, Sturgis, Meade Co. (BMN) -- Barney Nordstrom, Fairburn, e. Custer Co. (GLS) -- Galen L. Steffen, Burke, Gregory Co. (WCT) -- Walter C. Thietje, Reliance, Lyman Co. (TRT) -- Tom R. Tornow, compiler for LaCreek National Wildlife Refuge, Bennett Co. (IW) -- Irma Weyler, Belle Fourche, Butte Co. (RAW) -- Richard A. Wilt, Badlands National Monument, Jackson Co., and LaCreek N.W.R.

### EAST RIVER

(RB) -- Robert Buckman, Madison, Lake Co. (GF) -- Gladyce Froiland, Brookings (WH) -- Willis and Rosamond Hall, Yankton -- Yankton, Bon Homme, and Clay Counties. (BKH) -- Bruce K. Harris, Clear Lake -- Deuel, Grant, and Roberts Counties. (JH) -- June Harter, Highmore, Hyde Co. (RLH) -- Richard L. Hill, Pierre, Hughes Co. (NJH) -- Nelda Holden, s. Brookings Co. (KJH) -- Karolyn J. Hoover, s. Clay Co. (KH) -- Kenneth Husmann, Brookings (EM) -- Everett Montgomery, Aberdeen, Brown Co. (CP) -- Carol Peterson, Brookings (HLS) -- H. Schweigert, Brown Co. (CAT) -- Charles A. Taylor, Brookings (LW) -- Lois Wells, n. Moody Co. (JW) -- Juli Wilcox, Yankton (RLW) -- Robert L. Wright, Brown Co. (RRJ, MHP, DSW) -- Robert R. Johnson, Mgr.; Mike H. Phillips and David S. Wiseman, Waubay National Wildlife Refuge, Day Co.





## General Notes of Special Interest

NEST RECORD FOR AMERICAN WOODCOCK IN MARSHALL COUNTY - On May 26, 1977, I found an adult American Woodcock with two young chicks in Sica Hollow. The chicks were nearly totally feathered, with the exception of their wing feathers. It was raining that day, which made it a poor day for photography, but my snapshots do show that the birds were located in heavily wooded cover, and well camouflaged. There is no doubt in my mind that the birds were Woodcocks, as opposed to Common Snipe, simply by their location, their darker coloration, and the shorter neck and short legs of the adult in flight. - Rick Collignon, Dept. of Game, Fish and Parks.

★ ★ ★

ARCHILOCHUS SPECIES OBSERVED AT RAPID CITY - On August 19, 20, and 21, 1977, I closely watched a single hummingbird, sometimes at a distance of only two or three feet, as it fed at *Gilia* blossoms adjacent to our west deck. I noted carefully its generally green dorsal and white ventral plumage, the white throat (absence of gorget, presumably ruling out an adult male), and the absence of any rusty in the tail. Comparing it with Peterson's color plate (*Guide to Western Birds*, plate 39, p. 166; and *World of Birds*, p. 161), the three species already known from the Hills, Broad-tailed, Rufous, and Calliope, all have rufous in the tail. Ruby-throated (*Archilochus colubris*) and Black-chinned (*Archilochus alexandri*) do not, but without the gorget, they are not safely separable. No other hummingbirds are likely in the Black Hills. - N.R. Whitney, Jr., Rapid City.

★ ★ ★

FALL RECORD FOR BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER IN DEUEL COUNTY - On August 18, 1977, I observed a Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites*

*subruficollis*) at the sewage ponds at Clear Lake, Deuel County. The bird was associated with Killdeer, Baird's Sandpipers, and Semipalmated Sandpipers, but it stayed apart from those species during the time I watched it. Light conditions were ideal, and I studied the bird carefully for about fifteen minutes, with binoculars and a 20 power scope.

This apparently is the first fall record for the Buff-breasted Sandpiper in South Dakota; all the previous records, about nine, occurred in May. I have observed the species in this state on four occasions, on dates ranging from May 16 through May 19. In fact, all prior South Dakota dates for the bird are clustered in this same period, suggesting a remarkably steady migration pattern through South Dakota during the third week in May. I took a specimen in Miner County on May 18, 1967 (*Condor*, April 1970).

The lack of fall records for the Buff-breasted Sandpiper is particularly interesting since the species' migration in western Minnesota is considered to be more common in the fall than it is in the spring (*Minnesota Birds*, Green and Janssen, p. 92). For more information on the migration of this rare species in the plains states, refer to *Wilson Bulletin*, Vol. 6:34.

On only one occasion have I found this sandpiper migrating with flocks of American Golden Plover, although it obviously comes into the state during the same period that the plover is most common in South Dakota. - Bruce K. Harris, Clear Lake.

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SAW-WHET OWL IN CODINGTON COUNTY - In March, 1977, while I was working at the Game, Fish and Parks Department booth at the Watertown Sportsmen's Show, two men mentioned to

Conservation Officer Dave Wicks that there was a small, pretty little owl roosting in a building in Watertown. Knowing of my interest in birds, Wicks brought the fellows over to talk to me. When they emphasized that the bird was small, without ear tufts, I was interested, but not optimistic that it would be anything other than a Screech Owl. For some years I had been checking out all road kills and reports of small owls, hoping to find a Saw-whet Owl, a species I had never definitely identified in the field.

The two men, Roger Woods and Darwin Rindels, had been razing an old elevator adjacent to the building where the little owl was discovered. They first observed it on March 15, 1977. On March 18, I went to the building with the men and was pleased to find a Saw-whet Owl perching on the steel beams near the roof. It was easily observed because of its tameness, a characteristic of the species, although we used a flashlight to study the bird more closely in the poor light.

Fortunately, Roger Woods, an amateur photographer, had his camera and equipment with him and was able to get several excellent color slides of the bird.

Although the Saw-whet Owl is probably a regular summer resident in heavy woodlands in the state, it is seldom reported. We have only six definite records for this interesting little bird, and another five or six unconfirmed reports. Among the latter are two which I have for Roberts County, without definite dates. During late May or June of 1939 or 1940, near our cottage at Sodak Park, Big Stone Lake, a bird was heard calling on a moonlit night and was assumed to be this species – the “song” was exactly as is described in the literature for the Saw-whet Owl. I decided at the time that it was this bird singing, but I was not then sufficiently knowledgeable about birds to make special note on it. But that eerie, tremulous call I heard outside the window still remains in my mind quite vividly. We always had Screech Owls about the cottage in those days – they are now uncommon – and I did

not confuse the song of the Saw-whet with that of the Screech Owl. It was entirely different and more musical.

My second Roberts County record occurred about 1941 or 1942. I believe it was in May, which would also suggest a breeding record for the bird. A friend, the late Homer Dusing, and I were knocking about in a scattered cottonwood grove along Whetstone Creek, just north of Wilmot. We pushed a cottonwood stub, some fifteen feet tall, to the ground, and in the debris under the tree Homer found a small owl, evidently stunned by the impact. When my friend picked up the bird, we realized that it was not a Screech Owl. I remember the incident well because we both agreed that the bird was small and colorful. But my friend had even more reason to recall the event – he lost some blood before we could pry the little owl's claws from his gloved hand. The bird was unhurt, and we released it at the same location. – Bruce K. Harris, Clear Lake.

#### **BANDING REPORT FROM BURKE**

The list below gives the 26 bird species, totaling 695 individuals, that I banded in the Burke area in 1977.

Again, emphasis was on the nestling Purple Martins. During June and July, with the much appreciated assistance of Don Wilson, Burke, a total of 188 nestling martins were banded with a red plastic band on the right leg and the numbered metal band on the left leg.

Approximately six color-banded martins from the 1976 total of 132 returned to Burke in 1977. Individuals were seen regularly at several colonies during the summer. Their yellow leg bands (used in 1976) made it easy to find the birds with a binocular, and to observe their behavior. They were not seen attempting to mate or to nest. I caught one of the color-marked individuals in a mist net on June 6, 1977. At this writing, I have received two reports of recoveries of color-banded martins.

In 1977, the Bird Banding Laboratory sent reports of seven recoveries and one retrap of birds I banded at Burke in the past three years.

SOUTH DAKOTA BIRD NOTES

SPECIES	TOTAL
Killdeer	2
Mourning Dove	83
Common Flicker (Yel.-sh.)	1
Horned Lark	1
Barn Swallow	22
Purple Martin	190
Blue Jay	4
Black-capped Chickadee	14
White-breasted Nuthatch	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	6
House Wren	2
Brown Thrasher	4
American Robin	34
Swainson's Thrush	1
Wilson's Warbler	1
Red-winged Blackbird	6
Common Grackle	68
Brown-headed Cowbird	2
Northern Oriole (Balt.)	2
Evening Grosbeak	1
Pine Siskin	58
Dark-eyed Junco (Sl.-col.)	143
Tree Sparrow	41
Chipping Sparrow	3
Harris' Sparrow	3
Lincoln's Sparrow	1

### RECOVERIES AND A RETRAP

- Mourning Dove (imm.) -- banded 7/3/76, recovered 9/24/76 Devine, Texas, killed by cat.
- Mourning Dove (imm.) -- banded 7/4/76, recovered 10/12/77 Hunt, Texas, shot.
- Mourning Dove (imm.) -- banded 7/25/76, recovered 3/8/77 Zapotlanejo, Mexico, shot.
- Mourning Dove (imm.) -- banded 8/1/76, recovered 11/27/76 Tipitapa, Nicaragua, shot.
- Purple Martin (nestling) -- banded 7/5/76, recovered 7/9/77 Platte, S.D., found dead.
- Purple Martin (nestling) -- banded 6/21/77, recovered 7/23/77 Pierre, S.D., found dying.
- Am. Robin (imm.) -- banded 8/5/75,

recovered 7/5/77 Burke, S.D., found dead.

Dark-eyed Junco (age unknown) -- banded 10/5/75, retrapped 4/8/77 Indian Hills, Colorado, and released.

- Galen L. Steffen, Burke.

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### WHOOPIING CRANES: TWO OBSERVATIONS (Continued from page 5)

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In the afternoon, John Koerner and Sowards returned to the site to make casts of the crane tracks. The width of the tracks was approximately 7 5/8 inches and the heel-to-toe measurement was a little over six inches.

The responses of the cranes to stopped or moving cars indicate that a buffer zone of 600 yards appears to be acceptable for stopped cars. The birds evinced little interest in moving cars at a distance of 500 yards, but they raised their heads and then moved farther away when we stopped our car approximately 475 yards from them.

An additional observation of five Whooping Cranes was made by Robert Riter, Pierre. On November 6, 1977, at a location 20 miles south of the dam-dugout site of November 5, he saw five cranes flying northward at about 11:30 a.m. The Pierre Municipal Airport records show that it was 2:00 a.m. on November 7 when the south winds that had prevailed for several days finally turned to a westerly direction. This observation suggests that the Whooping Cranes may not have left the area until Monday, November 7, when the wind shift favored continued southward movement.

(A report received from R.V. Summer-side stated that he and several other observers from Pierre viewed the five Whooping Cranes on November 4, at the site designated in the above account. The other observers were Augusta Eklund, Enid Hyde, Carla Sahr, Grace Summer-side, Patsy Kringel, Floramay Miller, Helen Donnan, and Rex Riis. -- Ed.)

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Mr. & Mrs. Wesley Halbritter  
112 West 42nd  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105

# 1978 Spring Meeting

Registration and most of the social functions will be at the headquarters of the Samuel H. Ordway Memorial Prairie located nine miles west of Leola, South Dakota.

## *Friday Evening, May 19*

A social evening and registration will begin about 7:00 p.m. Dr. David J. Holden will present a slide show entitled "Our Prairie Heritage," an offering of The Nature Conservancy, which will be meeting with us.

## *Saturday, May 20*

Field trips all day. At the evening banquet at Leola, John T. Lokemonen and Harold Deubbert of the Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center at Jamestown, North Dakota, will present an illustrated talk entitled "Distribution and Densities of Waterfowl and Shorebird Nests on an Island in Miller Lake."

## *Sunday, May 21*

Field trips in the morning. Luncheon and species check-off at noon.

## *Accommodations*

Campers may be parked at the headquarters site, and good camping facilities are located at the Leola park. There is also the Zulk Hotel at Leola, a modern motel at Eureka, and numerous accommodations at Aberdeen.