# South Dakota Bird Notes

Vol. 32 June 1980 No. 2

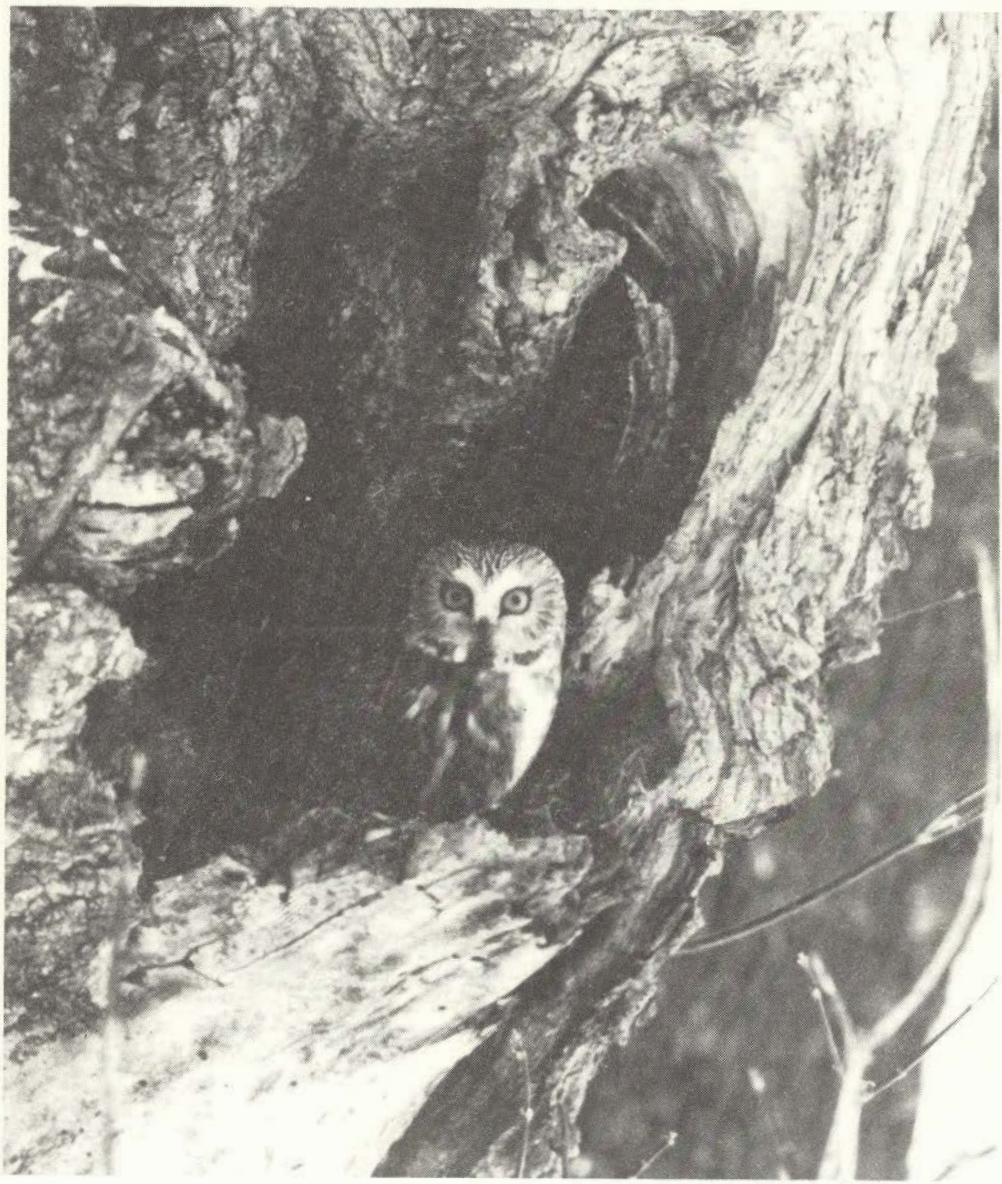

Photo: Steve Archer

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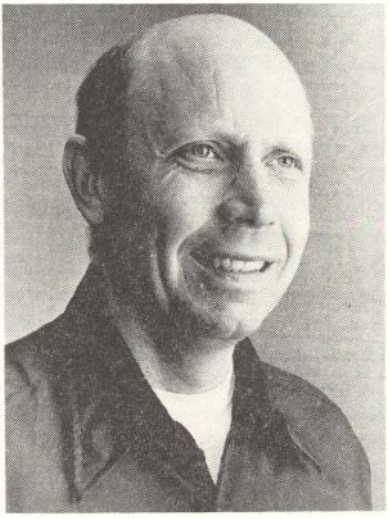

# PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Molt is a notable feature of bird biology. Feathers, once they are fully formed, are nonliving structures subject to deterioration because they have no mechanism for repair. A periodic loss of the old feathers and replacement with new ones is essential. The loss and replacement of plumage is called molt. The seasonal molt of feather tracts occurs in a very definite sequence; it is not haphazard.

Birds go through a series of plumages and molts from hatching on through adulthood. The number of plumages that the adults acquire varies with different species. Altricial birds hatch either naked or in a natal plumage consisting of only a few tufts of down feathers. But precocial young have a well developed natal plumage that covers the entire body.

Natal plumage is lost at the postnatal molt and replaced by the juvenile plumage. Juvenile plumage is characteristic of most fledglings. Often the downy remnants of the natal plumage adhere to the tips of the juvenile feathers. After several weeks, the juvenile plumage is either completely or partially lost by the postjuvenile molt and replaced by the first winter plumage. Depending on the species, this winter plumage usually is acquired in late summer or autumn and retained either until the succeeding spring or for the next 12 months.

In some birds the first winter plumage is indistinguishable from the adult plumage. In most cases, however, the two plumages differ. The first winter plumage in most species is lost by the first prenuptial molt and is replaced with the first nuptial plumage. This nuptial plumage is lost by the first postnuptial molt and is replaced with the second winter plumage. In the vast majority of species, the second winter plumage looks like the adult.

Many North American birds have marked differences between their winter and nuptial plumages. A rather unusual situation occurs in the timing of molt for some male ducks. After the breeding season, the postnuptial molt results in the male's obtaining a rather drab appearance referred to as eclipse plumage. While this molt is in progress, the flight feathers of the wings are shed so rapidly that, for a time, the birds are incapable of flight. During this vulnerable period, the males are very inconspicuous, spending their time in dense cover. As soon as the flight feathers grow back, the male undergoes a second molt of body feathers. This last molt corresponds to the prenuptial molt of other species but it occurs in the fall. Thus, by late autumn or early winter, the males are in full breeding plumage. This unique molt sequence probably is correlated with the early pairing that occurs in the fall and early winter among many species of ducks. **Robert Buckman, Madison 57042.**

## UNPRECEDENTED NUMBERS OF SHORT-EARED OWLS IN NORTHEASTERN SOUTH DAKOTA DURING THE 1978 BREEDING SEASON

by Bruce Harris

Clear Lake 57226

Since at least 1966, the Short-eared Owl has been considered a rare breeding bird in the northeastern counties of South Dakota. This statement would probably hold true for all of eastern South Dakota, with the possible exception of the northcentral counties, where the species could be considered uncommon. This evaluation is based on my personal experience with the Short-eared Owl in an eight-county area centered around Sanborn County (1966-1970) and in Deuel, Grant, and Roberts Co. (1970-1979). These conclusions are bolstered by field data (or, rather, a lack of data) reported in *South Dakota Bird Notes* by other observers in the state.

I recorded an "invasion" population of Short-eared Owls during the 1978 breeding season (27 sightings in seven counties) (Table 1). Although only one nest was definitely verified (four other reported nestings seemed authentic but could not be confirmed), undoubtedly many broods fledged during the summer, judging from the occurrence of owls throughout the breeding season. The scarcity of sight records from Day, Brown, Codington, and Brookings Co., compared with the numerous records from Deuel, Grant, and Roberts Co., is more likely a result of limited field work in those former areas than from an actual scarcity of owls. Considering the availability of adequate nesting habitat in all counties during the summer of 1978, I believe that Short-eared Owls were widespread throughout the northeast in numbers similar to those observed in Deuel Co., where I was constantly in the field during the season.

Apparently no build up of owls occurred in the northeast during the winter of 1977-1978. Four Short-eared Owls were reported on the 1977 Christmas Bird Count at Wilmot, Roberts Co., and three were observed in a three-mile area of Deuel Co. on 2 December 1977. These numbers were above normal but did not suggest the population explosion that was to follow. Five birds at the School Lake area of Deuel Co. on 9 April 1978 were probably migrants since none had been observed there during the winter. When I found three birds in three areas of Grant Co. on 2 May 1978, I started to check my files and the literature for nesting data because I knew something unusual was occurring.

On 14 May, Thane Wells, a farmer living adjacent to a Game, Fish, and Parks Public Shooting Area (PSA) near Coteau Lake, Deuel Co., reported finding a Short-eared Owl nest. It was in oat stubble, which Mr. Wells was plowing at the time. Wells had plowed around the nest site, leaving the nest and eggs undisturbed. Although an adult owl was present when Mr. Wells first approached the nest, the bird was not in the area when I investigated. The six eggs, however, were intact. The following day the eggs were cold. Since no adults were observed in the area, I assumed the nest had been abandoned.

I was intrigued that the nest was in oat stubble, less than ¼ mile from the Public Shooting Area that contained excellent nesting cover of native grasses and a mixture of alfalfa and brome. The nest was very exposed in the stubble and lacked protective cover. Why did the owl nest in such a vulnerable site, with more than 100 acres of ideal nesting cover nearby? Elsewhere Short-eared Owls have nested in rye and wheat stubble.

Four other Deuel Co. nests were reported late in the season, but I could not verify these sightings. Mr. Leroy Stricherz of Portland Township found three nests in native hay land near his farm along South Dakota Highway 77, on the Grant Co. line. Adult birds were flushed from all three nests on about 20 April, a few days after a five-inch snowfall! The nests contained nine, seven, and five eggs. One nest was only two feet from an active Mallard nest. The fourth nest was reported by Wallace Ronne of Clear Lake. He flushed an owl from a nest around 20 July but did not notice the number of eggs it contained. 20 April and 20 July are extreme dates of nesting for this species but, nevertheless, within the limits

Table 1. Short-eared Owls observed in northeastern South Dakota during the 1978 breeding season.

| county | date | observer |
|---|---|---|
| Deuel Co. | 14 May 1978 (nest & eggs) | Thane Wells & Harris |
| | 30 May 1978 | Harris |
| | 31 May 1978 (3 in 3 areas) | " |
| | 20 June 1978 | " |
| | 25 June 1978 | " |
| | 5 August 1978 | Doug Kreger |
| Grant Co. | 2 May 1978 (3 in 3 areas) | Harris |
| | 5 June 1978 (4 in 4 areas) | " |
| | 3 June, 7 June & | " |
| | 27 June 1978 (assumed to be duplicate sightings) | " |
| Roberts Co. | 6 June 1978 | Harris |
| | 7 June 1978 (2 in 2 areas) | " |
| | 14 June 1978 | " |
| | 22 June 1978 | " |
| | 18 July 1978 (2 in 2 areas) | " |
| Day Co. | 14 June 1978 | Harris |
| | 23 June 1978 | " |
| Brown Co. | 28 June 1978 | Harris |
| Codington Co. | 15 June 1978 (dead on road) | Dave Wicks |
| Brookings Co. | 25 July 1978 | Nelda Holden |

recorded in the literature (4 April-1 August reported by Stewart, *Breeding Birds of North Dakota*).

Prior to 1978, breeding records for Short-eared Owls in eastern South Dakota were rare. While working an eight-county area from Aurora and Jerauld east to McCook and Lake Co. from 1966-1970 (including extensive field work during the five breeding seasons), I recorded Short-eared Owls during only two years, on 21 May 1969 in Brule Co. and 12 June 1969 in Miner Co. On the last date, I followed a food-carrying bird for several miles, until it landed in an alfalfa field. I was unable to find a nest or young in the vicinity. Kent Olson (USF&W) reported a Short-eared Owl in Sanborn Co. during July 1969, as did Kent Hall (also USF&W) in Roberts Co. on 17 August 1976. My records show the species was fairly common in Edmunds, Campbell, and Walworth Co. in June 1972. I have always assumed that this area, along with other counties bordering the Missouri

River (south at least to Brule Co.), would contain small populations of this species because of extensive native grasslands and comparatively light grazing use. But I have no data to prove this assumption correct.

I have the following breeding season records from Roberts Co. (1938-1963): 28 April 1938, 20 August 1940, 16 May 1942, 19 July 1946, 21 May 1961, and June 1963. All these dates fall within the expected nesting period for this owl. I am sure that it was a fairly common breeding bird in the area during those years. The breeding populations of this species probably have been declining in eastern South Dakota for many years, just as they have in North Dakota. Summarizing nesting data for Short-eared Owls on Fish and Wildlife Service wetlands in North and South Dakota, Duebbert and Lokemoen (*The Prairie Naturalist*, 1977, 9:33) write that decreasing populations are due to a widespread disturbance of essential nesting habitat by the increasing use of intensive agriculture.

Why did this relatively rare breeding species suddenly appear in such large numbers? Two probable reasons for the increase are abundant nesting habitat and large populations of mice and voles during the summer of 1978. A three-year drought climaxed in 1976, the driest year on record for Deuel Co. The next year, 1977, was the wettest year ever in Deuel Co.! The 1978 breeding season continued to be above normal in precipitation, resulting in ideal nesting cover of native and tame hay and legumes. I have no data to verify prey population densities, but local farmers complained regularly to the county agent about rabbit damage to trees and shrubs. Close inspection showed that much of the damage was actually caused by small rodents. During the fall and winter of 1977-1978, mice and voles were commonly found within the city limits of Clear Lake and other communities.

A number of records exist for Short-eared Owls concentrating in areas of abundant prey during fall and winter months (see Bent, *Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey*, 1961, Dover Publications, New York). Birds migrating into an area where abundant cover and food are available might settle down in that area for the breeding season. But haven't we had other years duplicating the conditions found in the summer of 1978? Could we have overlooked such an influx of birds into the area in other times?

Following a year of such unprecedented population densities, one might expect an "echo flight." This flight apparently occurred to a limited extent. In May 1979, Dick Hoffman reported finding a nest in an alfalfa field in Deuel Co. about four miles southwest of Clear Lake. But when I investigted on 15 May, I found the nest destroyed, apparently by badgers. I found only fragments of eggshells. Other records during 1979 included owls on 12 and 19 September near the Mud Lake PSA (four miles east of Clear Lake) where excellent cover was available. Possibly only one bird was in the area but the dates suggest a nesting bird rather than a migrant. In Roberts Co., Jim Riis (GF&P) and I observed a Short-eared Owl near the Day-Roberts Co. line east of Enemy Swim Lake on 22 June. In McPherson Co., on 15 June 1979, Ken Husmann and I located three owls in the Forbes-Leola area and we found three more in west Brown Co. on 22 June. These latter two areas are in counties where I suspect Short-eared Owls have found adequate nesting cover for some years.

# MALLARD MIGRATION IN THE ORDWAY MEMORIAL PRAIRIE REGION, LEOLA, SOUTH DAKOTA

by Dan A. Tallman

Northern State College
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and

Paul M. Bultsma

Samuel H. Ordway, Jr. Memorial Prairie
Leola 57456

## Introduction

Nowhere is the open nature of communities more apparent than in the study of migratory birds that bridge a wide variety of ecological domains. To gain a better understanding of the dynamics of the prairie community at The Nature Conservancy's Samuel H. Ordway, Jr. Memorial Prairie, we examined Mallard banding data from the area.

## Methods and Materials

We chose to study the Mallard because it is the most abundant North American duck (Bellrose 1976). More Mallards than any other waterfowl have been banded either in the Ordway Prairie region and recovered elsewhere or recovered near Ordway Prairie, having been banded in another locality. We examined data from 252 band recoveries from 1922 through 1976 that were reported to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Migratory Bird Management.

## Results and Discussion

Mallards are one of the better studied of the North American species of waterfowl (Anderson and Henny 1972). This species winters across the continental United States wherever unfrozen water and food remain through the winter. The heaviest concentrations of wintering Mallards occur in Arkansas and southern Louisiana (Bellrose 1976). Mallards from the western Dakotas, western Nebraska, and central Colorado migrate south and southeast into the Arkansas and Louisiana wintering grounds.

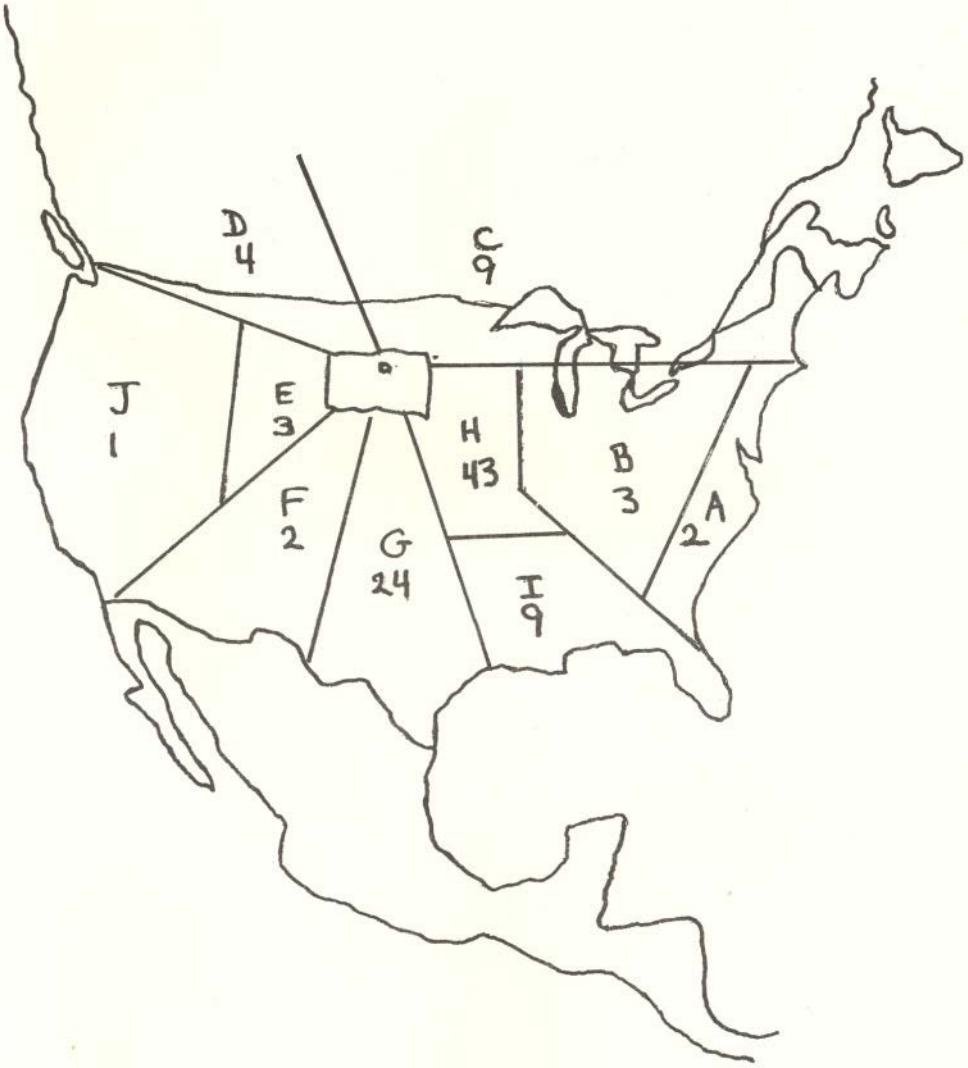


Figure 1. Percentages of total sample of Mallards banded in the Leola region and recovered elsewhere or of Mallards banded outside the study area and recovered near Leola.

Birds of the eastern Dakotas and populations from the Great Lakes states show a similar pattern but they tend to be recovered with increasing frequency along the Atlantic coast from Massachusetts to Florida (Anderson and Henny 1972).

Data analysis results are shown in Figure 1. Mallards from the Ordway Memorial Prairie, as would be expected from a review of the literature, migrate in a southeastern direction. Although band recoveries do not indicate exact routes taken by birds, they do show the general direction taken by banded populations (Bellrose 1969). Unexpected, however, was the low percentage of Mallards recovered from the lower Mississippi Valley. Possibly many Mallards recovered in the upper valley were, in fact, originating from or heading toward more southern grounds.

Table 1. Recoveries of Mallards during the fall migration. All birds were retrapped during the same migration in which they were banded.

| banded | recovered | direction |
|---|---|---|
| Western Minnesota<br>18 July 1967 | Ordway Prairie Region<br>20 October 1967 | SW |
| Minnesota<br>24 August 1967 | Ordway Prairie Region<br>October 1967 | SW |
| Western Minnesota<br>29 July 1971 | Ordway Prairie Region<br>10 October 1971 | NW |
| Wisconsin<br>4 September 1969 | Ordway Prairie Region<br>5 December 1970 | W |
| Central North Dakota<br>6 October 1939 | Ordway Prairie Region<br>October 1939 | SE |
| Central North Dakota<br>22 October 1939 | Ordway Prairie Region<br>29 October 1939 | SE |
| Eastern North Dakota<br>25 September 1968 | Ordway Prairie Region<br>19 October 1968 | SW |
| Ordway Prairie Region<br>27 August 1968 | Oregon<br>28 December 1968 | W |

The migration records provided a few additional interesting facts about Mallards from the Ordway Prairie region. The average age of birds caught after being banded was 2.5 years with a range of 1 to 14 years. Not including birds both banded and recovered in South Dakota, only eight birds were recovered during the same migration in which they were banded. These records, shown in Table 1, reveal a variety of postbreeding dispersal directions, a phenomenon also known to occur in other species of waterfowl (Weller 1964). The most intriguing of these records is of a Mallard banded in the Ordway Prairie region on 27 August 1968 and recovered near Portland, Oregon, on 28 December 1968. The farthest recovery is a Mallard taken near the prairie on 29 December 1965 that was banded on 22 January 1964 near Savannah, Georgia, a straight air distance of about 1500 miles.


## Summary

Although Mallards from the vicinity of the Ordway Memorial Prairie near Leola, South Dakota, have been banded or recovered from almost all areas of the United States, a majority of them are from the upper Mississippi and lower Missouri River Valleys. Records of Mallards that were recovered shortly after being banded on their breeding grounds suggest that Mallards, like other species of waterfowl, disperse in many directions after breeding. Mallards from the prairie apparently migrate southeast in the fall and northwest in the spring.


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# SPINK COUNTY BIRDS 1930-1980

by Charlotte Baird

Redfield 57469

During the summer of 1979, a little Burrowing Owl and his mate had staked a claim to a stretch of power line along SD 26 about seven miles southwest of Redfield. Any time of day that we drove by, he was there. We hoped he had a family because, like a number of other birds, Burrowing Owls have become rare in Spink Co. Fifty years ago, several owl families inhabited each quarter section of pasture. The 1930's destroyed habitat. And when rains returned, intensive cultivation during World War II and pesticides kept the land so altered that returning owls were not able to become established.

Conditions have so changed this area that American Goldfinches, once coming in flocks so large that every lawn on the block had at least 20 busy eaters, now arrive by twos and threes. Bobolinks, once forming family migratory flocks of 20 or more over a single meadow, now are so scarce that one may be unable to find more than two pairs in a summer's search. Bluebirds never were numerous but most old groves had a family or two. Now they are found only in very isolated spots. Common Nighthawks once were familiar sights winnowing the air above Redfield. In 1979 the town still had a pair that tried to breed on the schoolhouse roof, but those two nighthawks were all that I saw. In town and country alike, the Screech Owls are rare, although their quavering call is heard occasionally.

Bitterns, the Thunderpumps of the early residents, disappeared during the drought years and never did return to their old haunts. Black-crowned Night Herons and Great Blue Herons made remarkable comebacks, establishing huge rookeries in favorable locations. But, in Spink Co., the Black-crowned Night Heron has almost disappeared and the Great Blue Heron is much less numerous.

Prior to the 1930's, Redfield had many trees. Warblers and thrushes made regular migratory stops. Redstarts, Black-and-white Warblers, Mourning Warblers, and Yellow Warblers were prominent in the flocks. After the thirties, when warblers began to return to the area, Orange-crowned, Wilson's, Yellow, and Myrtle Warblers appeared to be predominant. Ovenbirds did not return. Wood Thrushes now appear sometimes but are no longer spring regulars.

Before we became a dust bowl, Lark Buntings, Dickcissels, and Chestnut-collared Longspurs were here but they were not common. With the drought, they moved in. When this area began to be green again, those three species, along with Horned Larks and Red-winged Blackbirds, were everywhere. I have wondered if the fluctuation of Dickcissel populations was due to their normal tendency to invade an area and then almost disappear in a few years. Whatever the cause, they are rare in the county now. The Lark Buntings remained numerous until the mid-1970's and then decreased rapidly. The Chestnut-collared Longspurs thinned out as our grasses and crops became taller as might be expected for a bird of the short-grass region. During the county's recovery, the Red-wings became birds of the fields, probably because weeds in fence lines and ditches offered nesting places before sloughs filled.

Cardinals came to the area in the 1960's and stayed for about five years. I wonder if the fact that most people stopped feeding birds in the summer left the Cardinals without sufficient food to raise families.

Now spring is a certainty when the pelicans and cormorants return. Fifty years ago, we looked for large flocks of cranes flapping across the sky in long V's.

# GENERAL NOTES

**BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE AT CAMP CROOK**--On the morning of 13 December 1979, my students and I spotted a Black-legged Kittiwake sailing over our school grounds. We observed the bird at close range as it flew and also perched for roughly 15 minutes. The pronounced black wing tips with no white splotches, a special mark on the upper neck resembling a collar, jet black feet and bill, and a black band across the end of the tail were diagnostic. The Black-legged Kittiwake is a casual fall and winter visitant in South Dakota according to Whitney et al. (*The Birds of South Dakota*), who mention a few sightings at various Missouri River impoundments in the late 1960's and one speciman taken near Sturgis in 1970.--**Bob Rogers, Camp Crook 57724.**

**THE BIG TWENTY MINUTES**--You have heard of "The Big Day" when a small group of birders exert themselves to list as many species of birds as possible in one calendar day. This note is about "The Big Half-hour" or, possibly, a "Big Twenty Minutes."

While attending the 1974 Spring SDOU Meeting in Vermillion, my wife, Jeanette, Margery Arbogast, and I were returning from Elk Point along the Missouri to Vermillion when, along a back road, we came upon a "magic mile."

We were on an ungraded dirt road with an unbroken line of old trees on the east side and scattered trees on the west. The bird list I wrote that day (25 May) had been lost for several years but I recently found it in an old field guide. The list contains the following species:

Cardinal
Orchard Oriole
Baltimore Oriole
Indigo Bunting
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
American Goldfinch
Catbird
Brown Thrasher
Western Meadowlark
Blue Jay
House Sparrow
Red-headed Woodpecker
Eastern Kingbird
American Robin
Mourning Dove
Barn Swallow
Common Grackle
Common Flicker
Red-winged Blackbird
Lark Sparrow
House Wren

Why were there so many unrelated birds that day in one small area? It was the migration season but birds were there that move through South Dakota at different times.

We redrove the road three times before leaving the area. In less than a half mile, we found another glamorous bird perched on an old corn stalk--a Blue Grosbeak.--**Everett C. Montgomery, Aberdeen 57401.**

**EARLY SPRING FERRUGINOUS HAWK AT ABERDEEN**--Although one winter record exists for the Ferruginous Hawk at Aberdeen, the species is rare in Brown and other eastern South Dakota counties (Whitney et al., *The Birds of South Dakota*). I observed a single Ferruginous Hawk sailing northward above Moccasin Creek on 16 March 1980. This observation is perhaps the second earliest migration date for the state. I observed the hawk with 10x binoculars and clearly noted its white rump and reddish tail and thighs.--**Dan A. Tallman, Northern State College, Aberdeen 57401.**

# 1979 SOUTH DAKOTA CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Dan A. Tallman
Northern State College
Aberdeen 57401

This year the following Christmas Count data were submitted to me by the various compilers of the counts. The following details supplied by the compilers include the date of the count, the number of observers, and the weather. Species seen during the count week, but not on the count day, are marked with an asterisk (*) in the main table.

**Aberdeen**--17 December 1979, 11 observers (+2 feeders), sunny with temperatures in the 20's. Compiler: Everett Montgomery.

**Belle Fourche**--16 December 1979. -25 — +10° F. Compiler: Irma Weyler.

**Brookings**--15 December 1979, 14 observers, temperatures in 20's and 30's. Compiler: Nelda Holden.

**Deuel County**--30 December 1979, 3 observers (+1 feeder), overcast with temperatures 30-40° F. Compiler: Bruce Harris.

**Highmore**--18 December 1979, 4 observers (+1 feeder), sunny with temperatures up to 60° F. Compiler: June Harter.

**Hot Springs**--15 December 1979, 7 observers, partly cloudy with temperatures from 8-47° F. Compiler: Richard Rosche.

**Lake Andes**--17 December 1979, 4 observers. Only noteworthy observations were reported. Compiler: David Hilley.

**Mitchell**--no data. Compiler: Harold Wagar.

**Rapid City**--16 December 1979. Compiler: Esther Serr.

**Sand Lake**--15 December 1979, 4 observers, overcast with temperatures 6-37° F. Compiler: Robert Edens.

**Waubay National Wildlife Refuge**--15 December 1979, 1 observer, overcast with temperatures 7-20° F. Compiler: Linda Watters.

**Wilmot**--22 December 1979, 8 observers, partly cloudy with temperatures 25-50° F. Compiler: Bruce Harris.

**Yankton**--30 December 1979, 11 observers, mostly foggy with mild temperatures. Compiler: Willis Hall.

| Species | Aberdeen | Belle Fourche | Brookings | Deuel Co. | Highmore | Hot Springs | Lake Andes | Mitchell | Rapid City | Sand Lake | Waubay | Wilmot | Yankton |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| Great Blue Heron | | | | | | | 2 | | 119 | 100 | | | |
| Canada Goose | | | 50 | 426 | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| White-fronted Goose | | | | | | | | | | 16 | | | |
| Snow Goose | | | | | | | | | 579 | 9550 | | 18 | 5020 |
| Mallard | | | 19 | 31 | | 6215 | | | 38 | | | | |
| Gadwall | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Pintail | | | | | | 1 | | | 15 | | | | |
| Green-winged Teal | | | | | | | | | 14 | | | | |
| American Wigeon | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Lesser Scaup | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | 9 |
| Common Goldeneye | | | | | | 11 | | | 1 | | | | |
| Barrow's Goldeneye | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Bufflehead | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ruddy Duck | | | 3 | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | 31 |
| Common Merganser | | | | | | 22 | | | 1 | | | | |
| Goshawk | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| *Accipiter* sp. | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Red-tailed Hawk | | | 1 | | | | | | 3 | | | | 7 |

| Species | Aberdeen | Belle Fourche | Brookings | Deuel Co. | Highmore | Hot Springs | Lake Andes | Mitchell | Rapid City | Sand Lake | Waubay | Wilmot | Yankton |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| American Roughleg | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | 8 | | | | 3 |
| Golden Eagle | | | | | | 4 | | | 1 | | | | |
| Bald Eagle | | | | | | 11 | 65 | | 1 | | * | | 12 |
| Marsh Hawk | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Prairie Falcon | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | |
| Merlin | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 |
| American Kestrel | | | 5 | | | | | | | 2 | | 3 | 6 |
| Greater Prairie Chicken | | | | | * | | 20 | | | | | | |
| Sharp-tailed Grouse | | | | | * | 19 | | | 52 | | | | |
| Bobwhite | | | | | | | | | | | | | 47 |
| Ring-necked Pheasant | 42 | | 31 | 1 | * | 4 | | 3 | 9 | 12 | | 57 | 13 |
| Gray Partridge | | | 40 | 14 | * | | | | | 9 | | 29 | |
| Turkey | | | | | | 156 | | | 105 | | | | |
| American Coot | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Killdeer | | | | | | 1 | | | 2 | | | | |
| Common Snipe | | | | | | | | | 3 | | | 2 | |
| Rock Dove | 104 | | 131 | 11 | 11 | 88 | | | 118 | 8 | 2 | 104 | 135 |
| Mourning Dove | 1 | | 2 | 11 | | | | | | 1 | | 23 | 1 |
| Screech Owl | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 2 |
| Great Horned Owl | 7 | | 23 | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 8 |
| Short-eared Owl | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |

| Species | Aberdeen | Belle Fourche | Brookings | Deuel Co. | Highmore | Hot Springs | Lake Andes | Mitchell | Rapid City | Sand Lake | Waubay | Wilmot | Yankton |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Belted Kingfisher | | | * | 1 | | 2 | | | 8 | | | * | 6 |
| Common Flicker | 23 | 1 | 14 | 3 | 2 | 28 | | 2 | 9 | 2 | | 7 | 48 |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker | | | | 2 | | | | | | | | | 5 |
| Red-headed Woodpecker | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | 7 |
| Hairy Woodpecker | 4 | 2 | 18 | 7 | 2 | 9 | | | 19 | | 1 | 6 | 17 |
| Downy Woodpecker | 13 | 2 | 47 | 8 | 4 | 11 | | | 28 | | 1 | 13 | 29 |
| Horned Lark | 10 | | 188 | * | 1 | | | | 6 | 3 | 12 | 33 | |
| Gray Jay | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | |
| Blue Jay | 14 | 14 | 54 | 18 | | | | | 53 | | 9 | 38 | 40 |
| Black-billed Magpie | | | | | | 41 | | | 79 | | | | 10 |
| Common Crow | | | 44 | 6 | 9 | 14 | | 11 | 114 | | | 42 | 72 |
| Pinyon Jay | | | | | | 531 | | | 130 | | | | |
| Black-capped Chickadee | 19 | 30 | 127 | 19 | * | 82 | | 3 | 211 | 2 | 5 | 41 | 101 |
| White-breasted Nuthatch | | | 11 | 11 | | 5 | | | 15 | | 2 | 12 | 22 |
| Red-breasted Nuthatch | 1 | | 11 | | 1 | 46 | | | 36 | | | | |
| Pygmy Nuthatch | | | | | | 2 | | | 2 | | | | |
| Brown Creeper | 4 | | 11 | 2 | 1 | 6 | | | 10 | | 1 | 6 | 9 |
| Winter Wren | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Canyon Wren | | | | | | 6 | | | 16 | | | | |
| Brown Thrasher | 1 | | * | | | | | | | | | | |
| American Robin | 318 | 10 | 3 | 3 | | 71 | | | 12 | 244 | * | 2 | 52 |

| Species | Aberdeen | Belle Fourche | Brookings | Deuel Co. | Highmore | Hot Springs | Lake Andes | Mitchell | Rapid City | Sand Lake | Waubay | Wilmot | Yankton |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Varied Thrush | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Eastern Bluebird | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 |
| Townsend's Solitaire | | 2 | | | | 51 | | | 59 | | | | |
| Golden-crowned Kinglet | | | 4 | 3 | | 4 | | | 15 | | | 8 | |
| Bohemian Waxwing | | | 3 | | | 63 | | | 786 | | | | |
| Cedar Waxwing | 13 | 30 | 145 | | | 44 | | | 17 | | | 3 | 231 |
| Northern Shrike | | | 2 | | | 1 | | | 3 | 1 | | 2 | |
| Loggerhead Shrike | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| Starling | 676 | 30 | 513 | 61 | 44 | 60 | | 100 | 649 | 18 | 3 | 247 | 808 |
| Yellow-rumped Warbler | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 3 |
| House Sparrow | 1413 | 20 | 611 | 96 | 568 | 227 | | 90 | 722 | 151 | 72 | 582 | 266 |
| Western Meadowlark | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Yellow-headed Blackbird | | | | | | | | | | 21 | | | |
| Red-winged Blackbird | 5 | | 46 | | 1 | 1 | | | | 1241 | | 110 | 208 |
| Rusty Blackbird | | | 33 | | | | | | 1 | | | 6 | |
| Brewer's Blackbird | | | | | * | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Common Grackle | 20 | 2 | 1 | 13 | | | | | | 10 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| Brown-headed Cowbird | | | 1 | | | | | | | 10 | | | |
| Cardinal | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 19 |
| Evening Grosbeak | | 20 | | | | 3 | | | 101 | | | | |
| Purple Finch | 9 | | 2 | 1 | | | | | | | 6 | * | |
| Common Redpoll | 6 | | | | | | | | | 75 | | 1 | |

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| Species | Aberdeen | Belle Fourche | Brookings | Deuel Co. | Highmore | Hot Springs | Lake Andes | Mitchell | Rapid City | Sand Lake | Wauhay | Wilmot | Yankton |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pine Siskin | | | 6 | 1 | | 109 | | | 29 | | | 1 | 1 |
| American Goldfinch | 24 | | 49 | 4 | | 98 | | | 90 | | 3 | 7 | 97 |
| Red Crossbill | 13 | | | | | 70 | | | 10 | | | | |
| Dark-eyed Junco | 62 | 30 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Slate-colored Junco | | | 237 | 14 | | 93 | | | 328 | 5 | 6 | 40 | 97 |
| Oregon Junco | | | 7 | | | 131 | | | 64 | | | 2 | 1 |
| White-winged Junco | | | | | | 199 | | | 521 | | | | |
| Tree Sparrow | 17 | | 317 | 61 | | 96 | | | 43 | 5 | 8 | 86 | 60 |
| Chipping Sparrow | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| Field Sparrow | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Harris' Sparrow | | | 2 | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 7 |
| Song Sparrow | | | | | | 4 | | | 4 | | | | 3 |
| Sparrow Sp. | | | | | | | | | | 3 | | | |
| Lapland Longspur | | | 10 | * | | 5 | | | | | | * | |
| Snow Bunting | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | * | |