
SOUTH DAKOTA Ornithologists' Union



Swallow-tailed Kite

Davison County, 9/12/07

Photo: Doug Backlund

SOUTH DAKOTA
BIRD NOTES

A small black bird, possibly a junco, is perched on a thin branch. It is facing right and has a white patch on its side. A small cluster of yellow flowers is attached to the branch above the bird.

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SOUTH DAKOTA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

As I write this communication in early December, I am convinced that an irruption of Red-breasted Nuthatches (RBNH in bird banding parlance) is occurring. In my back yard, we have counted four individual birds together at the feeders. In the last four or five years, we have had one and occasionally two RBNHs in the yard. In prior seasons, the appearance of a Red-breasted Nuthatch was spotty—not seen every year.



*Red-breasted Nuthatch
Lincoln County, SD. 9/07/07
Photo: Terry Sohl*

I was hoping to do a little research and be able to find the definitive word on the subject that, yes, the winter of 2007-2008 is an irruption year for RBNH. A review on the internet indicates that some people are finding these engaging birds at their feeders for the first time ever, and there are numerous reports of uncharacteristically large numbers of sightings in some areas, and large numbers of individuals in other areas. But these are all anecdotal indicators. I thought I might get some telling numbers from our online SDOU seasonal reporting database. A quick look

told me that so far through 2007, 131 sightings have been reported in the database, and I was encouraged, as in 2006 there were only 72 sightings. But going back one more year, to 2005, 135 sightings had been reported. By the end of December we will probably have totals exceeding the 2005 levels, but could we call that an irruption? Additionally, I don't know what other factors have influenced those numbers. Did we have a larger number of reporters in 2005 than in 2006 or 2007? The Sioux Falls participation in last year's 2006 Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) showed some numbers I found useful. Of thirty-five checklists submitted to the GBBC from Sioux Falls, only two reported RBNH and only four individual birds were reported. I will be surprised, based on conversations among birders here in Sioux Falls, if we don't greatly exceed those numbers this year. Nonetheless, I can conclude only a few things about a possible irruption taking place this winter:

- A. A large number of people are reporting an uncharacteristically large number of Red-breasted Nuthatches.
- B. They are being reported in areas where they have not previously been seen.
- C. I could not find definitive data in SDOU's seasonal reporting database to make a determination one way or the other.

The answer will come in mid-February, through the Great Backyard Bird Count, that remarkable citizen-science project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the Audubon Society—the Great Backyard Bird Count. Watch for it and consider participating. This could be an historic year for Red-breasted Nuthatches, and you will want to have played a role in the final verdict.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rosemary Draeger".

See good birds.

FROM OUR PAST...

...IN SOUTH DAKOTA BIRD NOTES

L. M. BAYLOR

GUEST COLUMN BY DOUGLAS E. CHAPMAN

Not long ago, I purchased a volume titled *Dakota Birds I: Song and Insectivorous Birds of South Dakota*. Published in 1925, it is authored by Loren and Nora Atherton of Madison, SD, as listed in the publishing data. Surprisingly, I have been able to find very little information concerning them. He was a Professor of Geography at General Beadle Teachers College, now Dakota State University. SDOU charter member Bruce Harris told me that he remembered the Athertons in the 1960s as “older people who did not bird with the group much”.

Nora painted all of the color plates; other drawings and photos were reproduced courtesy of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (some by L. A. Fuertes.) The opening chapter, titled “How to Study Birds” is really quite informative, especially when one remembers that in 1925 Roger Tory Peterson’s *Guide to the Birds* was nine years from becoming the very first field guide. The rest of the book as the review below states is a good introduction to the more common birds of South Dakota. Mrs. Atherton’s color plates show her great interest in birds but are drawn with a naïvete which is reminiscent of New England primitive folk art.

This copy is inscribed and has several color photos of Snowy Egrets at Avery Island, Louisiana, pasted in the end pages. They are from a visit to McIlhenny Island at the dedication of the Avery Island Egret Sanctuary. There is also a picture captioned “Ed. McIlhenny” with the comment, “Edward McIlhenny saved the egrets when they were nearly exterminated. 1891.” This is the family and the location of Tabasco Sauce fame. In my research to find who the Athertons of Madison were, I found a book titled *South Dakota Geography* online, which is also by Mr. Atherton. In addition, I found a review of the *Dakota Birds* book in the *Wilson Bulletin*. I reprint it here, as written in 1928.

BOOK REVIEW

The Wilson Bulletin, June 1928

Ornithological Literature pg. 123

DAKOTA BIRDS. By Loren G. Atherton and Nora M. Atherton. Published by J. Fred Olander Company, Pierre, S. D. 1925. Pp. 1-238. Figs. 39, 12 colored plates. Price, \$2.00. [*The book was printed in Sioux Falls by Will A. Beech Co.~Ed.*]

This book, though published two years ago [*sic*], has just come to our attention. It is strictly a home product—on Dakota birds, by Dakota authors, published by Dakota printers. Many of the common birds of South Dakota are appropriately discussed in a way to interest beginners. The biographies are informal and follow no uniform mode, each specific account presenting the outstanding habits or characters. The water birds and the birds of prey are not treated; but, beginning with the woodpeckers, the families of land birds are included. The book contains a number of plates, in both black and color, by the junior author. -T. C. S.

GENERAL NOTES

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE IN MITCHELL, 2-17 SEPTEMBER 2007

KITE STORY I

On 2 September 2007 Richard Rames was driving to the store in Mitchell, SD. “I was heading west on Norway Avenue on the edge of town.

“As I passed the L. B. Williams school, I spotted a bird hovering over a nearby soybean field. The fact that the bird was actually hovering and diving over a particular spot was what caught my attention. Not having my birding book or binoculars along I fortunately did have my digital camera, so I thought I’d take a few photos. This, of course, was when the bird decided to move on and headed south across the field and almost out of sight. I followed it heading west down Norway Avenue to about the location of Jack’s Campers Sales when the bird flew back over the road where I was able to take a photo. It then disappeared and I went about my shopping.

“Returning home I looked the bird up in my field guide and identified it as a Swallow-tailed Kite. At this point I contacted my mother and father, Ron and Lois Rames—the real birders of the family—and we decided to meet the next morning. We planned to bird a small lake and I told them I’d bring the photo of the kite for them to look at.

“My father then contacted Jeff Palmer of SDOU and told him of the sighting. When my father saw the photo he confirmed my suspicion that it was indeed a Swallow-tailed Kite and said it was important that I show the photo to Jeff. I drove to Madison and showed the photo to Jeff. Jeff then drove to Mitchell and saw the bird for himself. When he returned to SDOU he posted a “rare bird sighting” on the SDOU website.

“My folks did travel to Mitchell looking for it but didn’t get to see the bird that day. It was an entire week after my sighting before they got to see it.” ~Richard Rames, Mitchell

KITE STORY II

Jeff Palmer immediately notified the South Dakota birding community of his sighting through the SDOU listserv. “*SEPT 2 2007. Today I received a photograph of a Swallow-tailed Kite taken in Mitchell on Sunday morning. Not very hopeful that it would still be present, I drove down anyway and found the bird almost immediately. It is east of Jack’s Campers, north of the Interstate, west of McDonald’s, and due south of the L. B. Williams Elementary school. I watched the bird carefully for 5-10 minutes before it drifted to the northeast after which it was not seen again despite five hours of watching.*”

Birds of South Dakota, Third Edition (Tallman, et al.) includes only a few cloudy historical reports of Swallow-tailed Kite. Included are breeding records from the nineteenth century and a specimen taken in 1910 in Clay County (Visser 1915). This September 2007 sighting would thus be the first in ninety-six years. The rarity of this bird in South Dakota derives from the fact that Swallow-tailed Kites winter in South America, and no longer breed north of the American Deep South: most in Florida, but small populations exist in Georgia, South Carolina and Louisiana.

Present status of Swallow-tailed Kite records in neighboring states are as follows: Wyoming and Montana: not recorded (state bird distribution websites); Minnesota has four recent records, all are spring/summer: 15-27 May 1999, Rice County; 11-25 August 2002, Scott and Dakota counties; 18 August 2003, Rice County; 4 May 2007, Anoka County (Peder Svingen, pers. comm.). Nebraska has several records from the early twentieth century, the last from 1931 (Ross Silcock, pers. comm.). Iowa has two recent records: 14-15 September 2000, Cerro Gordo County; 3-4 June 2004 in Iowa City (state websites); North Dakota has only

Cont. next page

Cont. from preceding page

nineteenth century records (Ron Martin, pers. comm.).

A few days later Jeff posted: "I learned last night that the previously reported Swallow-tailed Kite was observed and photographed again on Saturday 08 September at the exact same location in Mitchell where it was (and then wasn't) observed on the prior Monday! Apparently it is still hanging around."

The bird was seen for the next week by many from as far away as Michigan and Wyoming. The Sioux Falls Bird Club was fortunate to have a scheduled trip on Saturday, 15 September. All sixteen birders who came along saw the bird well as it "kited" and swooped just inches over the now-famous soybean field and picked off dragonflies and grasshoppers. The show it put on was breathtaking. The last time it was seen was Monday, 17 September 2007. It was headed south with hundreds of swallows, a Common Nighthawk and a Red-tailed Hawk, all feeding on an enormous swarm of high-flying insects. It has been submitted to the Rare Bird Records Committee for consideration.

For extensive data on the Swallow-tailed Kite see:

<http://www.peregrinefund.org/explore_raptors/kites/swallowt.html>

~ Douglas Chapman, Sioux Falls

ODD HOUSE FINCH BEHAVIOR IN BRANDON

One day last June, Thea Miller-Ryan from the Outdoor Campus in Sioux Falls called to tell me about a strange report she had received earlier in the day. A woman from Brandon said she had a robin's nest under the second-story deck of their new house. She continued that a pair of House Finch chased the robin pair away after three young robins had hatched and the finches were raising the young robins as their own. I set out for Brandon to see what this strange affair was all about.

As I was led to the backyard, I spotted a robin's nest on a support beam of the deck. As there were considerable bird droppings visible on the exterior of the robin's nest (a tell-tale sign of messy House Finch at nest) I concluded that this must have been going on for some time. American Robins remove fecal sacs from the nest area; the new "adoptive" parents were not so doing. The adoption by force seemed to be complete, as the robins had built another nest very near-by—under the same deck on another support beam.

However, the robins' original parental drives were still intact, as the parent robins would approach their own offspring and the finches would attack with the ferocity of hummingbirds until the robins retreated to the nearby trees or to their new nest.

Perhaps the House Finch pair lost their brood for some reason and the robin's youngsters were close by. Jocelyn L. Baker found references regarding this behavior. It has been observed previously and is mentioned in both *The Birder's Handbook* and *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior*. Still, how the finches managed to drive off, and keep away, birds over double their size is a mystery.

For more information regarding this behavior see:

Ehrlich, Paul R. et al. 1988. House Finch. pg 646. *The Birder's Handbook: Field Guide to the Natural History of North American Birds*. Simon & Schuster Inc, New York.

Sibley, David, et al, (Eds.). 2001. Finches and their Allies: Breeding. p. 558, col. 2. *Guide to Bird Life and Behavior*. Chanticleer Press, New York.

~Douglas Chapman, Sioux Falls

SDOU 2008 SPRING MEETING

Ron Mabie, PO Box 182, Pickstown 57367

The Spring Meeting of the South Dakota Ornithologists' Union will be held in Pickstown, SD, from 16–18 May 2008. The social hour, meeting and banquet will be held in the Rainbow Room, 310 White Swan Drive. An agenda will be forthcoming in the March 2008 issue of *Bird Notes*. The first SDOU Meeting held in Pickstown was on 18–20 May 1979. That meeting was wonderfully chronicled in the Spring Meeting Report of the June 1979 *South Dakota Bird Notes*. The President's Page of the March 1979 *Bird Notes* also talks about that meeting and the birds which Dr. Elliott Coues saw when he was stationed at Fort Randall in 1872–1873. These articles make for interesting reading and both can be found in Volume 31 of the Online *South Dakota Bird Notes* at the SDOU website: <www.sdou.org>.

Pickstown is a small community located in south-central South Dakota along the Missouri River. It was built in the 1940s to house the workers who constructed Fort Randall Dam. The dam was named after the military post located nearby which was in operation from 1856 to 1892 to keep peace on the frontier and served as a major navigation link on the Missouri River. All that remains now of Old Fort Randall is a trail through the parade ground, foundations of the buildings, the cemetery and the standing ruins of the old chalkstone chapel. You should be able to hear and/or see Northern Bobwhite in this area.

The portion of river below the dam to the confluence of the Niobrara River was designated as a thirty-nine-mile stretch of the National Missouri Recreation River in 1991. It is home to the threatened Piping Plover and the endangered Least Tern and Pallid Sturgeon. There is a scenic drive along the east side of the river that provides many beautiful, unspoiled views and a chance to observe grassland birds. Turn south at the church across from the Fort Randall Casino on Highway 46 to a fair-weather gravel road, 385th Ave, and follow it down until it dead ends in a field, past the road closed sign.

The Karl E. Mundt NWR is located below the dam on the west bank of the Missouri River. It was established in 1974 as a sanctuary to provide winter roosting habitat for the endangered Bald Eagle. A peak number

continued on page 80

of 283 eagles was reached in 1967 which established the Fort Randall population of wintering eagles as the largest in the lower 48 states. The first successful nesting attempt in the state was made here in the 1990s and several pairs nested on the refuge last year as well as along the river. This refuge is closed to the public to prevent disturbance to the eagles and to prevent any possible degradation of the habitat, but I'm hoping that we can have a field trip there. The Mundt NWR offers a good opportunity to see warblers and other songbirds as well.

Located twelve miles northeast of Pickstown is the Lake Andes NWR. It was established in 1936 for migratory birds and other wildlife and boasts a bird checklist of 249 species. There is a nature trail along the wooded lake-shore, across marshlands and through native grasslands. Two dikes separate the lake and provide easy viewing access of water birds. I observed a Common Moorhen here last spring and a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron in 2003. If you go to the headquarters, please ask the staff why they don't have a bird feeder.

I hope that I have piqued your interest about this unique area and that you will plan to attend the 2008 Spring Meeting in Pickstown. Anytime you are in the area, give me a call and I will be glad to show you around.



For more local birding areas see "A Birder's Guide to Charles Mix County" by Dennis Skadsen in the December 1990 issue (Volume 42) of the online *Bird Notes* and the "Southeast South Dakota Birding Trail Guide."

*The Bald Eagle truly deserves the sobriquet "regal."
Hughes County, SD.
Photo: Dan Streifel*

2006 REPORT OF THE RARE BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

David L. Swanson, Department of Biology, University of South Dakota,
Vermillion 57069 Email: David.Swanson@usd.edu.

The SDOU Rare Bird Records Committee (RBRC) met on 21 May 2006 at Belle Fourche and on 21 October 2006 at Pierre. The members of the committee were David Swanson (secretary), Ricky Olson, Todd Jensen, J. David Williams, and Jeffrey Palmer. All members either attended each meeting or voted *in absentia*.

Springer (1988. SDBN 40:67-70) outlined the purpose and voting procedures of the RBRC. The RBRC strongly encourages observers of rare or unusual birds in South Dakota to report their observations to the secretary of the RBRC (David Swanson of Vermillion, SD), preferably via email at David.Swanson@usd.edu. A *Rare Bird Observation Form* is available in electronic format for this purpose at <http://homepages.dsu.edu/palmerj/SDOU/rbrf.doc>. A summary of the type of information desired by the RBRC in a rare bird report can be found in Swanson (2004. SDBN 56:88-95).

A listing of review species, for which rare bird reports are requested, is provided on the latest version of the checklist of South Dakota birds (available from K.C. Jensen, Brookings, SD). The RBRC regularly adds or removes species from the review list, based on current data, and these changes to the review list are reported in previous reports of the RBRC in *South Dakota Bird Notes*. Observers are also asked to submit reports of any species that is casual or accidental at a particular time or at a particular location within the state. This information can be found in Tallman et al. (2002. *Birds of South Dakota*, 3rd edition, SDOU, Aberdeen, SD). In addition, reports are requested for observations listed in the "Species Requiring Acceptance by the Rare Bird Records Committee" section in the Seasonal Reports of *South Dakota Bird Notes*. Observers whose records are accepted (Classes 1 and 2) are encouraged to publish these records in *South Dakota Bird Notes*, so details of the observation can be communicated to a wider audience.

Following are the results of the committee's action since the last report in the June 2006 issue of *South Dakota Bird Notes*. The numbers included in parentheses along with some reports indicate the committee's vote. If no numbers are listed, the vote was unanimous (5-0) or 4-0 if a committee member submitted the report. The committee wishes to emphasize that a rating of Class 3 or 4 (non-accepted record) does not imply any personal criticism of the observer. Such a rating only means that the information provided in the report, in the opinion of the committee, did not conclusively eliminate other similar species.

CLASS 1 (Accepted - Specimen, photograph, or recording).

Black Scoter. 3 December 2005-11 January 2006. One female or juvenile on Lake Oahe, Sully Co. Photographed. Ricky Olson and Kenny Miller. Casual fall migrant and accidental winter visitor.

Glossy Ibis. 17 June 2006. One adult in alternate plumage at Sand Lake NWR, Brown Co. Photographed. Ricky Olson and Kenny Miller. Third state record.

Common Moorhen. 3 June 2006. Three adults near Hecla, Brown Co. Photographed. Lynne Williams and Nancy Schaefer. Casual migrant.

Killdeer. 10 April 2005. One adult on nest on east side of tailrace at Oahe Dam, Hughes Co. Photographed. Doug Backlund. Earliest ever nesting record.

Whimbrel. 19 May 2006. 25-30 birds in alternate plumage at Bear Butte Lake, Meade Co. Photographed. Gary and Jan Small. Casual migrant.

Red Knot. 20-21 May 2006. Two adults in alternate plumage in Kingsbury Co. Photographed. Robb Schenck and Jeffrey Palmer. Casual migrant.

Western Sandpiper. 28-30 July 2006. One in juvenile plumage at Cottonwood Lake, Sully Co. Photographed. Ricky Olson. (3 Class 1P, 1 Class 3). Casual migrant.

Little Gull. 10-15 September 2006. One adult in basic plumage at Big Bend Dam, Buffalo Co. Photographed. Ricky Olson. Casual fall migrant.

Iceland Gull. 11 February 2006. One in first winter plumage at Pierre, Hughes Co. Photographed. Ricky Olson and Kenny Miller. Fourth state record.

Lesser Black-backed Gull. 9 April 2006. Two adults in alternate plumage at Stone Lake, Sully Co. Photographed. Ricky Olson and Kenny Miller. Casual migrant.

Lesser Black-backed Gull. 22 July-26 August 2006. One adult in alternate plumage one mile west of Stone Lake, Sully Co. Photographed. Ricky Olson. Casual migrant; second summer record.

Great Black-backed Gull. 8-9 April 2006. One adult in alternate plumage at Stone Lake, Sully Co. Photographed. Ricky Olson and Kenny Miller. (3 Class 1P, 1 Class 3). First state record.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher. 10 September 2006. One adult in Sully Co. Photographed. Ricky Olson. Casual migrant.

Green-tailed Towhee. 11 May 2006. One adult male at West Short Pine Hills, Harding Co. Photographed. Charlie and Kenny Miller. Accidental.

White-crowned Sparrow. 1 July 2006. One adult at Hermosa, Custer Co. Photographed. Michael Melius. First ever July record.

CLASS 1H (Hypothetical – Specimen, photograph, or recording confirms identification, but origin of bird uncertain).

Mute Swan. 8 March 2006. One adult on LaFramboise sandbar at Pierre, Stanley Co. Photographed. Ricky Olson. Captive origin of bird cannot be ruled out.

CLASS 2 (Accepted – Satisfactory written description).

Harlequin Duck. 14 October 2005. One first winter male at Sand Lake NWR, Brown Co. Mark Otnes. Third state record.

Red-throated Loon. 10 May 2005. One adult in alternate plumage below Oahe Dam, Hughes Co. Kenny Miller. Seventh state record, second in spring.

Yellow Rail. 17 June 2005. One adult in Tripp Co. Doug Backlund, Gary Marrone, and Charlene Bessken. Fifth state record.

Whimbrel. 8 May 2005. Two adult birds near Oahe Dam, Stanley Co. Kenny Miller. Casual migrant.

Whimbrel. 13 May 2005. Five adult birds in Sully Co. Kenny Miller. Casual migrant.

Whimbrel. 16 June 2005. One adult bird at Bear Butte Lake, Meade Co. Doug Chapman and Ed O'Brien. Casual migrant.

Little Gull. 17-24 September 2005. One adult in basic plumage at Big Bend Dam, Lyman Co. Kenny Miller. Casual fall migrant.

Little Gull. 17 September 2005. One in juvenile plumage at Big Bend Dam, Buffalo Co. Ricky Olson. Casual fall migrant.

Lesser Black-backed Gull. 1-2 November 2005. One in second or third-winter plumage at Lake Thompson, Kingsbury Co. David Swanson. Casual migrant.

Least Tern. 18 June 2005. One adult at Bear Butte Lake, Meade Co. Doug Chapman et al. Accidental summer visitor away from breeding areas along Missouri and Cheyenne rivers.

Red-bellied Woodpecker. 12 November 2005. One adult at Vale, Butte Co. Jocie Baker, Anna Ball, Jennifer Fowler. Accidental in western South Dakota.

Alder Flycatcher. 26 June 2006. One singing adult at Englewood Trailhead, Lawrence Co. Doug Faulkner. (4 Class 2, 1 Class 3). Accidental summer visitor.

Bewick's Wren. 29 August 2005. One eastern race bird at Hanna, Lawrence Co. D. George Prisbe. (4 Class 2, 1 Class 3). Third state record.

House Wren. 26 November 2005. One at south Rockerville Road, Pennington Co. David Swanson. Latest ever fall record.

Townsend's Solitaire. 18 May 2005. One adult at Farm Island, Hughes Co. Kenny Miller. Latest ever date away from Black Hills breeding grounds.

Townsend's Warbler. 27 May 2006. One singing bird along Long Draw Road in Lawrence Co. David Swanson and Don Powers. Second spring record.

Mourning Warbler. 26 May 2005. One adult male at Alkali Creek Campground, Meade Co. David Swanson and Don Powers. Fifth record for western South Dakota.

Henslow's Sparrow. 14 June 2005. One singing adult in Lincoln Co. Doug Chapman. Casual summer resident.

Henslow's Sparrow. 30 June 2005. One singing adult at Spirit Mound Historic Prairie, Clay Co. Doug Chapman. Casual summer resident.

CLASS 3 (Not accepted – Identification possibly correct but description not completely convincing).

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. 7 August 2007. One in juvenile plumage at Island Lake, McCook Co. This record would have constituted a first state record. The details provided in the report, however, did not conclusively eliminate Pectoral Sandpiper and the date is very early for a juvenile Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, given that no accepted records of this species exist along the west coast, where they are annual, before 1 September. The committee felt that better documentation is necessary for an acceptable first state record. (4 Class 3, 1 Class 2).

Blue-winged Warbler. 14 June 2005. One adult at Newton Hills State Park carrying food. This record was submitted as a first nesting record for the state, but in the absence of more concrete nesting evidence, the committee rated the report as Class 3, although the identification of the bird was not in question.

CLASS 4 (Not accepted – Identification probably or certainly incorrect).

Laughing Gull. 27 July 2007. One adult at Gavin's Point Dam, Yankton Co. The identification of this bird was not in question, but the bird was observed approximately half-way across the face of the dam, which according to current legal definitions, although not according to many maps, is considered Nebraska rather than South Dakota. The dissenting committee members followed a strict legal interpretation of the state border and ruled the bird in Nebraska and not in South Dakota. (2 Class 4, 2 Class 2).

SUBMITTED FOR CONSIDERATION

Black Scoter. 10 November 2006. One adult female at Waubay Lake, Day Co.

ERRATUM FROM 2005 REPORT

The adult female Townsend's Warbler observed by Kenny Miller on 6 September 2004 was at Echo Point, Stanley Co., not at Farm Island, Hughes Co. as reported.



Greater Prairie Chicken is one of the most requested birds on out-of-state birders wish lists. This male is dancing on a lek in the Ft. Pierre National Grasslands, a reliable place to find them. Stanley County, SD. 4/15/07

Photo: Doug Backlund



In South Dakota, we know winter is coming when the Barrow's Goldeneye is back on Canyon Lake in Rapid City. Pennington County, SD. 1/10/04

Photo: Douglas Chapman



Snowy Owls are also another crowd pleaser for birders who brave SD winters. Some years they show up in good numbers and in others are absent. Hughes County, SD. 12/24/06

Photo: Doug Backlund

Prairie Falcon is another species of the plains that out-of-state birders ask to see. However, resident birders are also thrilled to find this majestic raptor. Occasionally one or more may be found in Eastern SD in winter.

*Lyman, County, SD.
2/16/04*

Photo: Terry Sohl





The Black Hills population of the American Dipper is an uncommon and local permanent resident in the Northern Black Hills. It is mainly found along Spearfish Creek in Spearfish Canyon.

Lawrence County, SD. 6/10/06

Photo: Doug Backlund



Le Conte's Sparrow (above) is a beautifully plumaged bird, which more than makes up for the insect like buzzing which passes for its song. Some locations in SE SD have had up to 40 individuals staging in October migration.

*Lake County, SD.
9/30/06*

Photo: Terry Sohl



Sharp-tailed Grouse dancing on lek. This grouse is consistently close to the top of requested birds to see on out-of-state birders' lists.

Stanley County, SD. 4/8/07

Photo: Doug Backlund



Bell's Vireo is more colorful in some of its forms. Here in South Dakota it often shows a much more yellowish tinge to the flanks than those from Arizona or Texas.

Hughes County, SD. 3/26/06

Photo: Doug Backlund

SEASONAL REPORTS

The 2007 Summer Season

Compiled By: Jeffrey S. Palmer
01 June 2007 to 31 July 2007

College of Arts & Sciences
Dakota State University
Madison, SD 57042

There were 266 species, including 12 rarities, reported during the season. This is well above the ten-year (1997-2006) average of 249 and just short of the high of 270 reported in 2002. Confirmed breeding was reported for 102 species including potential first records for Snowy Plover, Herring Gull, and Winter Wren.

Snow Goose All Reports: 02 Jun Lake JSP; 21 Jul McPherson BU

Canada Goose Confirmed Breeding: 02 Jun Lake (PY) JSP; 04 June Butte (PY) JLB; 09 Jun Brookings (PY) JSP; 16 Jun Sully (PY) RDO; 19 Jun Meade (PY) EEM; 30 Jun Minnehaha (PY) JSP

Trumpeter Swan Confirmed Breeding: 09 Jun Meade (PY) ND ... also reported 04 Jun Tripp RDO; 19 Jun Tripp ND; 24 Jun Tripp RDO

Wood Duck Confirmed Breeding: 02 Jun Lake (PY) JSP; 09 Jun Lincoln (PY) BFH; 25 Jun Pennington (PY) ND; 21 Jul McCook (PY) MRZ

Gadwall Confirmed Breeding: 16 Jun Sully (PY) RDO; 20 Jun Hand (DD) *fide* BFW; 23 Jun Potter (PY) ND

American Wigeon Confirmed Breeding: 27 Jun Harding (PY) ND ... also reported 08 Jun Deuel BU; 20 Jun Meade JLB; 30 Jun Meade ND; 22 Jul Brown BU

Mallard Confirmed Breeding in Brookings, Charles Mix, McCook, Meade, Pennington, and Sully counties

Blue-winged Teal Confirmed Breeding: 16 Jun Sully (PY) RDO; 20 Jun Hand (NE) *fide* BFW; 23 Jun Potter (PY) ND; 21 Jul Minnehaha (PY) MRZ

Cinnamon Teal All Reports: 16 Jun Sully RDO; 30 Jun McPherson GO; 02 Jul McPherson DST; 20 Jul Day BU

Northern Shoveler Confirmed Breeding: 16 Jun Sully (PY) RDO; 23 Jun Miner (PY) JSP

Northern Pintail Confirmed Breeding: 16 Jun Sully (PY) RDO; 11 Jul Meade (PY) JLB

Redhead Confirmed Breeding: 08 Jul Day (PY) ND

Ring-necked Duck Confirmed Breeding: 20 Jul Grant (PY) BU

Lesser Scaup All Reports: **04 Jun Meade JLB; 09 Jun Brookings JSP; 16 Jun Charles Mix JSP; 16 Jun Sully RDO**

Bufflehead Only Report: **23 Jun Miner (1 female) JSP**

Common Merganser Only Report: 29 Jun Pennington ND

Gray Partridge Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Meade (PY) EEM; 10 Jul Custer (PY) MMM ... also reported 03 Jun Perkins DB; 10 Jun Lake MS; 20 Jul Day BU; 24 Jul Harding CEM

Ring-necked Pheasant Confirmed Breeding: 21 Jul Minnehaha (PY) MRZ

Ruffed Grouse Confirmed Breeding: 23 Jun Lawrence (PY) DS; 21 Jul Lawrence (PY) DB ... also reported 03 Jun Lawrence SW; 10 Jul Lawrence JSP

Greater Sage-Grouse Only Report: 04 Jun Harding ND

Sharp-tailed Grouse Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Meade (PY) EEM; 29 Jun Ziebach (PY) ND; 30 Jun Pennington (PY) ND; 04 Jul Jackson (PY) ND; 16 Jul Todd (PY) ND

Greater Prairie-Chicken Confirmed Breeding: **21 Jun Hyde (NE) *fide* BFW** ... also reported 24 Jun Tripp RDO

Wild Turkey Confirmed Breeding: 04 Jun Meade (PY) EEM; 06 Jun Pennington (PY) JLB; 09 Jul Lawrence (PY) JSP; 11 Jul Meade (PY) JLB; 21 Jul Brown (PY) BU; 26 Jul Fall River (PY) JSP

Northern Bobwhite All Reports: 24 Jun Tripp RDO; 03 Jul Union BU

Common Loon reported from Brookings, Brown, Marshall, Pennington, and Stanley counties

Red-necked Grebe Confirmed Breeding in Day, Marshall, and Roberts counties

Eared Grebe Confirmed Breeding in Beadle, Brown, Campbell, Charles Mix, Clark, Day, Edmunds, Fall River, Marshall, McPherson, Spink, and Sully counties

Western Grebe Confirmed Breeding in Beadle, Brown, Clark, Day, Deuel, Hamlin, Lake, Marshall, McPherson, Roberts, and Spink counties

Clark's Grebe All Reports: 02 Jun Lake JSP; 04 Jun Butte JLB; 09 Jun Brown ND; 20 Jul Day BU; 21 Jul Brown BU; 22 Jul Brown BU

Double-crested Cormorant Confirmed Breeding in Aurora, Beadle, Brown, Clark, Codington, Corson, Day, Kingsbury, Lake, McPherson, Roberts, and Spink counties

Great Egret Confirmed Breeding in Brown, Brule, Clark, Codington, Kingsbury, and Roberts counties

Snowy Egret Confirmed Breeding: 11 Jun Brown (ON) ND; 12 Jun Codington (NY) ND; 15 Jun Kingsbury (NY) ND; 19 Jul Brule (NY) ND

Little Blue Heron Only Report: 22 Jul Brown BU

Cattle Egret Confirmed Breeding in Brown, Brule, Codington, and Kingsbury counties

Green Heron Confirmed Breeding: 14 Jun Grant (ON) ND

Black-crowned Night-Heron Confirmed Breeding: 11 Jun Brown (NE) ND; 12 Jun Codington (ON) ND; 15 Jun Kingsbury (NE) ND; 22 Jun Brown (NY) ND; **19 Jul Brule (NY) ND**

White-faced Ibis Confirmed Breeding: 11 Jun Brown (NY) ND; 22 Jun Codington (NY) ND; **19 Jul Brule (NY) ND**

Osprey Confirmed Breeding: 25 Jun Custer (NY) ND ... also reported 17 Jun Pennington BFH; 18 Jun Custer BFH; 29 Jun Pennington ND; 06 Jul Pennington JLB

Bald Eagle Only Report: 22 Jul Brown BU

Northern Harrier Confirmed Breeding: 17 Jun Harding (NY) CEM

Sharp-shinned Hawk Confirmed Breeding: 21 Jul Lawrence (NY) DB ... also reported 01 Jul Custer DB

Cooper's Hawk All Reports: 09 Jul Lincoln BFH, MS; 03 Jul Lincoln BU; 03 Jul Union BU; 22 Jul Brown BU

Broad-winged Hawk All Reports: 09 Jun Lincoln RDO; 09 Jul Lawrence JSP

Swainson's Hawk Confirmed Breeding: 04 Jun Harding (ON) ND

Red-tailed Hawk Confirmed Breeding: 01 Jun Meade (ON) EEM; 04 Jun Harding (ON) ND

Ferruginous Hawk Confirmed Breeding: 11 Jun Jerauld (NY) *fide* BFW

Golden Eagle All Reports: 04 Jun Harding ND; 22 Jun Custer BFH; 27 Jun Meade EEM; 29 Jun Meade ND; 26 Jul Fall River JSP

American Kestrel Confirmed Breeding: 21 Jul Beadle (FY) ND

Merlin Only Report: 17 Jun Harding CEM

Prairie Falcon All Reports: 19 Jun Meade EEM; 25 Jun Custer ND; 28 Jun Butte RDO; 30 Jun Meade ND

Sora Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jul Brown (PY) ND; 18 Jul Roberts (PY) ND; 19 Jul Brule (PY) ND; 21 Jul Beadle (PY) ND

American Coot Confirmed Breeding: 09 Jun Brookings (PY) JSP; 16 Jun Sully (ON) RDO; 23 Jun Miner (PY) JSP

Black-bellied Plover Only Report: **11 Jun Sully RDO**

American Golden-Plover Only Report: 22 Jul Brown BU

Semipalmated Plover All Reports: 21 Jul Brown BU; 21 Jul McPherson BU; 29 Jul Sully RDO

Piping Plover Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Sully (PY) RDO; 16 Jun Sully (PY) RDO; 17 Jun Hughes (DD) RDO; 01 Jul Sully (DD) RDO

Killdeer Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jun Beadle (PY) *fide* BFW; 05 Jun Sully (PY) ND; 24 Jun Tripp (ON) RDO

Black-necked Stilt All Reports: **04 Jun Beadle *fide* BFW**; 30 Jun McPherson GO; 02 Jul McPherson DST; 21 Jul McPherson BU

American Avocet Confirmed Breeding in Brown, Campbell, Clark, Edmunds, Fall River, McPherson, and Sully counties

Greater Yellowlegs Early: 20 Jun Meade JLB; 30 Jun McPherson GO; 04 Jul Hughes RDO

Lesser Yellowlegs Early: 16 Jun Sully RDO; 20 Jun Meade JLB; 30 Jun McPherson GO

Solitary Sandpiper All Reports: 04 Jul Hughes RDO; 11 Jul Lawrence JSP; 20 Jul Day BU; 21 Jul Brown BU; 21 Jul McPherson BU; 29 Jul Sully RDO

Willet Confirmed Breeding: 03 Jul Harding (DD) CEM; 06 Jul McPherson (PY) ND

Spotted Sandpiper Confirmed Breeding: **08 Jun Custer (NE) RAP**

Upland Sandpiper Confirmed Breeding: 30 Jun Meade (PY) ND; 04 Jul Jackson (PY) ND

Long-billed Curlew Confirmed Breeding: 03 Jun Custer (PY) MMM

Marbled Godwit reported **01 Jul Sully (189) RDO**

Ruddy Turnstone Only Report: **20 Jul Day BU**

Sanderling Only Report: 19 Jul Sully RDO

Semipalmated Sandpiper Late: 10 Jun Sully RDO; 10 Jun Hyde RDO; 04 Jun Gregory RDO; 01 Jun Deuel BU ... Early: 11 Jul Day ND; 19 Jul Deuel BU; 19 Jul Sully RDO

Least Sandpiper Late: 10 Jun Sully RDO; 10 Jun Hyde RDO; 04 Jun Gregory RDO ... Early: 30 Jun Lake JSP; 03 Jul Union BU; 11 Jul Day ND

White-rumped Sandpiper Late: 20 Jun Meade JLB; 10 Jun Hyde RDO; 02 Jun Lake JSP ... Early: 04 Jul Sully RDO

Baird's Sandpiper Early: 04 Jul Sully RDO; 15 Jul Meade JLB; 20 Jul Day BU

Pectoral Sandpiper Late: 01 Jun Deuel BU ... Early: 19 Jul Deuel BU; 19 Jul Sully RDO; 20 Jul Day BU

Dunlin Only Report: 04 Jun Gregory RDO

Stilt Sandpiper Late: 04 Jun Gregory RDO; 01 Jun Deuel BU ... Early: 20 Jul Day BU; 21 Jul Brown BU; 21 Jul McPherson BU

Buff-breasted Sandpiper Only Report: **29 Jul Sully RDO**

Short-billed Dowitcher All Reports: 20 Jul Day BU; 21 Jul Brown BU; 21 Jul McPherson BU

Long-billed Dowitcher All Reports: 11 Jul Meade JLB; 19 Jul Sully RDO; 22 Jul Brown BU; 25 Jul Sully RDO; 29 Jul Sully RDO

Wilson's Phalarope Confirmed Breeding: 04 Jun Hand (NE) *fide* BFW; 02 Jul McPherson (PY) ND; **04 Jul Jackson (PY) ND; 04 Jul Sully (ON) RDO**

Red-necked Phalarope All Reports: 01 Jun Deuel BU; 04 Jun Gregory RDO

Franklin's Gull Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Brown (CN) ND; 11 Jun Brown (NY) ND; 19 Jun Day (ON) ND; 22 Jun Brown (NY) ND

Bonaparte's Gull All Reports: **20 Jul Day BU; 25 Jul Sully RDO**

Ring-billed Gull Confirmed Breeding: 04 Jun Butte (NY) ND; **13 Jul Clark (NY) ND**

California Gull Confirmed Breeding: **04 Jun Butte (NY) ND**; 10 Jun Stanley (PY) RDO

Herring Gull All Reports: **07 Jun Stanley RDO; 09 Jun Hughes GO; 22 Jun Stanley RDO; 30 Jun McPherson GO**

Lesser Black-backed Gull Only Report: **04 Jul Sully RDO**

Caspian Tern Confirmed Breeding: **10 Jun Stanley (ON) RDO**

Common Tern Confirmed Breeding: 04 Jun Butte (NE) ND; 10 Jun Stanley (ON) RDO; **13 Jul Clark (NY) ND**

Forster's Tern Confirmed Breeding: 11 Jun Brown (NY) ND; 19 Jun Day (NE) ND; 22 Jun Brown (NY) ND; 05 Jul Aurora (CF) ND; **18 Jul Roberts (NY) ND; 25 Jul Brown (NY) ND**

Least Tern Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Stanley (ON) RDO ... also reported 17 Jun Sully RDO; 23 Jun Sully DB; 03 Jul Union BU; 15 Jul Sully DB

Black Tern Confirmed Breeding in Beadle, Brown, Roberts, and Spink counties

Eurasian Collared Dove reported from Custer, Day, Fall River, Grant, Lake, Lawrence, Lincoln, Meade, Pennington, Stanley, and Union counties

Mourning Dove Confirmed Breeding: 04 Jun Lake (NY) JSP; 16 Jun Charles Mix (NE) JSP

Black-billed Cuckoo All Reports: 09 Jun Hughes GO; 23 Jun Sully DB; 29 Jun Lake KB; 30 Jun Lake KB; 03 Jul Lincoln BU; 03 Jul Union BU

Barn Owl Confirmed Breeding: 17 Jun Hughes (PY) RDO ... also reported 17 Jun Sully RDO; 05 Jul Hughes GO; 15 Jul Sully DB

Eastern Screech-Owl Only Report: 11 Jul Lawrence JSP
Great Horned Owl Confirmed Breeding: 17 Jun Sully (FL) RDO; 22 Jun Fall River (FL) BFH
Burrowing Owl Confirmed Breeding: 18 Pennington (NY) ND; 25 Jun Custer (NY) ND; 05 Jul Custer (FL) MMM
Barred Owl All Reports: 15 Jun Lincoln MO; 03 Jul Lincoln BU
Long-eared Owl All Reports: 24 Jun Tripp RDO; 03 Jul Lincoln BU; 23 Jul Pennington RDO
Short-eared Owl All Reports: 29 Jun Ziebach ND; 30 Jun McPherson GO
Northern Saw-whet Owl Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Harding (NY) CEM
Common Poorwill All Reports: 19 Jun Meade EEM; 26 Jun Meade APB; 12 Jul Meade APB; 14 Jul Harding CEM; 27 Jul Meade APB
Whip-poor-will Only Report: 03 Jul Lincoln BU
White-throated Swift All Reports: 09 Jun Custer JLB; 13 Jun Custer GJS; 19 Jun Custer BFH; 24 Jul Fall River JSP; 26 Jul Custer JSP
Ruby-throated Hummingbird reported 09 Jun Custer JLB
Broad-tailed Hummingbird reported from Custer and Lawrence counties
Lewis's Woodpecker All Reports: 19 Jun Custer BFH; 20 Jun Custer BFH; 23 Jun Custer BFH; 01 Jul Custer DB; 07 Jul Custer DB; 23 Jul Custer JSP
Red-naped Sapsucker All Reports: 20 Jun Custer BFH; 10 Jul Lawrence JSP; 22 Jul Custer RDO; 22 Jul Fall River RDO; 22 Jul Pennington RDO; 28 Jul Custer JSP
Downy Woodpecker Confirmed Breeding: 22 Jun Custer (CF) BFH; 27 Jun Meade (FY) EEM
American Three-toed Woodpecker Only Report: 09 Jul Lawrence JSP
Black-backed Woodpecker All Reports: 27 Jun Custer JLB; 12 Jul Lawrence JSP
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher Only Report: 02 Jun Lake JSP
Alder Flycatcher Only Report: **04 Jun Clay DS**
Least Flycatcher Confirmed Breeding: 19 Jul Roberts (FY) RR
Dusky Flycatcher Confirmed Breeding: 20 Jun Custer (NB) BFH; 22 Jun Custer (NB) BFH; 23 Jun Custer (NB) BFH
Cordilleran Flycatcher All Reports: 13 Jun Custer GJS; 22 Jun Custer BFH; 23 Jun Custer BFH; 09 Jul Lawrence JSP; 24 Jul Fall River JSP
Eastern Phoebe Confirmed Breeding: 09 Jun Brookings (NY) JSP
Say's Phoebe Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Meade (CF) EEM; 03 Jul Harding (NY) CEM ... also reported 20 Jul Day BU; 21 Jul McPherson BU; 22 Jul Brown BU
Western Kingbird Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Sully (CF) RDO; 07 Jul Stanley (CF) RDO
Eastern Kingbird Confirmed Breeding: 21 Jun Hyde (NE) *fide* BFW; 30 Jun Meade (ON) ND
Loggerhead Shrike Confirmed Breeding: 28 Jun Butte (NE) RDO; 30 Jun Meade (CF) ND
Yellow-throated Vireo All Reports: 09 Jun Lincoln RDO; 30 Jun Lincoln JSP; 03 Jul Lincoln BU; 03 Jul Union BU
Plumbeous Vireo All Reports: 09 Jun Custer JLB; 21 Jun Custer BFH; 01 Jul Custer DB; 07 Jul Custer DB; 22 Jul Custer RDO; 23 Jul Custer JSP
Warbling Vireo Confirmed Breeding: 22 Jun Custer (NB) BFH
Gray Jay Confirmed Breeding: **20 Jun Custer (FL) BFH** ... also reported 09 Jul Lawrence JSP; 10 Jul Pennington JLB; 26 Jul Custer JSP; 27 Jul Custer JSP
Pinyon Jay reported from Custer and Meade counties
Clark's Nutcracker All Reports: 09 Jun Pennington JLB; 07 Jul Custer DB; 13 Jul Custer JLB
Black-billed Magpie All Reports: 13 Jun Custer GJS; 24 Jun Tripp RDO; 11 Jul Meade JLB; 26 Jul Fall River JSP
Purple Martin Confirmed Breeding: 18 Jul McPherson (FY) RR; 19 Jul Day (FY) RR
Tree Swallow Confirmed Breeding: 19 Jun Custer (FY) BFH
Bank Swallow Confirmed Breeding: 18 Jun Pennington (ON) ND
Cliff Swallow Confirmed Breeding: 04 Jun Harding (ON) ND
Barn Swallow Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Meade (ON) JLB, EEM; 20 Jun Meade (ON) JLB; 09 Jul Lawrence (NY) JSP

Black-capped Chickadee Confirmed Breeding: 22 Jun Minnehaha (FY) MRZ

Red-breasted Nuthatch Confirmed Breeding: **09 Jul Lawrence (NY) JSP** ... also reported 19 Jul Minnehaha NS

Pygmy Nuthatch All Reports: 13 Jun Meade APB; 18 Jun Custer BFH; 19 Jul Fall River RAP; 22 Jul Custer RDO; 27 Jul Custer JSP

Brown Creeper All Reports: 20 Jun Custer BFH; 10 Jul Pennington JLB

House Wren Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Harding (NE) CEM; 12 Jun Custer (CF) MMM; 20 Jun Custer (FY) BFH; 01 Jul Meade (CF) EEM; 12 Jul Butte (ON) JLB

Winter Wren Only Report: **08 Jul Lawrence JSP**

American Dipper Only Report: 08 Jul Lawrence JSP

Golden-crowned Kinglet Only Report: 08 Jul Lawrence JSP

Ruby-crowned Kinglet All Reports: 13 Jun Custer GJS; 20 Jun Custer BFH; 09 Jul Lawrence JSP; 28 Jul Custer JSP

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher Confirmed Breeding: **14 Jun Custer (CF) DS**

Mountain Bluebird Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Meade (FL) EEM; 18 Jun Custer (ON) BFH

Veery Only Report: 17 Jul Marshall RR

Swainson's Thrush Confirmed Breeding: 20 Jun Custer (NB) BFH ... also reported 03 Jun Lawrence SW; 22 Jun Custer BFH; 08 Jul Lawrence JSP; 10 Jul Pennington JLB

Wood Thrush All Reports: 09 Jun Lincoln BFH, RDO; 30 Jun Lincoln JSP; 03 Jul Lincoln BU; 03 Jul Union BU; 14 Jul Lincoln MRZ

Gray Catbird Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jul Fall River (FL) RAP

Northern Mockingbird All Reports: 09 Jun Stanley GO; 12 Jun Fall River RAP; 13 Jun Custer MMM; 15 Jul Pennington JLB

Sage Thrasher All Reports: 28 Jun Butte RDO; 28 Jul Fall River JSP

Brown Thrasher Confirmed Breeding: 02 Jul Custer (FL) MMM

European Starling Confirmed Breeding: 09 Jun Brookings (NY) JSP

Sprague's Pipit All Reports: 03 Jun Perkins DB; 18 Jul McPherson RR; 21 Jul McPherson BU; 27 Jul Faulk MMM

Cedar Waxwing Confirmed Breeding: **09 Jun Lincoln (ON) BFH; 10 Jun Meade (CN) JLB**

Blue-winged Warbler All Reports: 09 Jun Lincoln RDO; 03 Jul Lincoln BU

Virginia's Warbler All Reports: 13 Jun Custer GJS; 14 Jun Custer DS; 21 Jun Custer BFH; 01 Jul Custer DB; 23 Jul Custer JSP

Chestnut-sided Warbler Only Report: **22 Jun Custer BFH**

Ovenbird Confirmed Breeding: **22 Jun Custer (CF) BFH**

Kentucky Warbler All Reports: **09 Jun Lincoln RDO; 03 Jul Lincoln BU**

MacGillivray's Warbler Confirmed Breeding: **22 Jun Custer (CF) BFH; 08 Jul Lawrence (CF) JSP** ... also reported 19 Jun Custer BFH; 20 Jun Custer BFH

Scarlet Tanager All Reports: 09 Jun Lincoln RDO, MRZ; 30 Jun Lincoln JSP; 03 Jul Lincoln BU; 03 Jul Union BU; 14 Jul Lincoln MRZ

Eastern Towhee All Reports: 09 Jun Lincoln MS, RDO, MRZ; 10 Jun Minnehaha MS; 30 Jun Lincoln JSP; 03 Jul Lincoln BU

Brewer's Sparrow All Reports: 04 Jun Harding ND; 22 Jul Fall River RDO

Lark Sparrow Confirmed Breeding: 03 Jun Harding (NE) CEM; 13 Jun Custer (DD) MMM; 13 Jun Sully (NY) RDO; 20 Jun Meade (NY) JLB; 22 Jun Fall River (CF) BFH; 07 Jul Stanley (CF) RDO

Lark Bunting Confirmed Breeding: 27 Jun Harding (CF) ND

Grasshopper Sparrow Confirmed Breeding: 20 Jun Meade (CF) JLB; 22 Jun Jerauld (FL) *fide* BFW; 12 Jul Butte (CF) JLB

Baird's Sparrow All Reports: 03 Jun Perkins DB; 21 Jul McPherson BU

Le Conte's Sparrow All Reports: 04 Jul Deuel BU; 21 Jul McPherson BU

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow All Reports: 04 Jun Beadle *fide* BFW; 22 Jul Brown BU; 25 Jul Sully RDO; 28 Jul Sully ND; 29 Jul Sully RDO

Northern Cardinal Confirmed Breeding: 30 Jun Minnehaha (NB) MRZ

Lazuli Bunting All Reports: 24 Jul Fall River JSP; 26 Jul Fall River JSP
Dickcissel Confirmed Breeding: 21 Jul Beadle (CF) ND
Bobolink Confirmed Breeding: 07 Jul Clark (CF) ND
Red-winged Blackbird Confirmed Breeding: 04 Jun Butte (CF) JLB; 18 Jun Custer (FY) BFH; 20 Jun Hand (FL) *fide* BFW; 12 Jul Lawrence (CF) JLB
Western Meadowlark Confirmed Breeding: 04 Jun Butte (CF) JLB; 04 Jun Meade (CF) JLB; 28 Jun Meade (NY) RDO; 07 Jul Stanley (CF) RDO
Brewer's Blackbird Confirmed Breeding: 18 Jun Custer (ON) BFH; 08 Jul Lawrence (FY) JSP
Common Grackle Confirmed Breeding: 04 Jun Butte (CF) JLB
Great-tailed Grackle All Reports: 02 Jun Lake JSP; 09 Jun Brookings JSP; 09 Jun Lincoln RDO; 03 Jul Union BU; 21 Jul Brown BU
Brown-headed Cowbird Confirmed Breeding: 09 Jun Brookings (FY) JSP
Orchard Oriole Confirmed Breeding: 09 Jul Day (CF) ND; 11 Jul Lawrence (FY) JSP
Bullock's Oriole All Reports: 06 Jul Stanley RDO; 11 Jul Lawrence JSP; 26 Jul Fall River RAP
Baltimore Oriole Confirmed Breeding: 30 Jun Minnehaha (FY) MRZ
Cassin's Finch All Reports: 13 Jun Custer GJS; 01 Jul Custer DB; 22 Jul Custer RDO
Pine Siskin All Reports: 12 Jul Lawrence JSP; 17 Jul Meade EEM; 28 Jul Custer JSP
Lesser Goldfinch All Reports: 10 Jul Fall River RAP; 24 Jul Fall River JSP; 27 Jul Fall River JSP

Reports Requiring Acceptance By The Rare Bird Records Committee

Common Goldeneye 09 Jun Brookings (1 adult male) JSP
Red-breasted Merganser 22 Jun Stanley RDO
Glossy Ibis 22 Jul Brown BU
Peregrine Falcon 28 Jun Butte RDO
Snowy Plover 10 Jun – 29 Jul (multiple individuals and confirmed breeding) RDO
Black-necked Stilt 22 Jun – 06 Jul McPherson (PY) JDW, ND
Sanderling 16 Jun Sully RDO
Stilt Sandpiper 16 Jun Sully RDO
Herring Gull 10 Jun Stanley (CN) RDO
White-winged Dove 26 Jun Pennington *fide* DB
Broad-tailed Hummingbird 30 Jul Stanley RDO
Winter Wren 30 Jun Lawrence (FL) *fide* DC
Hermit Thrush 08 Jun Buffalo *fide* BFW
Prairie Warbler 09 Jun – 26 Jul Lincoln BFH, MS, RDO, MRZ, JSP, BU, DC
Wilson's Warbler 24 Jul Custer MMM
Summer Tanager 03 Jul Lincoln BU
Henslow's Sparrow 02-16 Jun Lake JSP; 20 Jul Day BU
White-crowned Sparrow 23 Jun Custer BFH
Eastern Meadowlark 18 Jun Custer BFH; 07 Jul Stanley RDO
Bullock's Oriole 16 Jun Sully RDO

Contributing Observers

DB	Doug Backlund		
JLB	Jocelyn L. Baker	RAP	Richard A. Peterson
KB	Kristel Bakker	RR	Russell Robert
APB	Addison & Patricia Ball	NS	Nancy Schaefer
DC	Doug Chapman	MS	Mark Schmidtbauer
ND	Nancy Drilling	GJS	Gary & Jan Small
BFW	Bridgette Flanders-Wanner	DST	Daniel Streifel
BFH	Bill Huser	DS	David Swanson
MMM	Michael M. Melius	BU	Bill Unzen
CEM	Charlie Miller	SW	Scott Weins
EEM	Ernest E. Miller	JDW	J. David Williams
GO	Gary Olson	MRZ	Mick Zerr
RDO	Ricky D. Olson		
MO	Mark Otnes		
JSP	Jeffrey S. Palmer		

SDOU FALL MEETING, 6-8 OCTOBER 2007

Jocelyn L. Baker, 3220 Kirkwood Dr., Rapid City 57702

SDOU members and guests met in Pierre at the Ramkota Inn for a weekend of field trips and scientific papers illustrated with Power Point presentations. On Friday evening, following registration and a social hour, Doug Backlund's "Birding in Arizona" narrative accompanied by his superb photographs was a wonderful introduction to the meeting.

Saturday morning's activities began with early morning field trips led by Doug Backlund to the Ft. Pierre National Grasslands and Ricky Olson to Farm Island, LaFramboise Island and the Lake Oahe Dam tailrace. The paper session began with a presentation by David Swanson entitled "Plasma Corticosterone Levels as an Indicator of Stress in Shorebirds in Natural and Managed Habitats." Ricky Olson followed by showing photographs and discussing the first breeding records in SD of the Snowy Plover and Herring Gull. Nick Kaczor, a graduate student at South Dakota State University, informed the group of the "Reproductive Biology and Habitat of the Greater Sage Grouse on the Eastern Fringe of their Distribution." Following lunch, Eileen Dowd Stukel and Nancy Drilling discussed with attendees the possibility of conducting another Breeding Bird Atlas project in the state. This would be a follow up to the atlas project that began in 1988 and concluded in 1993. Two-hundred nineteen bird species were found breeding in the state during that period. Terry Sohl's illustrated paper "Modeling Land Cover Change-Potential Effects on Bird Populations" dealt with future projections of land use and how it may affect habitats. Drawing from his work at the Earth Resources Observations Systems (EROS) Data Center, he highlighted his projections for South Dakota and the pine forests of the American Southeast. The pressures on land use are expected to increase as more bio-fuels are used. Eric Liknes brought the group up to date on breeding biology of American Three-toed Woodpeckers in the northern Black Hills. It was surprising to learn that the woodpecker uses not only spruce trees as nesting sites but also aspen trees. The paper session concluded with Nancy Drilling's "Distribution and Status of Red-necked Grebes in South Dakota: Preliminary Results" which demonstrated that this species of grebe is more numerous than originally thought.

General membership and Board of Directors meetings were held in the late afternoon. It was announced that the 2008 spring meeting will be held in Pickstown 16-18 May with field trips searching for birds at Lake Andes National Wildlife Refuge, along the Missouri River and Fort Randall dam and areas in Charles Mix and Gregory counties.

The 2008 fall meeting will again be held in Pierre while the 2009 spring meeting will be in Custer in mid-May.



Red-necked Grebes nest in small numbers in northeast South Dakota. However, thanks to Nancy Drilling, we know now that more birds are present than we were previously aware of.

Anchorage, Alaska. 6/24/06

Photo: Terry Sohl

Nancy Drilling concluded the day's events with an after-dinner presentation entitled "Sumatran Swamp Saga." Nancy spent three years in Way Kambas National Park in Sumatra, Indonesia, studying the endemic White-winged Duck, also known as the White-winged Wood Duck. Nancy's knowledge of this seriously endangered rarity was clearly demonstrated through her talk and photographs.

Field trips in the Pierre and Fort Pierre area were conducted on Sunday morning. An immature Sabine's Gull was observed at LaFramboise Island, first by Ft. Pierre birder Ricky Olson, and then the rest of the birding group. This species became the undisputed "Bird of the Weekend" since so many of the birders had not observed one before. A check-list of birds observed on the field trips follows:

Cackling Goose	Eurasian-collared Dove
Canada Goose	Mourning Dove
Wood Duck	Great Horned Owl
Gadwall	Burrowing Owl
Mallard	Red-bellied Woodpecker
Blue-winged Teal	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Northern Pintail	Downy Woodpecker
Green-winged Teal	Hairy Woodpecker
Ruddy Duck	Northern Flicker
Ring-necked Pheasant	Blue Jay
Common Loon	American Crow
Pied-billed Grebe	Horned Lark
Horned Grebe	Black-capped Chickadee
Western Grebe	Red-breasted Nuthatch
American White Pelican	White-breasted Nuthatch
Double-crested Cormorant	Marsh Wren
Great Blue Heron	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Osprey	Eastern Bluebird
Northern Harrier	American Robin
Red-tailed Hawk	European Starling
Ferruginous Hawk	American Pipit
American Kestrel	Orange-crowned Warbler
Prairie Falcon	Yellow-rumped Warbler
American Coot	Spotted Towhee
Black-bellied Plover	American Tree Sparrow
Semipalmated Plover	Chipping Sparrow
Killdeer	Vesper Sparrow
American Avocet	Savannah Sparrow
Greater Yellowlegs	Fox Sparrow
Lesser Yellowlegs	Song Sparrow
Least Sandpiper	Lincoln's Sparrow
Baird's Sandpiper	White-throated Sparrow
Dunlin	Harris's Sparrow
Stilt Sandpiper	White-crowned Sparrow
Long-billed Dowitcher	Dark-eyed Junco
Wilson's Snipe	Chestnut-collared Longspur
Franklin's Gull	Northern Cardinal
Bonaparte's Gull	Red-winged Blackbird
Ring-billed Gull	Western Meadowlark
California Gull	Common Grackle
Herring Gull	Purple Finch
Sabine's Gull	House Sparrow
Rock Pigeon	

FIRST BLACK HILLS RECORD OF WHITE-EYED VIREO (*Vireo griseus*)

Jocelyn Baker, 3220 Kirkwood Dr., Rapid City 57702,
Erika Tallman & Dan Tallman, 2120 Taylor Ct., Northfield, MN 55057

On 19 October 2007, Jocie Baker, Erika Tallman and Dan Tallman hiked Little Elk Creek Canyon Trail, located in the Black Hills National Forest near the small town of Piedmont in Meade Co., South Dakota. Five minutes from the trailhead (about 0.25 mi. along the trail) we encountered a small bird with two obvious whitish wing bars. Erika, expecting to see a kinglet with a white eye ring, was surprised to discover the bird's eye had a white iris and the lore/eye area had yellow spectacles. Upon hearing Erika's description Jocie and Dan quickly identified the bird as a White-eyed Vireo. Aware that this record was a first for the Black Hills, Dan took photographs while Jocie confirmed field marks. In addition to the features observed by Erika, Jocie noted the white throat, yellow flanks, white vent, greenish back, grayish head and dark, thick bill. The digital photographs clearly showed all of these field marks. [*One of Dan Tallman's photos of the White-eyed Vireo can be found on the back cover. ~Ed.*]

The vireo leisurely fed on insects among branches about ten feet from the ground in an ironwood (*Ostrya virginiana*) thicket in the floodplain along the dry creek bed. (Farther up the canyon the creek held flowing water.) It was a beautiful sunny fall day with temperatures in the upper 60 degrees Fahrenheit, with a clear blue sky and light breezes. During the previous day, however, there had been exceptionally high winds, with NNW gusts up to 60 mph. For several days prior to the sighting, much of central South Dakota endured rainstorms from the south.

There is only one other West River record for this species (19-20 May 2002, Bennett Co.) and only two other fall records anywhere in the state (21 October 2000, Hughes Co. (Tallman, Dan A. et al. 2001. *Birds of South Dakota, Third Edition, SDOU, Aberdeen*), and 12 October 2001 in Brown Co. (Ron Martin, pers. comm.)

The White-eyed Vireo is a breeding bird of the eastern United States. The western limits of its range stretch from south-central Texas to eastern Iowa. The species has been expanding in the northern parts of its range. There have been increasing sightings from eastern South Dakota as well as from Minnesota, where it may breed. (Hopp, S. L., A. Kirby, and C. A. Boone. 1995. White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*). In *The Birds of North America*, No. 168 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, and the American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, D.C.)

There are five North Dakota records, all from the month of May and from the eastern part of the state. The western-most of these records is

from Bismarck (Ron Martin, pers. comm.).

To the west of South Dakota, Wyoming has four records—two of these are from the fall season (20 September 1989, Casper and 16 November 1994 near Laramie) (Robert Dorn, pers. comm.).

We are also aware of increasing records from Colorado (about thirty-five records by 2002 in the eastern plains; in fact, the Colorado Rare Birds Committee no longer requires documentation for White-eyed Vireo sightings [Semo, pers. comm.]).

This sighting has been submitted to the Rare Bird Records Committee for review.

CAROLINA WREN AT FEEDERS IN SIOUX FALLS, 8/07–12/07

A wren was seen in the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) Backyard Habitat Number #20922 located in Sioux Falls, SD, on 27 August 2007. It landed briefly in a shrub and later on a railing, allowing for identification as a Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*). This was a first time sighting for this backyard site. The wren was feeding in a woodpile with House Sparrows. The bird was seen again in the same area on 9 September. It was again feeding with House Sparrows in a woodpile.

On 30 September, it was seen again under the same circumstances. On 10 November, the bird was back, seen well on a pile of branch trimmings across from the favored woodpile. This time it was feeding with juncos as well as House Sparrows, feeding on seeds and suet. The Carolina Wren was also observed drinking in the birdbath as well as foraging near a small artificial pond. The unusually warm fall of 2007 turned back to normal on 20 November; the wren was not seen again until 25 November 2007. It was subsequently seen 2 December 2007. Seen on 7 December and again 13 December it was still present at press time, 17 December 2007.

The assumption that it was the same bird in all sightings is probably sound. Photos from each sighting were compared and all markings seemed the same. It has a special place on the NWF species list as the sixtieth species for this backyard habitat. A common bird of the American Southeast, Carolina Wren sightings are uncommon for this area.
~ Mick Zerr, 2101 S. Crestwood Road, Sioux Falls 57105.



Carolina Wren is a common bird of the southeastern United States. A vagrant to the Great Plains, this bird was found at Mick Zerr's home feeder area on 27 August 2007. It was being seen at press time December 17.

Minnehaha County, SD. 12/13/07

Photo: Mick Zerr



Contents

President's Page.....	75
by Rosemary Draeger	
From Our Past...in SD Bird Notes	76
by Douglas E. Chapman	
General Notes: <i>Swallow-tailed Kite in Mitchell;</i> <i>Odd House Finch Behavior in Brandon:</i>	77
by Richard Rames and Douglas E. Chapman	
SDOU 2008 Spring Meeting.....	79
by Ron Mabie	
2006 Report of the Rare Bird Records Committee	81
by David L. Swanson	
2007 Summer Seasonal Reports	86
by Jeffrey S. Palmer	
SDOU 6-8 October 2007 Fall Meeting, Pierre.....	92
by Jocelyn L. Baker	
First Black Hills Record of White-eyed Vireo	94
by Jocelyn L. Baker and Dan A. Tallman	
Carolina Wren in Minnehaha County.....	95
by Mick Zerr	
White-eyed Vireo	Back Cover
Photo: Dan A. Tallman, Meade County, 10/19/07	