

SOUTH DAKOTA Ornithologists' Union

Northern Saw-whet Owl

expelling a pellet

Stanley Co., 1/29/2016

Photo: Kenny Miller



S O U T H



D A K O T A

B I R D

N O T E S

Vol. 68

March 2016

No. 1

SOUTH DAKOTA BIRD NOTES, the official publication of the South Dakota Ornithologists' Union, is sent to all members whose dues are paid for the current year. Life membership: \$400; Family Life membership (one subscription to *SD Bird Notes*): \$500; Sustaining membership: \$40; Regular membership: \$20; Family membership (one household; one subscription to *SD Bird Notes*): \$25; Junior/Student membership: \$10; Library Subscription: \$30. Single and back copies: Members, \$5; non-members, \$6. All dues, contributions, and orders for back copies should be sent to the SDOU Treasurer, Rosemary Draeger, 2520 E. Whisper Trail, Sioux Falls, SD, 57108. Manuscripts for publication and change of address notices should be sent to Douglas Chapman (3108 S. Holly Ave., Sioux Falls, SD, 57105) or preferably, e-mailed to: sfbirdclub@sio.midco.net. **SDOU website: www.sdou.org**.

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Vol. 68

MARCH 2016

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Bring a friend and share the birds.

I am looking forward to the spring meeting in Oacoma and plan on inviting a couple of friends to join us there. One friend has been a birder for a while but has never joined SDOU or attended a meeting and the other one is just getting interested in birding so I think this would be a great occasion



to check out SDOU. The location is an area than many people have never birded even though it has some great places and a variety of species to see. The central location should also make it well within everyone's easy driving distance as opposed to the far east or west side of our great state.

You do not know if someone is interested unless you give them the opportunity. We can all start by sharing our knowledge of birds and birding. Bring a friend or friends and help all of us welcome them to SDOU Also please introduce yourself to new attendees and help them feel they are part of the group.

The Friday night program on Grassland Bird Management should be very informative. The Saturday night keynote address by Jerry Toll on the Hitchcock HawkWatch and raptor banding should be interesting and a good complement to the rest of our activities. Jerry will be discussing the significance of the HawkWatch and give tips on identifying hawks at a distance.

Please plan on attending and bring some friends.

See you in Oacoma!

Roger Dietrich

FLEDGLING TRACTS

JASON THIELE

A Beginner's Guide to Birderspeak (Part IV)

This article is part of a series of terms used in the birding world. In previous issues, I defined some terms associated with the birding hobby and the people who enjoy it. With this article I begin a transition from a focus on birders to a focus on birds.

Nemesis Bird

Virtually every birder, regardless of experience level, has at least one bird species that he/she has hoped to see for a long time, but has continually failed to find despite a fair amount of effort to do so. The nemesis bird can run the gamut from a “yard list” Northern Cardinal, a species which you’ve often seen in your neighborhood but that never seems to make an appearance at your own feeders, to the “life list” Ross’s Gull, a species you’ve chased in three different states where it has been reported but that always seems to vanish by the time you’re able to get there.



Although it can be maddening when everyone else seems to have seen a certain species that constantly evades you, nemesis birds keep birding interesting. I know that nemesis birds have motivated me to spend more time in the field, just like some of my opponents during my high school track and field days motivated me to put in more miles at practice. I currently have two main nemesis birds that come to mind: the Northern Goshawk and the Connecticut Warbler. The goshawk has especially frustrated me over the last few years. I work at an excellent hawkwatch site along the Mississippi River, where on a good day in September or October, hundreds of Sharp-shinned Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, and other raptors can be seen. During my first fall on the job, we had at least one person at our river overlook nearly every day tallying all of the raptors that flew by. I was one of five observers that year, and I was the only one who didn't record a Northern Goshawk! And I still haven't been fortunate enough to spot one of these relatively rare visitors from the north woods, despite my boss's insistence that “It's only a matter of time.” Maybe it's time for a trip back to South Dakota and the Black Hills. The Connecticut Warbler is another species that I have inexplicably missed for several years' worth of migrations. Although it is a species that has a reputation for being hard to detect, especially when it's not on the breeding grounds, I still can't believe that with all

of the time I spend re-learning its song and calls before every migration season and checking every single dense thicket of vegetation while I'm out birding in the spring and fall, this species always sneaks by me. Maybe this will be my year.

Trash Bird

This term is generally used for various bird species that are so common that a birder has to go through virtually no effort to find them. Often the species that are called trash birds are introduced/non-native species, such as House Sparrows, European Starlings, and Rock Pigeons. Even some native species are sometimes given this label, especially those that are ubiquitous and highly tolerant of human-altered landscapes, such as Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle and American Robin. Personally, I'm of the same attitude as a birder I know who once said, "All native birds are sexy." Even though I generally don't get that excited about seeing a Red-winged Blackbird, I do appreciate them for their simple beauty, their yearly arrival that announces the coming of spring, and the fact that they are such a successful species.

Another thing I try to keep in mind is that one person's trash bird is another person's life bird. One of my professors at the University of Nebraska co-advised some students at a university in Colombia, and one spring they came to visit him and present their research in Lincoln. Their research in Colombia was focused on the Columbian endemic Red-bellied Grackle, a beautiful bird that seemed very exotic to me. However, the visiting students were very struck by the Common Grackles feeding on city lawns. It's amazing how your location changes your perspectives!

I've discovered time and time again that virtually any bird species has the potential to excite someone, and even though it makes me cringe a little when someone gets excited about seeing his/her lifer Eurasian Collared-Dove (a bird I have no qualms whatsoever about calling a "trash bird" due to its non-native status in the US), I try to keep in mind that it is actually quite a handsome bird (though I would never give its voice any compliments) and it's only here because of human activity. But most importantly, I remind myself that whenever someone is excited about a bird, regardless of its origins, a step is being taken in the right direction to ensure that we will always have birds to enjoy. For example, a little boy who gets interested in birds because he likes to throw crumbs to the pigeons in the city park is no doubt ultimately going to be a better advocate for birds than his buddy who is more interested in the latest video game release.

BREEDING BIRD SURVEY OF GOOD EARTH STATE PARK AT BLOOD RUN
by Linda Johnson

During the 2015 breeding season, Rosemary Draeger and I conducted a breeding bird survey of South Dakota's newest state park, Good Earth State Park at Blood Run in Lincoln County. The survey was funded by a South Dakota GF&P Wildlife Diversity grant.

Good Earth's 529 acres are located about 10 miles southeast of Sioux Falls, along the Big Sioux River and South Dakota-Iowa border. Good Earth is easily accessible and has facilities for hiking and birding. Currently, construction has started on a Visitor Center and an alternate entrance.



Good Earth State Park prairie near the parking lot

Bald Eagle, Piping Plover, and Osprey potentially breed at Good Earth and are monitored by both the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Wildlife Division Natural Heritage Program (NHP) and Cornell Lab of Ornithology's *Wildlife Action Plan* for 2014. There is an active Bald Eagle nest near Brandon, about six miles upstream from

the park. Participants on a Sioux Falls Bird Club field trip in September, 2013, observed Piping Plover on a sandbar in the Big Sioux River at the edge of the park. Osprey have been seen periodically in the immediate area. Other birds monitored by the NHP and listed on its Threatened and Endangered Species List are potentially to be found nesting in Good Earth. These include Cooper's Hawk, American Woodcock, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush and Scarlet Tanager. These birds are known to breed in other eastern deciduous forests in the area.

Figure 1. Good Earth State Park trail system and habitats



Survey Methods
We surveyed along marked trail system routes (Figure 1): **Burr Oak**, **Grand Ravine**, **River Lookout Loop**, and **Riparian**. These trails feature woodland, woodland edge and grassland habitats. Additionally, we surveyed the outer western and

northern edge of the park covering the largest grassland area. That area also features a small pond and some cedars (Figure 2). Finally, we surveyed a woodland trail (as yet unnamed) on the south edge of the park, which opened officially in late August and which was only partially accessible during the early part of the season. That trail also goes down to the river.

We surveyed for parts of nineteen days and two evenings, beginning 11 April 2015 and continuing through 22 September 2015. Routes and different sections of the park were walked at varying times of day, so that each was occasionally visited in early morning, late morning, afternoon, or evening. Recorded bird calls were used at night to survey for Eastern Screech Owl, but none responded. We documented species using breeding status, habitat type, and the breeding pair relative abundance codes published in Peterson (1995). The four primary categories for breeding status are Confirmed (CO), Probable (PR), Possible (PO), and Observed (O). Within these categories, specific characteristics or behaviors must be observed before a category can be coded. The designation of PO was assigned when species were only observed but were within “safe dates” according to the *South Dakota Breeding Bird Atlas Project 2 (SDBBA2; <http://www.rmbo.org/SDBBA2/>)*. If the species is observed within “safe dates,” one may assume that it is a possible summer resident breeding species.

Results of Field Survey April through September 2015

We observed 108 species from April to September. Of species observed during the survey, the behaviors of 34 were classified as Confirmed (CO), 14 as Probable, 23 as Possible and 37 species were marked as Observed, with no evidence of breeding activity. Most of the species documented during the survey were as expected – birds common to eastern deciduous forest and oak savanna.

Confirmed Breeding (CO)

In order to designate confirmed breeding, we had to observe specific behaviors or breeding activities—adult carrying food, nest with young, adult feeding recently fledged young, occupied nest, recently fledged young incapable of flight, distraction display, carrying nesting material, or nest building. The birds are listed below along with the dates when we identified confirmed status. Those tracked by the NHP are noted with an asterisk and **bold text**.

Table 1 - Confirmed breeders.

American Robin	5/12, 7/20	Swamp Sparrow	7/29
Baltimore Oriole	5/19	Downy Woodpecker	6/3
Bank Swallow	6/9, 6/29	Eastern Kingbird	7/29
Barn Swallow	6/9, 7/16	Eastern Phoebe	4/11
Black-capped Chickadee	5/19, 7/16	Eastern Towhee	7/16
Blue Jay	7/16	European Starling	8/10
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher*	7/22	Field Sparrow	6/7
Bobolink	6/24	Gray Catbird	7/29
Brown Thrasher	7/22	House Wren	5/19, 6/3,
Canada Goose	5/20		6/24, 7/20
Chipping Sparrow	6/3, 6/7	Indigo Bunting	7/29
Dickcissel	7/22	Killdeer	5/20
Northern Cardinal	7/29	Lark Sparrow	5/20, 7/16
Red-bellied Woodpecker	5/20, 7/20	Red-winged Blackbird	6/9, 7/22
Red-headed Woodpecker	7/16	Tree Swallow	5/12, 6/7
Red-tail Hawk	4/11	Yellow Warbler	5/19
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	6/29	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	7/20
Scarlet Tanager*	8/10		

We confirmed **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** on 22 July carrying food. Other observation dates were 12 May; 29 June with territorial display; 29 July; and 10 August. The gnatcatchers

were observed in the same location on all days, in the cottonwoods on the Riparian Trail loop. According to Tallman et al. (2002) nesting records in Lincoln and Minnehaha counties occur from 4 May to 4 July. Safe dates are 25 May - 31 July. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher populations are increasing and spreading northward according to Kershner and Ellison (2012). However, South Dakota once designated the species as “critically imperiled because of extreme rarity” (five or fewer occurrences). The breeding range map in Kershner and Ellison (2012) shows gnatcatchers at the very extreme northern edge of their range in southeastern South Dakota. According to Kershner and Ellison (2012), they prefer habitat with little disturbance.

Scarlet Tanager was observed 12, 19 May; 9, 29 June; 20, 22 July; 10 August; and 28 September. Safe dates are 1 June – 31 July. On 12 May we observed a pair. On 20 July we heard and observed an agitated singing male. On 10 August we confirmed breeding, observing a fledgling on the path. Identification was verified from a photo on Cornell Lab’s *All About Birds* (<https://www.allaboutbirds.org>). Tallman et al. (2002) indicate that nesting records extend from 10 June through 14 July, with fall migration as late as 29 September Brookings County, 68 miles north of Good Earth State Park.

Of those species monitored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s *Wildlife Action Plan* for 2014, we established breeding behavior for the Red-headed Woodpecker and Bobolink.

Red-headed Woodpecker were frequently seen mid through late summer in the upper parking area and along the road boundary: 24 June; 16, 20, 22, 29 July; 10, 25 August; and 12, 28 September. On 16 July, we saw a Red-headed Woodpecker carrying food. Late summer sightings included an immature bird. According to Tallman et al. (2002) populations are declining in the Dakotas.

We observed several **Bobolink** in the northern grassland of the park 20 May; 3, 7 June, and confirmed breeding on 24 June (adult carrying food and distraction display). We saw no Bobolink after that date. We speculate that nests had been destroyed because the grassland where they had nested was mowed.

Probable Breeding (PR)

We identified 14 species with probable breeding status. Behaviors which allowed us to designate probable status included multiple males singing, a pair in suitable habitat, courtship, agitated behavior, and singing in the same place on 2 or more occasions and 7 or more days apart.

Table 2 - Probable breeders.

American Goldfinch	5/19, 7/20	Northern Flicker	5/12
Blue-winged Teal	5/5	Orchard Oriole	7/16
Brown-headed Cowbird	5/19	Sedge Wren	6/29, 7/16
Common Yellowthroat	7/16, 7/22	Spotted Sandpiper	6/9
Eastern Bluebird	5/5	Whip-poor-will	5/20
Hairy Woodpecker	5/5	White-breasted Nuthatch	6/24
Mallard	5/5	Yellow-throated Vireo*	7/22

Eastern Whip-poor-will was heard in several of the wooded areas beyond the entrance of the main trails on 20 May. We also observed one during the day on 12 May. One perched on a low branch in the shade approximately a foot off the ground.

Yellow-throated Vireos were observed nine times between 12 May and 12 September, often at the edges of the lower woodland. SDBBA2 safe dates are 25 May – 31 July. According to the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology (2002), this species is of “moderate conservation importance because of its relatively small breeding distribution, its low density throughout its range, its dependence on mature deciduous forests...”.

Eastern Bluebirds, included in this category, were observed eight times near suitable nesting areas or nest boxes. However, in spite of numerous sightings, the only behavior relative to breeding status was the occurrence of pairs of bluebirds. Bluebirds were observed in the upper area of the park near the entrance, along the Burr Oak Trail edge, and on the Riparian Trail near the river edge woodland loop. Bluebirds were observed 11, 22 April; 5, 12, 20 May; 3, 9, 24, 29 June; and 10 August. Safe dates are 1 May through 31 July. We did see a House Wren in a bluebird box on one occasion.

Brown-headed Cowbird was designated as a probable breeder when we observed a pair 19 May. We observed cowbirds eight times, but not in the large numbers which had been observed at other regional state parks where we have conducted surveys. Lowther (1993) cites a conservation interest in Brown-headed Cowbird because of its impact on other species. Of the eight cowbird observations at Good Earth, none involved any brood parasitism.

Sedge Wrens occurred only in specific habitat at Good Earth—in the central low floodplain west of the river. According to Herkert et al. (2001), Sedge Wrens are opportunistic nesters, moving into suitable nesting areas as conditions change. Additionally, the wrens nest from late May to June in northern parts of their range (e.g., North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin), and July to September in southern parts of their range (e.g., Kansas). Our observations included 12, 20 May; 7, 9, 24, 29 June; 16, 20, 22 July with multiple males singing each time we encountered them. Tallman et al. (2002) cite nesting dates ranging from 6 June in Brown County to 9 July in Moody County with migration in October to November. SDBBA2 safe dates are 1 June – 31 July. During the Adams Preserve 2008 survey (<https://gfp.sd.gov/wildlife/funding/docs/small-grants-reports/Draeger%202008.pdf>) we first observed a Sedge Wren on 22 July and were readily able to confirm breeding during each visit to the preserve over the next three weeks, later than the designated safe dates in South Dakota.

Possible Breeding (PO)

We had hoped to confirm the following species, but we were only able to categorize them as possible because we observed them in suitable habitat and/or singing during safe dates. They did not exhibit other breeding behavior which would have allowed us to categorize them at a higher breeding status. Once again, those tracked by NHP are indicated with an asterisk and **bold**.

Table 3 - Possible breeders

American Crow	Common Grackle
American Redstart	Eastern Wood Pee-wee
Bald Eagle*	Great Crested Flycatcher
Barred Owl	Great Horned Owl
Belted Kingfisher	House Finch
Black-billed Cuckoo	House Sparrow
Blue Grosbeak	Mourning Dove
Cedar Waxwing	Red-eyed Vireo
Chimney Swift	Ring-necked Pheasant
Clay-colored Sparrow	Rock Pigeon

We observed **Bald Eagles** on six occasions: 11 April; 7 June; 29 July; 10, 25 Aug; and 22 Sept. On 10 August we observed an immature eagle flying from a perch near the river. Although we were unable to locate a nest, we assigned PO breeding status since observations were within the safe period and in suitable habitat. SDBBA2 safe dates are 15 May – 31 July. We are aware that Bald Eagles nest several miles away near Brandon.

Ruby-Throated Hummingbirds were observed in the riparian area along the river in the woodland on July 22 and at the parking area feeders on 29 July 29; 10, 25 August; and September 22. We were unable to find more solid evidence of breeding. Tallman et al. (2002) note that nesting dates range from early June to mid-August with the majority of nesting confirmed in the northeastern part of the state.

A few species of note that we were able to categorize as possibly breeding due to their presence during safe dates and occurring in low numbers are noted below.

Red-eyed Vireos were heard very few times: our only observations were once in mid-May and once in early June and then no observations until mid-September. Had they been breeding in the park, we should have heard them singing all summer.

American Redstarts were observed on the Riparian Trail, along the wooded area of the river loop, early in the breeding season on 12, 19 May; and 3 June. Only a single bird was observed on these dates.

A **Blue Grosbeak** was observed only once, on 20 July, at the beginning of the Burr Oak Trail woodland edge just beyond the barn area.

A **Barred Owl** was observed 11 April in trees near the river on the newest unnamed woodland trail (south and east). This area was not readily accessible early in the season. Furthermore, the grant period did not begin until 15 April, primarily after the period when nesting might have been observed. Barred Owls had been reported by Rosemary Draeger during late fall 2014 when two owls were vocalizing.

Species that we anticipated detecting but never observed included American Woodcock, Wood Thrush, Eastern Screech Owl, Blue-winged Warbler, and Ovenbird. Each is known to breed at some parks in southeast South Dakota. Species we hoped might be expanding their range, but which were less likely to be found, that we did not observe included Northern Bobwhite, Acadian Flycatcher, Tufted Titmouse, Bell's Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, and Prothonotary Warbler.

Summary Observations

1. A number of species that we classified as probable or possible breeders may breed in the park and could be confirmed by future observations. Additionally, some of the species categorized as observed only may potentially exhibit breeding behavior in the future, as they are known to nest in surrounding areas (Peterson 1995, Tallman et al. 2002).
2. Long-term habitat concerns within the park include natural successional changes and the impact of increasing numbers of visitors. The housing developments north and south of the park are in close proximity to park property and may contribute to dis-

turbance and negatively affect and/or discourage breeding for some species of birds.

3. Given the serious declines in grassland habitat in the country and within the state (Peterson 1995), the north grassland areas such as where Bobolink nest, deserve special conservation attention. We recommend careful review of planned development and mowing schedules for this area.
4. The low observed numbers of Orchard Oriole, Red-eyed Vireo, and American Redstart and the absence of Ovenbird, Wood Thrush, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, American Woodcock, Northern Bobwhite, and Eastern Screech Owl, all of which are breeding species of eastern deciduous forest, underscore the importance of preserving the scarce fragments of this habitat in South Dakota.

The entire report *Breeding Bird Survey of Good Earth State Park at Blood Run 2015* including a complete list of references and photos can be accessed at SD GF&P (<http://gfp.sd.gov/wildlife/funding/docs/small-grants-reports/breeding-birds-survey-good-earth-state-park.pdf>). And a detailed database of dates, habitat, and breeding status compiled by Rosemary Draeger accompanied the report and is available on request from GF&P.

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Figure 2.
*Good Earth State Park
northern grasslands
and small pond*

SEASONAL REPORTS

JEFFREY S. PALMER

The 2015 Fall Season

Compiled By: Jeffrey S. Palmer

01 August 2015 to 30 November 2015

College of Arts & Sciences

Dakota State University, Madison, SD 57042

There were 314 species, including 7 rarities, reported during the 2015 Fall Season. The 10-year average (2005-2014) is 310. Below, I have tried to highlight the more significant sightings (early/late dates as given in the online database and species that are significantly out of range). For early/late migration dates, I have listed the three earliest/latest dates (by county). However, if these did not include a sighting East River, West River, and along the Missouri River, I have included the earliest/latest reported date from the missing region also. Included at the end of this report is a list of species that were not reported this year but might be expected during the Fall Season. A species is placed on the list if it was not reported this year but had been reported during fall in at least 2 of the previous 5 years. Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of consecutive years (up to 4) that the species has appeared on the list during the season. **Little Blue Heron** and **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** went unreported for the 5th consecutive Fall Season and were therefore removed from the list.

Greater White-fronted Goose Early: 17 Oct Lake JSP; 25 Oct Charles Mix KP, RM; 29 Oct Kingsbury JSP ... Late: 28 Nov Charles Mix KP; 27 Nov Gregory RM; 23 Nov Edmunds GO

Snow Goose Early: 03 Aug Clark CV; 15 Aug Pennington ND; 03 Sep Kingsbury ND; 25 Oct Charles Mix KP

Ross's Goose Early: 14 Nov Brookings KCJ, KP, SS; 15 Nov Hamlin RDO; 21 Nov Lyman RDO ... Late: 30 Nov Edmunds GO; 27 Nov Day GO

Cackling Goose Early: 13 Nov Lyman SS; 15 Nov Jones ND; 15 Nov Kingsbury CA, KP

Trumpeter Swan All Reports: 20 Sep Meade ND; 30 Sep Custer SS; 14 Oct Meade ND; 22 Oct Pennington SS

Tundra Swan Early: 10 Oct Brown CV, GO; 13 Nov Kingsbury RDO, SS; **21 Nov Jackson JLB, ND** ... Late: 27 Nov Day WS; 21 Nov Kingsbury JSP; 16 Nov Brown GO

Wood Duck Late: 27 Nov Custer JLB; 03 Nov Hughes DB; 03 Nov Brown GO

Gadwall Late: 29 Nov Pennington JLB; 28 Nov Charles Mix KP; 27 Nov Fall River ND; 25 Nov Kingsbury JSP

American Wigeon Late: 29 Nov Pennington JLB; 28 Nov Charles Mix KP; 27 Nov Gregory RM; 27 Nov Fall River and Custer JLB; 25 Nov Kingsbury JSP

American Black Duck Only Report: 08 Aug Kingsbury KCJ

Blue-winged Teal Late: 07 Nov Miner JSP; 28 Oct Charles Mix RM; 25 Oct Kingsbury SS; 10 Oct Pennington SS

Northern Shoveler Late: 27 Nov Fall River ND, JLB; 25 Nov Kingsbury JSP; 25 Nov Brown GO; 21 Nov Lyman RDO

Northern Pintail Late: 29 Nov Charles Mix KP; 21 Nov Lake JSP; 18 Nov Gregory RM; 20 Sep Pennington RSL

Green-winged Teal Late: 28 Nov Charles Mix KP; 27 Nov Custer JLB; 26 Nov Stanley KM; 25 Nov Brown GO

Canvasback Late: 26 Nov Gregory RM; 23 Nov Charles Mix RM; 21 Nov Lyman RDO; 21 Nov Kingsbury JSP

Redhead Late: 29 Nov Pennington JLB; 28 Nov Hughes RDO; 28 Nov Charles Mix KP; 25 Nov Brown GO

Ring-necked Duck Late: 29 Nov Pennington JLB; 28 Nov Hughes RDO; 21 Nov Lyman RDO; 21 Nov Kingsbury JSP

Greater Scaup All Reports: 13 Nov Hamlin SS; 28 Nov Hughes RDO; 29 Nov Stanley RDO

Lesser Scaup Late: 28 Nov Charles Mix KP; 27 Nov Gregory RM; 26 Nov Hughes KM; 25 Nov Kingsbury JSP; 23 Nov Pennington CLG

Surf Scoter All Reports: 25 Oct Kingsbury DS; 14 Nov Kingsbury DS; 15 Nov Kingsbury CA, KP; 21 Nov Kingsbury JSP; 24 Nov Yankton DS

Black Scoter Only Report: 24 Nov Yankton DS

Long-tailed Duck All Reports: 20 Nov Hughes SS; 21 Nov Douglas (7) KP; 28 Nov Yankton DS

Bufflehead Early: 05 Oct Pennington CLG; 21 Oct Meade JLB; 21 Oct Minnehaha MKZ; 01 Nov Charles Mix KP; 01 Nov Lyman RDO

Common Goldeneye Early: 07 Nov Perkins ND; 13 Nov Gregory RM; 13 Nov Hamlin SS

Hooded Merganser Early: 03 Oct Brookings KCJ; 10 Oct Brown CV, GO; 18 Oct Meade ND; 24 Oct Hughes RDO ... Late: 29 Nov Pennington JLB; 28 Nov Charles Mix KP; 27 Nov Gregory RM; 27 Nov Fall River ND; 25 Nov Kingsbury JSP

Common Merganser Early: 03 Aug Pennington CLG; 20 Aug Stanley DB; 06 Nov Charles Mix RM; 13 Nov Hamlin SS

Red-breasted Merganser Early: 25 Oct Stanley DB, KM; 24 Nov Yankton DS ... Late: 29 Nov Stanley RDO

Ruddy Duck Late: 28 Nov Yankton DS; 25 Nov Kingsbury JSP; 22 Nov Gregory and Charles Mix KP; 21 Oct Meade JLB

Ruffed Grouse Only Report: 25 Oct Lawrence ND

Greater Sage-Grouse Only Report: 08 Aug Harding CEM

Pacific Loon Only Report: **22 Nov Butte ND**

Common Loon Early: 01 Aug Charles Mix RM; 01 Aug Hughes JC; 06 Aug Stanley RDO; 04 Sep Deuel ND; 12 Sep Butte EK ... Late: 26 Nov Hughes KM; 25 Nov Pennington ND; 24 Nov Yankton DS; 31 Oct Marshall MO

Pied-billed Grebe Late: 29 Nov Pennington JLB; 29 Nov Charles Mix RM; 15 Nov Codington GO

Horned Grebe Early: 26 Sep Hughes DB; 07 Oct Charles Mix RM; 09 Oct Lyman SS; 25 Oct Kingsbury RDO, SS; 31 Oct Meade RSL ... Late: 28 Nov Yankton DS; 28 Nov Gregory KP; 25 Nov Pennington ND; 07 Nov Kingsbury JSP

Red-necked Grebe All Reports: 04 Sep Deuel ND; 29 Sep Douglas KP; 30 Sep Gregory RM; 18 Oct Douglas KP; 18 Oct Gregory RM; 01 Nov Lyman RDO

Eared Grebe Late: 27 Nov Gregory RM; 16 Nov Pennington ND; 10 Nov Meade ND; 25 Oct Kingsbury SS, RDO, JSP

Western Grebe Late: 29 Nov Pennington ND; 28 Nov Yankton DS; 28 Nov Stanley RDO; 28 Nov Charles Mix KP; 21 Nov Kingsbury JSP

Clark's Grebe Only Report: 18 Oct Buffalo RDO

American White Pelican Late: 26 Nov Hughes KM; 23 Nov Charles Mix RM; 21 Nov Lyman RDO; 21 Nov Kingsbury JSP; 31 Oct Butte ND, JLB

Double-crested Cormorant Late: 28 Nov Lake JSP; 28 Nov Charles Mix KP; 27 Nov Fall River ND, JLB

American Bittern All Reports: 12 Aug Marshall GO; 29 Aug Marshall MO; 05 Sep Jones SS; 06 Sep Faulk ND; 12 Sep Day GO; 27 Sep Moody JSP

Great Blue Heron Late: 28 Nov Stanley RDO; 27 Nov Charles Mix RM; 22 Nov Pennington RSL; 16 Nov Faulk MMM

Great Egret Late: 17 Oct Roberts CV; 17 Oct Lake JSP; 16 Oct Minnehaha MKZ; 05 Oct Hughes KM; 21 Sep Mellette SS

Snowy Egret Late: 10 Oct Codington JSP; 19 Sep Day GO; 18 Sep Stanley RDO

Cattle Egret Late: 06 Oct Yankton DS; 03 Oct Kingsbury JSP; 03 Oct Brookings KP

Green Heron Late: **06 Nov Lincoln MKZ**; 10 Oct Minnehaha CA; 03 Oct Brookings KCJ

Black-crowned Night-Heron Late: 10 Oct Brown GO, CV; 04 Oct Meade EK; 03 Oct Kingsbury JSP; 25 Aug Hyde ND

White-faced Ibis Late: 25 Oct Kingsbury JSP; 26 Sep Douglas KP; 14 Sep Miner ND; 07 Sep Charles Mix KP; 14 Aug Fall River ND

Turkey Vulture Late: 20 Oct Hughes DB; 11 Oct Lawrence EK; 08 Oct Lake JSP; 08 Oct Charles Mix RM

Osprey Early: 02 Aug Pennington JLB; 20 Aug Stanley DB; 29 Aug Lincoln KP ... Late: 11 Nov Sully KM; 02 Nov Pennington CLG; 30 Oct Lincoln MKZ

Northern Harrier Late: 28 Nov Hughes RDO; 27 Nov Fall River ND; 27 Nov Day GO

Sharp-shinned Hawk Early: 05 Sep Marshall and Roberts ND; 07 Sep Walworth ND

Northern Goshawk All Reports: 07 Sep Harding CEM; 29 Oct Butte ND; 08 Nov Perkins ND; 27 Nov Brookings KCJ

Broad-winged Hawk Early: 23 Aug Pennington RSL; 29 Aug Lincoln CA, KP; 06 Sep Lawrence RSL; 10 Sep Hughes KM ... Late: 06 Oct Edmunds GO; 05 Oct Charles Mix RM; 02 Oct Brown GO; 26 Sep Fall River ND

Swainson's Hawk Late: 30 Sep Pennington OCW; 29 Sep Charles Mix RM; 28 Sep Meade RDO; 27 Sep Moody JSP

Ferruginous Hawk Late: 26 Nov Hughes KM; 14 Nov Harding CEM; 06 Nov Perkins ND

Rough-legged Hawk Early: 19 Sep Charles Mix KP; 14 Oct Butte and Harding ND; 31 Oct Marshall MO

Golden Eagle Early: 10 Oct Stanley RDO; 06 Nov Corson ND; 06 Nov Sully KM

Virginia Rail All Reports: 07 Aug Douglas KP; 08 Aug Lake KCJ; 16 Aug Fall River ND; 05 Sep Brown ND; 07 Sep Meade SW

Sora Late: 21 Sep Mellette SS; 20 Sep Perkins ND; 15 Sep Jones SS; 05 Sep Brown ND; 25 Aug Hughes ND

American Coot Late: 29 Nov Pennington JLB; 28 Nov Hughes RDO; 28 Nov Charles Mix KP; 23 Nov Edmunds GO

Sandhill Crane Early: 08 Oct Hughes DB; 10 Oct Pennington SS; 12 Oct Meade EEM; 13 Oct Charles Mix RM; 28 Oct Douglas KP ... Late: 23 Nov Edmunds and Brown GO; 21 Nov Charles Mix RM; 08 Nov Perkins ND

Black-bellied Plover All Reports: 10 Aug Charles Mix DS, RM; 03 Sep Charles Mix RM; 07 Sep Pennington RSL

American Golden-Plover Early: **10 Aug Charles Mix KP**; 25 Aug Hand ND; 07 Sep Pennington RSL ... Late: 25 Oct Charles Mix KP; 22 Oct Meade ND; 15 Sep Jones SS; 14 Sep Kingsbury ND

Semipalmated Plover Late: 12 Oct Charles Mix KP; 10 Oct Brown CV; 14 Sep Sanborn ND; 10 Aug Butte ND

Piping Plover All Reports: 08 Aug Charles Mix RM; 10 Aug Charles Mix RM; 25 Aug Sully ND; **17 Sep Meade RSL**

Killdeer Late: 29 Nov Pennington JLB; 15 Nov Hutchinson KP; 07 Nov Minnehaha MKZ, CA; 03 Nov Clay DS

Black-necked Stilt All Reports: **29 Aug Marshall MO**; **05 Sep Brown ND**; **06 Sep Potter ND**

American Avocet Late: 07 Nov Kingsbury JSP; 01 Nov Lyman RDO; 01 Nov Charles Mix KP; 27 Sep Butte EK

Spotted Sandpiper Late: 14 Sep Pennington CLG; 14 Sep Lake ND; 07 Sep Stanley RDO

Solitary Sandpiper Late: 12 Sep Minnehaha JC, CA; 10 Sep Charles Mix RM; 09 Sep Haakon SS

Greater Yellowlegs Late: 29 Oct Kingsbury JSP; 17 Oct Roberts CV; 14 Oct Charles Mix RM; 09 Oct Pennington RSL

Willet Late: 22 Aug Aurora ND; 18 Aug Minnehaha JC; 12 Aug Marshall GO; 10 Aug Charles Mix RM, KP, DS

Lesser Yellowlegs Late: 25 Oct Charles Mix KP; 17 Oct Roberts CV; 12 Oct Hutchinson CA; 03 Oct Meade RSL

Upland Sandpiper Late: 07 Sep Sully KM; 25 Aug Hyde ND; 22 Aug Hanson ND; 18 Aug Custer MMM

Long-billed Curlew All Reports: 02 Aug Butte ND; 15 Aug Pennington JLB

Hudsonian Godwit All Reports: 25 Aug Sully ND; 05 Sep Brown ND

Marbled Godwit All Reports: 08 Aug Kingsbury JC; 10 Aug Butte ND; 12 Aug Brown and Marshall GO; 25 Aug Sully ND

Stilt Sandpiper Late: 08 Oct Meade RSL; 03 Oct Kingsbury JSP; 26 Sep Douglas KP; 26 Aug Charles Mix RM

Sanderling Late: 17 Sep Meade RSL; 02 Sep Marshall ND; 25 Aug Sully ND

Dunlin Only Report: 08 Nov McPherson BP

Baird's Sandpiper Late: 17 Oct Roberts CV; 13 Oct Charles Mix RM; 08 Oct Meade RSL

Least Sandpiper Late: **07 Nov Minnehaha MKZ, CA**; 13 Oct Charles Mix RM; 03 Oct Meade RSL

White-rumped Sandpiper Early: 08 Aug Brown GO; 08 Aug Lake KCJ; 10 Aug Butte ND; 22 Aug Brule ND ... Late: 05 Sep Brown ND; 25 Aug Hand ND; 23 Aug Charles Mix ND

Buff-breasted Sandpiper Early: 01 Aug Kingsbury (73) JSP; 08 Aug Brown GO; 10 Aug Charles Mix DS, KP ... Late: 03 Sep Beadle ND; 22 Aug Hanson ND; 17 Aug Charles Mix KP

Pectoral Sandpiper Late: 13 Oct Charles Mix RM; 03 Oct Meade RSL; 03 Oct Kingsbury JSP

Semipalmated Sandpiper Late: **10 Oct Charles Mix KP**; 17 Sep Meade RSL; 14 Sep Sanborn ND

Short-billed Dowitcher Only Report: 22 Aug Aurora ND

Long-billed Dowitcher Late: **30 Nov Clay DS**; 07 Nov Kingsbury JSP; 17 Oct Roberts CV; 10 Oct Pennington SS

Wilson's Snipe Late: 10 Nov Brown BP; 04 Nov Marshall GO; 17 Oct Roberts CV; 19 Sep Meade ND; 10 Aug Charles Mix KP

American Woodcock Only Report: 05 Oct Hughes EDS

Wilson's Phalarope Late: 28 Sep Charles Mix RM; 14 Sep Sanborn ND; 12 Sep McCook JC, CA; 09 Sep Jones SS

Red-necked Phalarope All Reports: 25 Aug Sully ND; 05 Sep Brown ND; 07 Sep Pennington RSL

Sabine's Gull All Reports: 14 Sep Dewey and Sully SS; 04 Oct Charles Mix KP; 05 Oct Charles Mix RM; 17 Oct Lyman RSL

Bonaparte's Gull Early: 19 Aug Charles Mix RM; 04 Sep Brookings KCJ; 27 Sep Hughes RDO; 24 Oct Pennington ND ... Late: 28 Nov Charles Mix KP; 26 Nov Hughes KM; 23 Nov Moody KCJ; 22 Nov Butte ND

Little Gull Only Report: 20 Nov Lyman SS

Franklin's Gull Late: 25 Nov Charles Mix RM; 21 Nov Minnehaha CA; 07 Nov Kingsbury JSP; 04 Oct Meade EK

Mew Gull Only Report: 20 Nov Lyman SS

Ring-billed Gull Late: 29 Nov Stanley RDO; 28 Nov Gregory and Charles Mix KP; 27 Nov Fall River ND, JLB; 25 Nov Kingsbury JSP

California Gull Late: 29 Nov Stanley RDO; 27 Nov Fall River ND, JLB; 22 Nov Butte ND

Herring Gull Early: 01 Aug Hughes JC; 17 Aug Stanley RDO; 22 Aug Kingsbury JSP; 27 Nov Fall River JLB, ND ... Late: 29 Nov Stanley RDO; 28 Nov Charles Mix KP; 26 Nov Hughes KM; 23 Nov Moody KCJ

Thayer's Gull Early: 17 Oct Lyman RSL; 01 Nov Stanley RDO; 11 Nov Potter RDO, SS

Lesser Black-backed Gull Early: 14 Sep Stanley DB; 23 Sep Yankton DS; 21 Oct Minnehaha MKZ ... Late: 20 Nov Hughes SS, RDO; 11 Nov Walworth and Potter SS, RDO; 31 Oct Minnehaha MKZ, JC, CA

Least Tern Late: 24 Aug Hughes DB; 23 Aug Stanley RDO; 12 Aug Charles Mix RM

Caspian Tern Late: 18 Sep Stanley RDO; 13 Sep Lyman RDO; 12 Sep Butte EK

Black Tern Late: 19 Sep Lake JSP; 14 Sep Sanborn ND; 13 Sep Moody ND; 07 Sep Charles Mix KP; 06 Sep Pennington JLB

Common Tern Late: **21 Oct Gregory RM**; 03 Oct Hughes RDO, KM; 18 Aug Stanley RDO; 16 Aug Fall River ND; 15 Aug Kingsbury CA

Forster's Tern Late: 18 Oct Lyman RDO; 07 Oct Hughes DB; 23 Sep Yankton DS; 19 Sep Day GO

Mourning Dove Late: 26 Nov Clay GJS; 22 Nov Minnehaha CA; 15 Nov Brookings RDO; 18 Oct Pennington RSL

Yellow-billed Cuckoo All Reports: 23 Aug Lincoln ND; 29 Aug Union CA, GJS, KP; 31 Aug Hughes EDS; 03 Sep Stanley ND

Black-billed Cuckoo All Reports: 18 Aug Clay DS; 23 Aug Hutchinson ND

Barn Owl All Reports: 23 Aug Tripp (NY) ND; 16 Sep Hughes DB; 02 Oct Stanley DB

Snowy Owl Only Report: 29 Nov Charles Mix KP

Burrowing Owl Late: **17 Oct Custer MMM**; 11 Oct Pennington RSL; 21 Sep Jackson SS; 02 Sep Stanley ND

Barred Owl Only Report: 12 Sep Lincoln ND

Northern Saw-whet Owl Confirmed Breeding: 09 Aug Harding (NY) CEM ...Early: 01 Oct Brookings KCJ; 01 Nov Gregory RM; 01 Nov Sully KM

Common Nighthawk Late: 06 Oct Charles Mix KP; 05 Oct Lake JSP; 05 Oct Hughes DB; 12 Sep Butte SW

Common Poorwill All Reports: 02 Aug Sully KM; 09 Aug Sully KM; 22 Aug Custer CA, JC; 29 Aug Custer ND; **27 Sep Lawrence SW**

Eastern Whip-poor-will Only Report: 10 Aug Charles Mix RM

Chimney Swift Late: 23 Sep Yankton DS; 20 Sep Brown GO; 15 Sep Douglas KP; 24 Aug Pennington CLG

White-throated Swift Late: **05 Oct Pennington CLG**; 07 Sep Custer DS, JSP; 05 Sep Lawrence DB

Ruby-throated Hummingbird Late: 05 Oct Charles Mix RM; 03 Oct Edmunds JDW; 29 Sep Clay GJS; 17 Sep Pennington ND

Broad-tailed Hummingbird All Reports: 01 Aug Custer RDO; 02 Aug Custer RDO

Rufous Hummingbird All Reports: 01 Aug Custer RDO; 02 Aug Custer RDO; 16 Aug Fall River JLB; 21 Aug Pennington ND

Belted Kingfisher Late: 28 Nov Lake JSP; 23 Nov Pennington CLG; 16 Nov Lawrence DB; 17 Oct Hughes DB

Lewis's Woodpecker All Reports: 01 Aug Custer RDO; 22 Aug Custer CA, JC; 22 Nov Lawrence JLB

Red-headed Woodpecker Late: 04 Oct Lincoln CA; 03 Oct Hughes KM; 20 Sep Charles Mix KP; 15 Sep Jones SS

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker Late: 01 Nov Charles Mix RM; 06 Oct Hughes KM; 06 Oct Haakon SS; 04 Oct Minnehaha CA

Red-naped Sapsucker Late: 08 Sep Lawrence DB; 23 Aug Pennington RSL; 23 Aug Custer JC, CA

American Three-toed Woodpecker Only Report: 23 Aug Custer CA, JC

Black-backed Woodpecker Only Report: 24 Oct Pennington ND

Pileated Woodpecker All Reports: 05 Sep Roberts ND; 12 Sep Roberts CV, GO; 10 Oct Roberts JSP

Merlin Early: 02 Aug Custer RDO; 29 Aug Marshall MO; 02 Sep Stanley ND

Gyr Falcon All Reports: 15 Nov Jackson ND; 26 Nov Sully KM

Peregrine Falcon Early: 17 Aug Charles Mix KP; 29 Aug Marshall MO; 01 Sep Minnehaha CA; 07 Sep Butte ND ... Late: 26 Oct Pennington CLG; 18 Oct Meade RSL; 15 Oct Lincoln CA; 05 Oct Charles Mix RM

Prairie Falcon Early: 25 Aug Hyde ND; 02 Sep Stanley ND

Olive-sided Flycatcher Early: 10 Aug Charles Mix KP; 12 Aug Roberts CV; 14 Aug Douglas KP; 05 Sep Custer DS, JSP ... Late: 12 Sep McCook JC, CA; 10 Sep Hughes DB; 08 Sep Douglas KP

Western Wood-Pewee Late: 06 Sep Fall River DS, JSP; 29 Aug Custer ND; 26 Aug Pennington OCW

Eastern Wood-Pewee Late: 19 Sep Yankton JC, CA; 13 Sep Lincoln ND, CA; 13 Sep Clay GJS

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher Early: 11 Aug Charles Mix KP; 23 Aug Roberts MO; 23 Aug Stanley RDO, SS ... Late: 07 Sep Charles Mix KP; 01 Sep Douglas KP; 01 Sep Clay DS

Willow Flycatcher Late: **07 Oct Lyman SS**; 06 Sep Union JC; 04 Sep Brookings ND; 08 Aug Jones SS

Least Flycatcher Late: 24 Sep Stanley RDO; 12 Sep Roberts GO, CV; 04 Sep Brookings ND; 22 Aug Custer JC, CA

Dusky Flycatcher All Reports: 01 Aug Custer RDO; 22 Aug Custer CA, JC

Cordilleran Flycatcher All Reports: 01 Aug Custer RDO; 21 Aug Fall River ND; **06 Sep Meade RSL**

Eastern Phoebe Late: 03 Oct Brookings KCJ; 02 Oct Minnehaha JC, CA; 02 Oct Lake JSP; 28 Sep Clay DS; 06 Sep Fall River DS, JSP

Say's Phoebe Late: 07 Sep Sully KM; 07 Sep Harding CEM; 05 Sep Pennington JLB; 05 Sep Jones SS; 05 Sep Custer DS, JSP; 29 Aug Roberts MO

Great Crested Flycatcher Late: 15 Sep Hughes DB; 12 Sep Lincoln ND; 08 Sep Haakon SS

Cassin's Kingbird Only Report: **06 Sep Fall River DS, JSP**

Western Kingbird Late: 13 Sep Lyman RDO; 06 Sep Potter ND; 06 Sep Douglas KP; 04 Sep Meade RSL

Eastern Kingbird Late: **27 Sep Douglas KP**; 19 Sep Yankton JC, CA; 13 Sep Lyman RDO; 01 Sep Jackson ND

Loggerhead Shrike Late: 20 Sep Pennington RSL; 15 Sep Stanley DB; 09 Sep Haakon SS; 22 Aug Roberts CV

Northern Shrike Early: 13 Oct Charles Mix RM; 17 Oct Lyman RSL; 18 Oct Buffalo and Hughes RDO; 18 Oct Custer MMM; 24 Oct Kingsbury JSP

Bell's Vireo Late: 07 Sep Charles Mix KP; 01 Sep Hughes EDS; 29 Aug Pennington RSL

Yellow-throated Vireo Late: 13 Sep Lincoln ND; 13 Sep Clay GJS; 12 Sep Union ND; 12 Sep Roberts GO, CV

Plumbeous Vireo All Reports: 21 Aug Fall River ND; 29 Aug Custer ND; 01 Sep Meade RSL; 05 Sep Custer DS, JSP; 06 Sep Custer DS, JSP

Blue-headed Vireo Early: 20 Aug Clay GJS; 01 Sep Roberts CV; 07 Sep Lincoln JC, MKZ ... Late: **08 Oct Lake JSP**; 05 Oct Hughes KM; 01 Oct Brookings KCJ

Warbling Vireo Late: 28 Sep Clay GJS; 22 Sep Hughes EDS; 19 Sep Union JC, CA; 19 Sep Lake JSP; 09 Sep Pennington OCW

Philadelphia Vireo Early: 23 Aug Roberts MO; 29 Aug Union CA, KP; 07 Sep Stanley RDO ... Late: 06 Oct Yankton DS; 12 Sep Lincoln MKZ, JC, CA

Red-eyed Vireo Late: **01 Nov Brown BP**; 04 Oct Hughes DB; 26 Sep Lake JSP; 01 Sep Meade RSL

Gray Jay All Reports: 23 Aug Custer CA, JC; 17 Sep Lawrence JLB; 24 Oct Lawrence ND; 14 Nov Lawrence RSL; 29 Nov Lawrence RDO

Clark's Nutcracker All Reports: 01 Aug Custer RDO; 05 Sep Custer DS, JSP; 06 Sep Custer DS, JSP

Black-billed Magpie reported 09 Oct Lyman SS

Purple Martin Late: 04 Sep Brookings ND; 01 Sep Douglas KP; 29 Aug Lake JSP; 26 Aug Charles Mix RM

Tree Swallow Late: 10 Oct Minnehaha MKZ, CA; 04 Oct Lincoln CA; 03 Oct Lake JSP; 25 Aug Pennington CLG; 17 Aug Charles Mix KP

Violet-green Swallow Late: 24 Aug Pennington CLG; 21 Aug Fall River ND; 01 Aug Custer RDO

Northern Rough-winged Swallow Late: 14 Sep Lake and Kingsbury ND; 26 Aug Charles Mix RM; 19 Aug Pennington CLG

Bank Swallow Late: 09 Sep Haakon SS; 22 Aug Roberts CV; 22 Aug Kingsbury JSP; 22 Aug Aurora ND; 17 Aug Charles Mix KP

Cliff Swallow Late: **20 Sep Pennington RSL**; 13 Sep Charles Mix KP; 07 Sep Lincoln MKZ

Barn Swallow Late: 10 Oct Roberts JSP; 10 Oct Charles Mix KP; 10 Oct Brown GO, CV; 02 Oct Butte ND

Red-breasted Nuthatch Early: 28 Aug Brown GO; 29 Aug Union CA, KP; 15 Sep Hughes KM

Pygmy Nuthatch All Reports: 01 Aug Pennington RSL; 22 Aug Custer CA, JC

Brown Creeper Early: 27 Sep Roberts KM; 05 Oct Brown GO; 05 Oct Hughes DB

Rock Wren All Reports: 21 Aug Fall River ND; 31 Aug Pennington ND; 10 Sep Pennington ND

Canyon Wren All Reports: 01 Aug Custer RDO; 21 Aug Fall River ND; 05 Sep Custer DS, JSP; 06 Sep Custer DS, JSP

House Wren Late: 08 Oct Douglas KP; 06 Oct Haakon SS; 06 Oct Clay DS; 06 Oct Charles Mix KP

Winter Wren Early: 27 Sep Marshall KM; 02 Oct Hughes DB ... Late: 10 Oct Roberts JSP; 06 Oct Hughes KM

Sedge Wren Late: 22 Oct Lake JSP; 06 Oct Charles Mix KP; 05 Oct Hughes KM

Marsh Wren Late: 07 Nov Brown BP; 21 Oct Pennington OCW; 10 Oct Minnehaha MKZ, CA; 10 Oct Charles Mix KP

Carolina Wren All Reports: 07 Sep Lincoln MKZ; 19 Sep Yankton CA, JC

American Dipper Only Report: 08 Sep Lawrence DB

Golden-crowned Kinglet Early: 10 Oct Charles Mix KP; 15 Oct Lake JSP; 22 Oct Clay GJS

Ruby-crowned Kinglet Early: 01 Sep Brown GO; 11 Sep Hughes EDS; 11 Sep Stanley SS ... Late: 16 Nov Lawrence DB; 03 Nov Brown GO; 30 Oct Hughes DB

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher Late: 07 Sep Lincoln MKZ; 07 Sep Charles Mix KP; 06 Sep Union JC; 06 Sep Douglas KP; 29 Aug Custer ND

Eastern Bluebird Late: 16 Nov Lawrence DB; 15 Nov Gregory RM; 01 Nov Charles Mix RM; 31 Oct Marshall MO

Mountain Bluebird Late: 16 Oct Custer ND; 07 Oct Meade ND; 26 Sep Pennington JLB; 26 Sep Harding CEM; 26 Sep Fall River ND

Townsend's Solitaire Early: 30 Sep Hughes KM; 26 Oct Edmunds JDW; 10 Nov Brown GO

Veery Only Report: 04 Sep Brookings KCJ

Gray-cheeked Thrush Only Report: 01 Oct Brookings KCJ

Swainson's Thrush Early: 24 Aug Clay GJS; 25 Aug Charles Mix RM; 25 Aug Hughes DB; 29 Aug Lake JSP; 29 Aug Lincoln KP; 29 Aug Marshall MO ... Late: 07 Oct Brookings KCJ; 06 Oct Hughes EDS; 03 Oct Pennington ND

Hermit Thrush Early: 24 Sep Pennington ND; 01 Oct Brookings KCJ; 03 Oct Lake JSP ... Late: 24 Oct Lake JSP; 17 Oct Minnehaha CA; 10 Oct Roberts JSP; 24 Sep Pennington ND

Wood Thrush All Reports: 23 Aug Lincoln ND; 07 Sep Lincoln JC

Gray Catbird Late: 15 Oct Lake JSP; 05 Oct Hughes KM, EDS; 04 Oct Lincoln CA; 24 Sep Pennington ND

Brown Thrasher Late: 06 Oct Hughes EDS; 06 Oct Haakon SS; 03 Oct Pennington ND; 03 Oct Lake JSP; 03 Oct Brookings KP, KCJ

Sage Thrasher Only Report: 08 Aug Fall River RSL

American Pipit Early: 17 Sep Meade RSL; 03 Oct Kingsbury JSP; 06 Oct Clay DS ... Late: **30 Nov Clay DS**; 13 Nov Kingsbury SS; 07 Nov Minnehaha MKZ, CA; 24 Oct Meade JLB

Sprague's Pipit All Reports: 19 Sep Butte ND

Bohemian Waxwing All Reports: 30 Oct Hughes KM; 01 Nov Hughes DB; 02 Nov Hughes DB; 05 Nov Hughes RDO; 08 Nov Perkins ND; 13 Nov Hughes DB

Ovenbird Late: 27 Sep Lake JSP; 17 Sep Clay GJS; 12 Sep Roberts GO; 29 Aug Pennington RSL

Northern Waterthrush Early: 23 Aug Brown GO; 23 Aug Roberts MO; 29 Aug Union CA, KP ... Late: **03 Oct Brookings KCJ**; 07 Sep Lincoln MKZ; 01 Sep Hughes EDS

Blue-winged Warbler Only Report: **07 Sep Lincoln JC**

Black-and-white Warbler Early: 17 Aug Clay DS; 19 Aug Hughes DB; 20 Aug Union DS; 23 Aug Roberts MO ... Late: 30 Sep Hughes KM; 28 Sep Stanley RDO; 14 Sep Lake ND

Tennessee Warbler Early: 24 Aug Douglas KP; 29 Aug Marshall MO; 01 Sep Brown GO; 07 Sep Walworth ND; 19 Sep Butte ND ... Late: 04 Oct Hughes RDO; 24 Sep Brown GO; 20 Sep Perkins ND

Orange-crowned Warbler Early: 24 Aug Stanley DB; 26 Aug Charles Mix RM; 29 Aug Pennington RSL; 31 Aug Brown GO ... Late: 20 Oct Hughes KM, DB; 10 Oct Stanley RDO; 10 Oct Roberts JSP; 10 Oct Charles Mix KP; 06 Oct Haakon SS

Nashville Warbler Early: 20 Aug Union DS; 21 Aug Lake JSP; 23 Aug Clay GJS; 23 Aug Minnehaha ND; 30 Aug Lawrence RSL ... Late: 06 Oct Minnehaha JC; 04 Oct Charles Mix KP; 03 Oct Lake JSP; 09 Sep Pennington OCW

Virginia's Warbler All Reports: 22 Aug Custer CA, JC; **05 Sep Custer DS, JSP**

MacGillivray's Warbler All Reports: 05 Sep Custer DS, JSP; 05 Sep Lawrence DB; 07 Sep Custer DS, JSP

Mourning Warbler All Reports: 25 Aug Stanley DB; 29 Aug Marshall MO; 01 Sep Hughes EDS

Common Yellowthroat Late: 07 Oct Meade ND; 05 Oct Pennington CLG; 05 Oct Hughes KM, EDS; 04 Oct Minnehaha JC

American Redstart Late: 03 Oct Hughes KM; 17 Sep Clay GJS; 12 Sep Union ND; 08 Sep Lawrence DB; 07 Sep Lincoln JC

Magnolia Warbler Only Report: 24 Aug Hughes DB

Bay-breasted Warbler Only Report: 12 Sep Lincoln CA et. al

Blackburnian Warbler All Reports: 19 Aug Clay GJS; 20 Aug Union DS; 06 Sep Faulk ND; 06 Sep Union JC

Yellow Warbler Late: 30 Sep Hughes EDS; 28 Sep Clay GJS; 27 Sep Charles Mix RM; 19 Sep Meade ND; 14 Sep Lake ND

Chestnut-sided Warbler Early: 20 Aug Clay GJS; 25 Aug Lake JSP; 26 Aug Edmunds GO; 05 Sep Lawrence DB ... Late: 12 Sep Lake JSP; 07 Sep Lincoln MKZ; 06 Sep Union JC

Blackpoll Warbler Only Report: 09 Sep Brown GO

Black-throated Blue Warbler All Reports: 02 Oct Hughes DB; 04 Oct Hughes DB, RDO; 05 Oct Hughes KM

Palm Warbler All Reports: 26 Sep Lake JSP; 30 Sep Clay DS; 03 Oct Kingsbury JSP

Yellow-rumped Warbler Early: 29 Aug Codington CV; 04 Sep Brookings KCJ; 06 Sep Faulk ND; 07 Sep Walworth ND ... Late: 10 Nov Jones DB; 06 Nov Hughes DB; 25 Oct Douglas KP

Black-throated Green Warbler All Reports: 06 Sep Union JC; 07 Sep Lincoln MKZ; 26 Sep Lake JSP; 06 Oct Haakon SS

Canada Warbler All Reports: 26 Aug Hughes KM; 29 Aug Marshall MO; 08 Sep Clay GJS

Wilson's Warbler Early: 18 Aug Stanley RDO; 19 Aug Hughes DB; 23 Aug Minnehaha ND; 31 Aug Pennington ND ... Late: **01 Nov Charles Mix KP**; 06 Oct Haakon SS; 05 Oct Hughes KM; 17 Sep Douglas KP

Yellow-breasted Chat Late: 22 Sep Hughes EDS; 09 Sep Sully KM; 06 Sep Stanley RDO; 05 Sep Custer DS, JSP; 04 Sep Brookings KCJ

Scarlet Tanager Late: 07 Sep Lincoln JC; 01 Sep Minnehaha CA; 29 Aug Union KP, CA

Western Tanager Late: 06 Sep Meade RSL; 06 Sep Fall River DS, JSP; 05 Sep Lawrence DB

Spotted Towhee Late: 30 Oct Hughes KM; 18 Oct Lyman RDO; 10 Oct Jackson SS; 07 Oct Douglas KP

Eastern Towhee Late: 29 Sep Minnehaha JC; 27 Sep Lincoln CA; 05 Aug Gregory RM

American Tree Sparrow Early: 01 Oct Brookings KCJ; 05 Oct Charles Mix RM; 16 Oct Hughes DB; 17 Oct Jones RSL; 17 Oct Meade JLB

Chipping Sparrow Late: 07 Nov Charles Mix KP; 25 Oct Douglas KP; 21 Oct Clay GJS; 07 Oct Meade ND

Clay-colored Sparrow Late: 17 Oct Gregory KP; 10 Oct Hughes RDO; 06 Oct Haakon SS; 04 Oct Minnehaha JC

Brewer's Sparrow All Reports: 08 Aug Fall River RSL; 14 Aug Fall River ND

Field Sparrow Late: 16 Oct Charles Mix RM; 11 Oct Custer MMM; 10 Oct Roberts JSP

Vesper Sparrow Late: 17 Oct Lake JSP; 17 Oct Charles Mix KP; 11 Oct Pennington RSL

Lark Sparrow Late: 10 Oct Jackson SS; 10 Oct Brown GO; 01 Oct Hughes DB

Lark Bunting Late: 15 Sep Meade RSL; 14 Sep Sanborn ND; 12 Sep Pennington JLB

Savannah Sparrow Late: **30 Nov Clay DS**; 24 Oct Kingsbury JSP; 18 Oct Lyman RDO; 11 Oct Custer RSL

Grasshopper Sparrow Late: 20 Sep Perkins ND; 19 Sep Meade ND; 13 Sep Pennington JLB; 22 Aug Brule ND; 08 Aug Kingsbury JC

Le Conte's Sparrow Early: 29 Sep Minnehaha JC; 30 Sep Clay DS; 01 Oct Hughes KM ... Late: 17 Oct Minnehaha JC, CA; 13 Oct Charles Mix RM; 06 Oct Clay DS

Nelson's Sparrow All Reports: 01 Oct Hughes KM; 04 Oct Hughes RDO; 05 Oct Hughes KM

Fox Sparrow Early: 29 Sep Douglas KP; 02 Oct Hughes KM; 03 Oct Lake JSP ... Late: 18 Nov Brookings KCJ; 12 Nov Hughes DB; 10 Nov Brown GO

Song Sparrow Late: 27 Nov Fall River ND, JLB; 20 Nov Lincoln MKZ; 18 Nov Brookings KCJ; 03 Nov Hughes DB

Lincoln's Sparrow Early: 02 Sep Hughes EDS; 05 Sep Custer DS, JSP; 07 Sep Lincoln MKZ ... Late: 22 Oct Lake JSP; 17 Oct Minnehaha JC, CA; 13 Oct Charles Mix RM; 06 Oct Haakon SS

Swamp Sparrow Late: 29 Oct Stanley RDO; 24 Oct Lake JSP; 17 Oct Hughes RSL

White-throated Sparrow Early: 13 Sep Lincoln ND; 16 Sep Stanley RDO; 19 Sep Charles Mix KP; 19 Sep Lake JSP; 03 Oct Pennington ND ... Late: 06 Nov Hughes DB; 04 Nov Lake JSP; 22 Oct Lincoln MKZ; 14 Oct Pennington OCW

Harris's Sparrow Early: 28 Sep Hughes DB, EDS; 29 Sep Minnehaha JC; 01 Oct Brown GO; 01 Oct Lake JSP; 04 Oct Butte JLB ... Late: 30 Nov Clay DS; 22 Nov Minnehaha CA; 05 Nov Hughes RDO, DB; 05 Nov Brown GO; 18 Oct Custer MMM

White-crowned Sparrow Early: 19 Sep Butte ND; 20 Sep Meade ND; 20 Sep Pennington RSL; 28 Sep Hughes DB; 04 Oct Lincoln CA ... Late: 12 Nov Hughes DB; 04 Nov Lake JSP; 02 Nov Charles Mix RM; 21 Oct Pennington OCW

Dark-eyed Junco Early: 10 Sep Hughes DB; 19 Sep Lake JSP; 23 Sep Stanley RDO

Lapland Longspur Early: **10 Oct Minnehaha CA, MKZ**; 31 Oct Marshall MO; 13 Nov Jerauld SS; 13 Nov Miner RDO; 22 Nov Charles Mix KP

Chestnut-collared Longspur All Reports: 18 Aug Custer MMM; 25 Aug Hughes ND; 20 Sep Perkins ND; 04 Oct Custer MMM

Snow Bunting Early: 01 Nov Harding ND; 04 Nov Marshall GO; 13 Nov Kingsbury RDO, SS; 23 Nov Charles Mix RM

Rose-breasted Grosbeak Late: 13 Sep Lincoln ND; 12 Sep Union ND; 06 Sep Clay GJS

Black-headed Grosbeak Late: 18 Oct Hughes EDS; 24 Sep Pennington ND; 09 Sep Jones SS

Blue Grosbeak Late: 14 Sep Miner ND; 09 Sep Haakon SS; 07 Sep Charles Mix KP

Lazuli Bunting All Reports: 16 Aug Fall River JLB; 21 Aug Fall River ND; 05 Sep Fall River DS, JSP; 06 Sep Fall River DS, JSP

Indigo Bunting Late: 16 Sep Clay GJS; 11 Sep Stanley KM; 09 Sep Jones SS; 07 Sep Lincoln MKZ

Dickcissel Late: 30 Sep Clay DS; 07 Sep Lincoln MKZ; 23 Aug Minnehaha DC

Bobolink Late: 06 Sep Douglas KP; 05 Sep Custer MMM; 04 Sep Brookings ND; 22 Aug Brule ND

Red-winged Blackbird Late: 26 Nov Stanley KM; 25 Nov Kingsbury JSP; 22 Nov Pennington RSL

Western Meadowlark Late: 28 Nov Stanley RDO; 24 Nov Custer MMM; 22 Nov Pennington RSL; 04 Nov Brown GO

Yellow-headed Blackbird Late: 22 Nov Pennington RSL; 07 Nov Kingsbury JSP; 24 Oct Meade JLB; 26 Sep Hughes DB

Rusty Blackbird Early: 17 Oct Meade JLB; 24 Oct Kingsbury JSP; 27 Oct Hughes DB ... Late: 22 Nov Clay DS; 22 Nov Charles Mix KP; 15 Nov Day and Codington GO; 31 Oct Butte ND

Brewer's Blackbird Late: 21 Nov Brookings KCJ; 14 Nov Lake MKZ; 13 Nov Sanborn SS, RDO; 11 Nov Potter SS, RDO; 09 Oct Jones SS

Common Grackle Late: 27 Nov Stanley RDO; 27 Nov Lincoln MKZ; 21 Nov Brookings KCJ; 24 Oct Meade JLB

Brown-headed Cowbird Late: 13 Nov Sanborn SS, RDO; 17 Oct Roberts CV; 17 Oct Minnehaha JC, CA; 17 Oct Lake JSP; 13 Oct Charles Mix RM; 22 Aug Fall River JC, CA

Orchard Oriole Late: 06 Sep Roberts CV; 06 Sep Charles Mix RM; 29 Aug Pennington RSL

Baltimore Oriole Late: 16 Sep Roberts CV; 11 Sep Stanley SS; 09 Sep Haakon SS; 09 Sep Charles Mix RM

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch All Reports: 29 Oct Meade JLB; 31 Oct Lawrence ND; 01 Nov Lawrence JLB; 15 Nov Harding CEM; 17 Nov Meade DB

Pine Grosbeak All Reports: **29 Oct Hughes DB; 30 Oct Hughes DB**; 01 Nov Douglas KP; 06 Nov Sully KM; 30 Nov Edmunds GO

Purple Finch Early: 30 Sep Brown GO; 30 Sep Hughes RDO; 04 Oct Roberts CV

Cassin's Finch Only Report: 06 Sep Custer DS, JSP

Red Crossbill Early: 14 Nov Brookings CA

Common Redpoll Early: 01 Nov Lyman RDO; 06 Nov Perkins ND; 09 Nov Roberts CV

Pine Siskin Early: 02 Oct Roberts CV; 03 Oct Charles Mix RM; 12 Oct Brookings KCJ

Lesser Goldfinch All Reports: 16 Aug Fall River JLB, ND; 22 Aug Fall River CA, JC; 05 Sep Fall River DS, JSP; 06 Sep Fall River DS, JSP

Reports Requiring Acceptance By The Rare Bird Records Committee

- Red-breasted Merganser** 19 Sep Yankton CA, JC
- Yellow-billed Loon** 13 Nov Gregory RM
- Horned Grebe** 23 Aug Minnehaha DC; 30 Aug Hughes DB
- Northern Goshawk** 23 Aug Charles Mix ND
- Golden Eagle** 01 Aug Hughes JC; 22 Aug Aurora ND
- Long-billed Curlew** 07 Sep Corson ND
- Ancient Murrelet** 24 Oct Kingsbury JSP
- Anna's Hummingbird** 13 Nov Codington RDO
- Great Kiskadee** 15 Nov Brookings GO, JSP, RDO; 16 Sep Brookings RM
- Bell's Vireo** 29 Sep Hughes EDS
- Common Raven** 18 Oct Harding CEM; 30 Oct Sully SS
- Sprague's Pipit** 30 Oct Stanley SS
- Bay-breasted Warbler** 06 Nov Perkins ND
- Yellow-throated Warbler** 30 Sep Hughes EDS, RDO
- Townsend's Warbler** 06 Sep Custer DS, JSP
- Le Conte's Sparrow** 30 Nov Clay DS
- Nelson's Sparrow** 17 Sep Meade RSL

Species Expected But Not Reported

Cinnamon Teal (2), White-winged Scoter, Barrow's Goldeneye (2), Northern Bobwhite (3), Least Bittern (2), Little Blue Heron (5), Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (2), Glossy Ibis (4), Common Gallinule (2), Whooping Crane, American Woodcock (2), Black-legged Kittiwake, Iceland Gull (3), Glaucous Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Alder Flycatcher (2), Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (5), Pinyon Jay, Varied Thrush, Northern Mockingbird, Golden-winged Warbler, Connecticut Warbler, Cape May Warbler (3), Northern Parula (2), Pine Warbler, Baird's Sparrow (4), Smith's Longspur, Great-tailed Grackle (3), Bullock's Oriole, White-winged Crossbill

Corrections/Additions to Past Reports

Dickcissel 06 Nov 2014 should be 06 Oct 2014

Contributing Observers

CA	Chris Anderson	GO	Gary Olson
DB	Doug Backlund	RDO	Ricky D. Olson
JLB	Jocelyn L. Baker	MO	Mark Otnes
DC	Douglas Chapman	JSP	Jeffrey S. Palmer
JC	Joe Coppock	BP	Barry Parkin
ND	Nancy Drilling	KP	Kelly M. Preheim
CLG	Canyon Lake Group	GJS	Gary & Jan Small
AH	Alice Hill	WS	Waubay NWR Staff
KCJ	Kent C. Jensen	SS	Scott Stolz
EK	Elizabeth Krueger	EDS	Eileen D. Stukel
RSL	Richard S. Latuchie	OCW	Outdoor Campus West Survey
RM	Ron Mabie	DS	David Swanson
MMM	Michael M. Melius	CV	Cheryl Vellenga
CEM	Charles E. Miller	SW	Scott Weins
EEM	Ernest E. Miller	JDW	J. David Williams
KM	Kenny Miller	MRZ	Mick R. Zerr

WEST RIVER IRRUPTION OF WADERS DURING SPRING 2014 MIGRATION

Nancy Drilling • Bird Conservancy of the Rockies • Rapid City, SD

In western South Dakota, most wader species are a rare sighting. In April and May 2014, an unusual number of these birds appeared West River during spring migration. Birders reported a total of 11 individuals of 5 rare species (Black-crowned Night-heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*, Great Egret *Ardea alba*, Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*, Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*, Green Heron *Butorides virescens*) over a 4 week period (Table 1).

Table 1. Migrant wader sightings in western South Dakota during spring 2014.

SPECIES	DATE	COUNTY	LOCATION
Green Heron	18 May	Pennington	Rapid Creek, Rapid City
Great Egret	6 May	Pennington	New Underwood GPA
Great Egret	11 May	Butte	Belle Fourche Reservoir
Great Egret	23 May	Jackson	near Belvidere
Snowy Egret	24 April	Pennington	Catron pond, Rapid City
Snowy Egret	6 May	Meade	Elk Vale Rd
Snowy Egret	9 May	Lawrence	Rochford Rd
Snowy Egret	10 May	Pennington	Wall sewage lagoon
Snowy Egret	20 May	Pennington	Major Lake, Hill City
Cattle Egret	10 May	Butte	near Newell sewage lagoons
Black-crowned Night-Heron	23 April	Pennington	New Underwood GPA

These reports were highly unusual because the West River status of each of these species is listed as 'rare', 'casual', or 'accidental' (Tallman *et al.* 2002). Before 2014, there had only been 30 reports of the combined species (SDOU database 2015). Green Heron, the rarest, had previously only been reported twice in the western third of the state during spring migration – in May 1988 in Meade County and May 2005 in Pennington County. Snowy Egret also rarely has been seen during spring migration. There are just 3 Snowy Egret records in the database – at Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, once in Butte County, and once in Pennington County. Great Egret had been reported at Lacreek, in Dewey County (twice), Meade County, and Pennington County. Black-crowned Night-heron and Cattle Egret breed regularly at Lacreek in Bennett County, and thus there have been more spring migration reports of these species over the years. Away from Bennett County, the night-heron had been reported 13 times in 9 counties, while Cattle Egret had been reported 7 times in 5 counties.

Although unusual, this irruptive phenomenon has happened before. In May 2008, 7 individuals of 3 species (4 Black-crowned Night-herons, 2 Cattle Egrets and 1 Great Egret) were reported in Butte, Custer, Dewey, Pennington, and Oglala Lakota counties (SDOU database 2015). The question is – why does this happen? The scientific literature notes that

many wader species have a tendency to wander during both spring and fall migration. The most famous wanderer is the Cattle Egret, which has colonized much of the planet because of its prodigious ability to survive long-distance displacements and start new populations (Telfair 2006). Other egret and heron species also ‘typically’ appear in areas outside of their breeding range (Parsons and Master 2000). Although many of these records are of single birds, these accounts note that “numbers appearing in any given location may vary greatly from year to year” and that some extralimital movements can be irruptive (Parsons and Master 2000). The literature however, is short on answers concerning why this occurs. It is known that weather events, such as strong fronts or weather events such as hurricanes, disrupt migration patterns. However, in spring 2014, no such obvious strong weather event occurred anywhere in the U.S. In addition, the West River reports were spread out over almost 4 weeks, weakening the proposition that a single weather event caused the irruption. A second possibility is that these species experienced exceptionally good reproductive success the previous summer (2013). With more juveniles to begin with, the probability of some ending up West River is higher. Above-average reproductive success does indeed contribute to more extralimital sightings during fall migration. However, this effect has never been noted to carry over into spring. In addition, we do not have any data on whether reproduction in summer 2013 was above average.

So, in reality, we do not know why this irruption of waders outside of their regular migration routes and breeding ranges happened. We are left with simply enjoying the phenomenon and continuing to go out there and record our observations.

LITERATURE CITED

- Parsons, Katharine C. and Terry L. Master. 2000. Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*), The Birds of North America Online (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Retrieved from: <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/489>
- SDOU Database. 2015. Online database of South Dakota bird sightings. Accessed from: <http://homepages.dsu.edu/palmerj/sdousbor/>
- Tallman, Dan A., David L. Swanson, and Jeffrey S. Palmer. 2002. The birds of South Dakota. 3rd ed. Midstates/Quality Quick Print, Aberdeen, SD. 441 pp.
- Telfair II, Raymond C. 2006. Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*), The Birds of North America Online (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Retrieved from: <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/113>

This begins a series of articles on bird related topics centering on the area around your house known as the “yard”. We will start with definitions of yard, as well as include some background information.

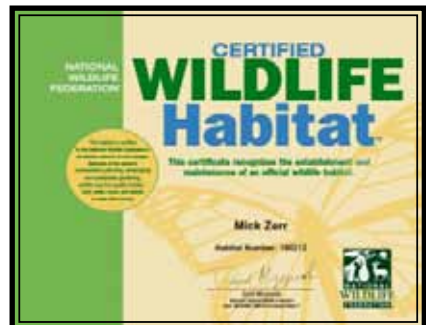
Yard (noun) – Ground that immediately adjoins or surrounds a house, public building, or other structure.

ETYM: “patch of ground around a house,” Old English *geard*, “fenced enclosure, garden, court,” from Proto-Germanic *gardaz* (cognates: Old Norse *garðr*, enclosure, garden, yard).

When the Dakotas were first settled by non-indigenous peoples in the 19th century, there were no “urban forests”, tree claims, or shelterbelts and no “yards”. Thus the native bird populations, other than waterbirds, were tall-grass and short-grass prairie birds, and birds that favored the treed areas including the Black Hills, riparian forests along the rivers, and the western edge of the Eastern Deciduous Upland Forest from the northern Coteau to the Newton Hills area. When settlers started planting trees and shrubs, the beginning of a new era was at hand for birds. Migrants now had rural “islands” of trees to utilize, thus changing migrating patterns and breeding habits. Over the years, these new patterns and habits became the norm, just as the change in the environment from glacial (Pleistocene) to post-glacial (Holocene) gradually changed those patterns eleven thousand years ago. Once modern people came on the scene, their activity started a new epoch, sometimes called the Anthropocene, where major environment change was/is often intentional or a direct result of human activity.

Today, we are seeing these rural tree islands cut down and burned for more cropland. This will, eventually, result in more changes to the migration and nesting patterns.

One area, however, that is relatively stable, is the urban forest. Many cities are encouraging home owners to plant trees, and in some cases, requiring it, as Brookings, SD, does, and they pay for the trees and plant them for free. The homeowner is only required to maintain them. Brookings is one of 33 “Tree Cities” in S.D., as recognized by the Arbor Day Foundation.



Another bird friendly environment is the yard that has a mini-native prairie. Planting native grasses and forbs helps sustain native birds and insects. An excellent free guide for the native yard environment is *Living Landscapes in South Dakota: A Guide to Native Plantscaping* by the USDA National Resources Conservation Service. Check with your local Outdoor Campus, Extension Office or Conservation District for a copy, or download it on line at <<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>>.

Cornell has a free program, called *YardMap* (found on the Cornell website), where you can map your yard as it is, placing trees, shrubs, feeders, etc. It can help you connect with a community of scientists, master gardeners, birders and people around the world who can help with what you are planning to do. National Wildlife Federation has a program called *Garden for Wildlife*, where you can certify your yard if it meets the correct environmental requirements, such as food, shelter, and cover, for birds.

In this southeastern South Dakota, most yards in the urban forest have some green stuff. Including trees, flowers, shrubs, and more than not, non-native grasses, (cut short). Yard gardens, either food or flower, are increasing. If minimal or no chemicals are used, these yards can be bird friendly.



National Wildlife Federation Backyard Wildlife Habitat signage is available for those who qualify

Yards can be part of a rural, as well as the urban, landscape. There are around 30,000 farms in SD (*USDA*), and 255,000 homeowners (*US Census 2010*). If one out of 50 is bird friendly, meaning folks enjoy birds in their yard, or actually feed, house, or water them, it means SD has almost 6,000 yard birders. According to the Wild Bird Feeding Industry (*WBFi*), each year more than 55 million Americans over the age of sixteen feed wild birds or other wildlife around their homes, and spend more than \$3.8 billion on bird seed, feeders and other accessories. One fourth of the total US sunflower production is for birdseed (*USDA*). In 2015, South Dakota's oil sunflower production lead the nation for the third year in a row. So, in South Dakota, yard birding is encompassing thousands of folks and a lot of money invested, and even a market for our sunflower oil production.

SD BIRD NOTES ID QUIZ

Answer to Quiz #4

DOUGLAS CHAPMAN

Our bird pictured for the *SD Bird Notes Quiz #4* is one of the most often confused and thus misidentified birds found in South Dakota. (Try before you look at the captions!)

“OH NO!” I hear you thinking. “This bird seems all brown-streaked and sparrow-like – an LBJ (little brown job). I give up!” But stay with me here. True, a sparrow is what probably first comes to mind. But quickly we realize that sparrows are small, plumpish birds with short, stout bills. This bird seems larger and its bill is long, thin and sharp. The long slender neck and slender overall appearance eliminate the sparrows. WHEW! See, not so bad.

So what other species found in South Dakota in mid-June could be streaked brown and be sharp-billed and slender-bodied? Pipits and sandpipers are streaked brown, surely. Sandpipers are eliminated by the wrong size and wrong body proportions, as well as the shape of the tail and bill.

Well, one bird we might think of would be an American Pipit, which is similar in size, posture and general appearance. But American Pipits usually show some ochre or buffy coloring. The American Pipit bill is even thinner and sharper than that on the bird in the photo. In addition, American Pipit has a strong facial pattern with a dark ear patch bordered by pale superciliary and malar streaks. Thus, American Pipit is a good candidate, but doesn't quite fit, so let's hold that thought and inquire further.

The other pipit found in South Dakota in June is the Sprague's Pipit. Sprague's Pipit is one of the birds that out-of-state birders most frequently inquire about when planning birding adventures to the Upper Great Plains. People come from great distances to see and hear them skylarking and singing in that spectacular aerial courtship display. And we who live near them have to admit that it is always thrilling to see and hear Sprague's Pipits as we explore the upper limits of our neck-craning observing. If you are watching skylarking Sprague's Pipits with a group, all the smiling and happy faces will attest that this sighting is a true cause for celebration.

Thus it is not uncommon for people to be hopeful, always on the alert, to possible Sprague's sightings. Especially in June in South Dakota's northwestern counties, when we know they are breeding. To arrive at an identification of Sprague's Pipit, there are several small things that we should look for. Our Quiz Bird #4's bill looks a bit too sharply pointed to be Sprague's. Even though the face of the quiz bird is plain, similar to the plain face of a Sprague's, there is no distinct eye-ring, making the bird appear less “friendly” than is typical for Sprague's Pipit. Another very important consideration is primary projection. This character will lead us to our best way of identifying this bird.

Are there other small streaked little brown jobs to consider? How about sub-adult birds? But are there any in June – don't we start seeing them towards fall? One candidate species is juvenile Horned Larks, as they are among the very first passerines to breed in spring. Thus, young birds do appear in South Dakota by late spring and early summer.

Simply put, Horned Lark juveniles are often confused for Sprague's Pipit. It is among the most commonly misidentified birds of our region. While sub-adult Horned Larks are almost always illustrated with pale spots on the back, our bird shows few and very muted spots, but instead shows very streaky brown upperparts. Photos of juvenile Horned Lark

will no doubt show that spotted plumage most often. But, what about those few that show streaky brown? In fresh juvenile plumage, the upperparts of Horned Larks show pale tips to the feathers. However, as the feathers wear with age, the pale tips wear off and disappear, leaving streaky brown upperparts in older juvenile birds. Thus the lack of spots is not an issue. We have only the afore-mentioned primary projection to consider. And by far the best character separating these very similar birds is primary projection (best seen when the wings are folded).

The longest primary of the Horned Lark projects approximately twice the length of its longest tertial. When seen on the ground, this makes the bird look short-tailed since the primaries extend so far back. Sprague's Pipits have very short to almost no primary projection, so this is an excellent feature to distinguish the two species. Collectively, the lack of an eye ring, the slender-bodied appearance, and the very long primary projection, indicate that this bird is a Horned Lark in older juvenile plumage. This appearance is easily possible in June, since the third edition of *Birds of South Dakota* (Tallman et al. 2002) notes fledgling Horned Larks in South Dakota as early as mid-April.

There were six entries for Quiz #4, with only one correct answer: Kelly Preheim submitted "Juv Horned Lark" on December 15, 2015 and the next day e-mailed me that "...on second thought...maybe a pipit".

To quote game show hosts, "Your first answer is what we must accept". In my estimation, that counts as a win.

Congratulations, Kelly. I'll get your prize to you in Oacoma.

References

Tallman, D.A , Swanson, D.L., and Palmer, J. S. (2002). *The birds of South Dakota*, 3rd ed. South Dakota Ornithologists' Union. Aberdeen, SD

David Swanson, University of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD, graciously checked my ornithology for this quiz answer. I thank him for his time and expertise.



A. Horned Lark in "juvenile" plumage.
Butte Co. 6/18/15.



B. Sprague's Pipit adult.
Jones Co. 9/25/11.



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