

VOL. 77 | NO. 4 | WINTER 2025



South Dakota

Bird  Notes

South Dakota Ornithologists' Union

Red-breasted Nuthatch, Mitchell, 12/3/2025

Photo Credit: Lonnie Wiese

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, 8504 East 38th Street, Sioux Falls, SD 57110

SDOU website: <www.sdou.org>

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Vol. 77

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No.4

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President's Page

Chris Anderson

Greetings everyone,

Artificial intelligence, or AI, has been on my mind lately. This branch of computer science uses machine learning to perform tasks otherwise accomplished by us humans and is permeating many aspects of our daily lives. ChatGPT and other generative AI tools that can create content, ambient listening technology at the doctor's office, and Google Maps analyzing traffic congestion data to provide the most effective navigation are some examples of AI's influence that we might experience on a regular basis. And of course there's our friends Siri, Bixby, and Alexa, helping us with numerous tasks on our phones and other devices. Even spell-checking and autocorrecting text has become an AI function; it's quite helpful, but I look forward to the day when my phone finally learns that I do in fact mean to type the word "birding" instead of "burning" or "birthing," and "birder" instead of "burger" or "murder." It's made for some awkward and amusing text messages.



What does AI mean for ornithology and birding? There are several ways that AI is already playing a role in our birding lives and has been for a while.

Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology has brought forward several AI-based tools over the years. Chances are good that you've used or are familiar with their Merlin Bird ID app. This tool was launched in 2014 and has since added sound and photo ID capabilities to help users identify the birds around them. BirdNET, the sound recognition backbone of Merlin, is used not only by everyday birders but it also provides tools for avian researchers to gather amounts of bioacoustics data at scales not previously attainable. BirdCast is another collaboration between Cornell, Colorado State University, and UMass Amherst, which uses radar sites and live weather maps to identify, track, and analyze, and predict bird migration.

AI-based photo recognition is used both scientifically and recreationally. Bird feeders with AI-powered cameras are becoming popular, telling us which of our feathered friends are visiting. At the same time, researchers around the world are using AI-controlled cameras and image analysis to monitor both birds and habitat to deliver data about population, phenology, and vegetation differences and the effects of climate change.

In sum, AI continues to present tools that could benefit ornithology, conservation, and birding. But are there costs associated with these benefits?

Broadly speaking, artificial intelligence relies on vast amounts of computing power to produce its results. Generative AI tools like ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, and others often utilize hyperscale warehouse-style

data centers containing tens of thousands of servers, the construction of which has ramped up significantly in the 2020s. These server farms require massive amounts of electricity and often huge amounts of water for cooling, though water recycling and other cooling system improvements may make this need variable. In terms of power, an MIT News article from January 2025 stated that the global electricity consumption of data centers was 460 terawatt-hours (460 billion kWh) in 2022 and is projected to increase to 1,050 terawatt-hours in 2026. At that number, if data center energy consumption were a country, it would be the fifth-highest user of electricity in the world, just above Russia but not quite as much as Japan. Given that much of the electricity in the U.S. still comes from fossil fuels, air pollution where the power is generated is also a concern. According to Statista, the U.S. had 4,165 data centers in November 2025, by far more than any other nation, with the U.K. second at 499.

In some places, these data centers are the latest type of project to inspire “not-in-my-backyard” sentiment. These centers can generate a large amount of property tax for the local economy but often provide little in terms of employment or other local economic benefit after they are built. In January, residents voiced their concerns about a proposed data center in Sioux Falls at a city council meeting that lasted six hours. Objections involved anxiety over the effects of its water and power needs, potential light and noise nuisance to residents nearby, and conversion of 160 acres for very little local benefit.

The full impact of hyperscale data center sites directly on birds is not clear. It is obvious that converting habitat into million-square-foot warehouses is damaging, the same as with any other large building. There are other questions, such as: Is the noise generated by the centers (primarily for cooling and ventilation) enough to disrupt local bird communities? Do the weak electromagnetic emissions have any effect on bird migration through the area? Are there other unforeseen consequences that have not been identified yet?

If all that feels overwhelming to read, I feel the same way writing it. It’s a complicated topic and I don’t pretend to understand everything surrounding it. From what I can tell, the muscle behind the Merlin app is located at Cornell’s Center for Advanced Computing, so it’s unclear if it adds to any of the issues mentioned above. The proliferation of AI is not likely to wane any time soon, nor am I saying it should. But AI infrastructure and the pace with which it is being constructed should certainly draw scrutiny. Hopefully more sustainable construction methods will emerge over time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Registration is now open for the Spring 2026 meeting, which will be held May 15 - 17, 2026 at the Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center in Pierre. Activities begin at 6 PM on Friday May 15 with a social hour and then a presentation by SDOU member Roger Dietrich on this trip to Peru. Saturday field trips begin at 7 AM from the Ramkota parking lot and last until about 4 PM. Saturday evening’s banquet starts at 6:30 PM, followed by keynote speaker SDSU alum Jay Carlisle. Register on the ‘Meetings’ page of sdou.org before May 8th.



Notable Sightings: December 2025 - February 2026

By Ricky D. Olson, Ft. Pierre

These are some of the notable sightings that I noticed being reported during this season, in person or on social media platforms. Notable being in the eye of the beholder, I probably miss some sightings but am sharing what I know.

The invasion of zebra mussels into all the South Dakota Missouri River system reservoirs has made an impact on wintering sea duck numbers. By sea ducks, I mean all three scoter species, Long-tailed Ducks and Barrow's Goldeneye. Before the infestation a few sea ducks occasionally would winter where there was open water below the dams or along the dam face. Now their numbers have steadily increased. Deep diving sea ducks eat mollusks as a main part of their diet.

Another change I noted in the last few winter seasons is the increase of Short-billed Gulls in the winter. In years past, we may have had one Short-billed Gull show up around Christmas Bird Count time in the Pierre area, but they rarely stayed very long. Now we see multiple gulls during the season, and some stay all winter. I have no theory why.

There was a one-day sighting of a Black-legged Kittiwake on January 1st in Pierre SD.

Another notable observation was a wintering Lesser Goldfinch at Hot Springs, only the state's second wintering record.



Winter Season Bird Photos

Compiled by Kelly Preheim, Armour

In addition to our front and back cover photos, the following are a selection of photos taken in South Dakota during Fall 2025. All photos printed with permission of the photographers.



Trumpeter Swans, Lake Yankton, 1/10/2026. Photo by Roger Dietrich



Trumpeter Swan, Lake Yankton, 2/13/2026. Photo by Cathy Logue



Ross's Goose, Lake Yankton, 1/10/2026. Photo by Roger Dietrich



Wood Duck and Mallard, Big Bend Dam, 1/2/2025. Photo by Perry Coleman



Barrow's Goldeneye, Big Bend Dam, 1/2/2026. Photo by Perry Coleman



Lesser Black-backed Gull, Pierre, 12/18/2025. Photo by Ricky Olson



Short-billed Gull, Pierre, 3/14/2026. Photo by Ricky Olson



Whooping Cranes, Bon Homme Co., 12/19/2025. Photo by Randy Hoeck



Rough-legged Hawk, Fort Pierre National Grassland, 2/17/2026. Photo by Aileen Brunner



American Goshawk, Pierre, 1/20/2026. Photo by Aileen Brunner



American Goshawk, Sanborn Co., 2/7/2026. Photo by Cindy Hansen-VanLaecken



Gyr Falcon, Hughes Co., 11/30/2025. Photo by Ricky Olso



Long-eared Owl, Codington Co., 2/20/2026. Photo by Devin Pitts



Eastern Screech-Owl, Codington Co., 12/6/2025. Photo by Devin Pitts



Northern Flicker, Yankton, 12/8/2025. Photo by Sharon Koller



Lewis's Woodpecker, Black Hills, 2/13/2026. Photo by Teresa Denke



Downy Woodpecker, Yankton, 1/20/2026. Photo by Sharon Koller



American Dipper, Spearfish Canyon, 2/8/2026. Photo by Anne Norwood-Carter



Eastern Bluebird, Yankton area, 1/23/2026. Photo by Kevin Henseler



Mountain Bluebird, Badlands, 2/4/2026. Photo by Kelly Preheim



Townsend's Solitaire, Badlands, 2/4/2026. Photo by Kelly Preheim



Varied Thrush, Brookings Co., 11/26/2026. Photo by Kent Jensen



Redpoll, Brandon area, 11/29/2025. Photo by Travis Gallipo



White-winged Crossbill, Aberdeen, 2/12/2026. Photo by Jeffrey Schulz



Evening Grosbeak, Spearfish, 1/2/2026. Photo by Ricky Olson



Dark-eyed Junco, Madison, 1/15/2026. Photo by Irene Feldhaus-Colling



What We Don't Know: the Warbling Vireo Complex

by Nancy Drilling, Rapid City

Introduction

In 2025, the American Ornithologists' Union split the species Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*) into two species: the Eastern Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*) and the Western Warbling Vireo (*Vireo swainsoni*). Both new species breed in South Dakota. Although we have a general sense of where the two new species breed, and overlap, in South Dakota, we need more information. This article summarizes what we know about these vireos in South Dakota, the challenges of identification, and what you can do to contribute to our knowledge.

Warbling Vireos in South Dakota

Warbling vireos are found in South Dakota from late April through September. They breed in forests and woodlots that have some tall, primarily deciduous, trees. They are the most common breeding vireo species, found throughout the state except areas with little woodland habitat, such as the extreme northwest corner (Drilling et al. 2018).

The Eastern Warbling Vireo, which primarily inhabits open deciduous woodlands, is found throughout the state, except in the Black Hills (Tallman et al. 2002). The Western Warbling Vireo, which primarily inhabits mixed aspen/birch/pine stands, breeds in the Black Hills. The Black Hills population of Western Warbling Vireo is genetically distinct from both the Eastern Warbling Vireo and other Western Warbling Vireo populations (Carpenter et al. 2021). In the lower elevations of the Black Hills, the two species meet. However, we don't know exactly where the two species meet nor how extensive this overlap zone is. There is also the potential for both species to breed on the Pine Ridge in Todd, Bennett, and Oglala Lakota counties, as is hypothesized for the adjacent pine ridges in Nebraska (Silcock and Jorgensen 2026).

If a migrating warbling vireo is not singing, one can assume Eastern Warbling Vireo throughout most of the state. In the western one-third to one-quarter of the state and in the Pine Ridge area, a silent warbling vireo may have to be recorded as ‘Eastern/Western Warbling Vireo’. Theoretically, an excellent look or photo of a fall migrant can be identified because the two species molt their feathers at different times (Voelker and Rohwer 1998). Easterns molt on the breeding grounds, then migrate. Westerns mostly molt during migration. In addition, adult Westerns leave their breeding grounds much earlier than do juvenile Westerns. Vagrants are possible but excellent documentation (see below) will be needed.

Field Identification

Warbling vireos in the eastern two-thirds of the state, except the Pine Ridge, can safely be called Eastern Warbling Vireo, simply based on location. If you suspect that a warbling vireo in this area is a Western Warbling Vireo, you will need to document the bird with (preferably) an audio recording (see below).

In and around the Black Hills and in the pine ridge regions, the species should NOT be identified simply based on location or habitat. Unfortunately, the two warbling vireo species look almost identical. Field guides state that Western Warbling Vireo ‘averages’ smaller and drabber, with a darker crown and a slightly thicker bill. This may be useful with a bird in the hand. However, there are frequent exceptions to every supposed distinguishing feature, and especially in the field, it is not possible to definitively identify a warbling vireo based on plumage.

The two species usually can be identified by differences in their songs. The Eastern song is a pleasant rolling, whistling song of many fast notes, often ending on a rising higher note. It is sometimes transcribed as “if I could see it I would seize it and squeeze it ‘til it squirts”. Compared to the Western’s song, it is longer, has more ‘flowing’ rhythm, and more consistent pitch and tempo. Overall the Western’s song is more choppy and less structured, with more varied pitch and tempo. It is usually shorter, with fewer syllables, incorporates more burry and high-pitched notes, and sounds more jumbled and disjointed. Spencer (2016) and Sibley (2025a) give many more details on the differences and show spectrographs of ‘pure’ songs of each of the species.

However, some birds do not sing the typical song of their species. There is considerable individual variation among birds. Our genetically distinct Black Hills population may sing a slightly different song than other Western Warbling Vireo populations. Some birds in the contact zone sing intermediate songs that are not readily identifiable as Eastern or Western (Sibley 2025b). I have personally heard such intermediate songs in the Nebraska Panhandle. The extent of these individual, population, and hybrid song differences has not been studied and there is the potential that they may be significant in western South Dakota.

What we need from you

You can help us better understand the status and distribution of the two warbling vireo species in South Dakota. If you are in or near the Black Hills or Pine Ridge during the summer, pay special attention to the warbling vireos and document what you hear and see. The best documentation is a song recording. If you have a smart-phone, the easiest way to record a song is to make a recording on the Merlin bird app, which creates a WAV file that eBird and researchers prefer. No matter which recording app you use, make sure to *Save* the recording on your phone. Once the recording is downloaded to your computer, you can trim unwanted portions of the recording using a sound editing program. eBird has an excellent tutorial explaining what to do, and not do, with a recording ([audio file preparation](#)).

An excellent photo in good light may be useful to identify a vireo to species. In particular, a photo showing details of the wing feathers MAY allow for identification (Mlodinow et al. 2025, Silcock and Jorgenson 2026).

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Citizen Science Survey for Mountain Chickadee (*Poecile gambeli*)

By Ricky D. Olson, Fort Pierre

BACKGROUND

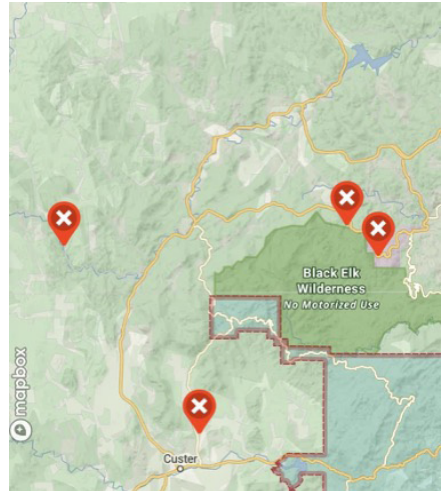
A sighting in South Dakota of a Mountain Chickadee requires a rare bird report form be submitted to the South Dakota Ornithologists' Rare Bird Records Committee. The committee then votes on whether to accept or deny the record. South Dakota only has five accepted records of Mountain Chickadee, including the 7/13/2021 eBird sighting.

There are several eBird reports of Mountain Chickadee in the Black Hills, dating from 2018-2021. I personal-

ly deemed most as probably credible, even without photo or audio evidence. The sightings were mainly along granite ridges from southwest of Hill City and the Custer area to Mount Rushmore. These ridges are covered mainly by pine, spruce and aspen.

The eBird sighting locations (see map) were:

- Spring Creek Road west (43.879, -103.679), 6/16/2018
- Ft. Welikit Campground (43.784354, -103.585763), 8/23/2020
- Horse Thief Lake (43.889112 -103.481941), 7/13/2021
- Mount Rushmore (43.87709, -103.46093), 7/21/2021



METHODS

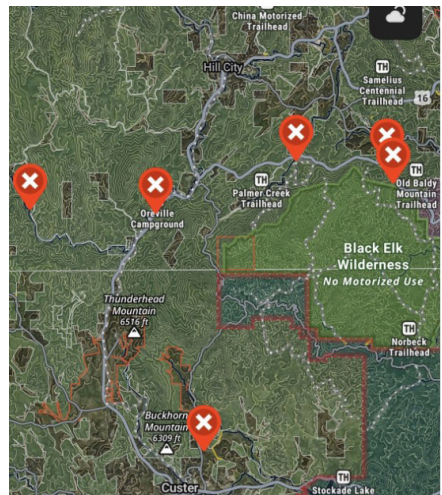
I decided to come up with a plan to find and document the chickadees. This survey was conducted for personal and scientific reasons. I had never seen a Mountain Chickadee in South Dakota and very much wanted to observe one. Also, this was probably a feeble attempt to see if this was a viable way to survey this species.

I decided to set up a feeder and trail camera near each reported sighting. My plan was that hopefully I could attract a Mountain Chickadee to a feeder, and a trail camera would capture a photo. The survey period would start in January 2022 and run through March or April.

I live around 220 miles from the survey area. Because of the distance, my hope was that the seed would last for a month. I would return to swap camera cards and refill the feeders every month. I decided I would purchase high-capacity bird seed feeders, which hold between 8-10 lbs. of seed. Most had suet block feeders attached. I opted to feed black oil sunflower seed and suet blocks, which are both attracters of chickadees and other winter residents. I also purchased 6 trail cameras and installed 16 GB cards.

The feeder locations (see map) were:

1. Spring Creek Road 43.87883, -103.68070
2. Ft. Welikit Campground 43.78373, -103.58565
3. Horsethief Lake Trailhead 43.89089, -103.48099
4. Willow Creek Horse Camp 43.89808, -103.53518
5. Alternate Willow Creek Horse Camp 43.89796, -103.53529
6. Oreville Campground 43.87736, -103.61207
7. Horsethief Lake Campground 43.89663, -103.48535



RESULTS and DISCUSSION

On 1/10/22 we put up three feeders and cameras: Spring Creek Road, Ft. Welikit Campground, and Horsethief Lake Trailhead. On 1/11/22 a fourth feeder was hung at Willow Creek Horse Camp.

On 2/14/22 we returned to the survey area. We hung a fifth feeder at Oreville Campground and a sixth feeder

at Horsethief Campground. Results from the first month of the survey: Spring Creek - no bird photos; Ft. Welikit - 1700 photos; Willow Creek - no bird photos; Horsethief - no bird photos. It became apparent that at the busy feeders I would have to return every two weeks to refill the feeders.

2/28/22 results: Spring Creek -no bird photos; Oreville - photos, numbers not recorded; Ft. Welikit - 2800 photos; Willow Creek - no photos; Horsethief Campground - 3000 photos; Horsethief trailhead - no bird photos.

3/14/22 results: Spring Creek - no bird photos; Ft. Welikit - no photos because the camera was not on; Oreville - camera not on; Willow Creek - no bird photos and so we moved it closer to the creek; Horsethief Campground - 5400 photos; Horsethief trailhead - no bird photos.

3/28/22 results: Spring Creek - finally a few White-winged Junco photos; Oreville - 20,000 photos; Ft. Welikit - 3400 photos; Willow Creek - no photos; Horsethief Campground - 11,331 photos; Horsethief trailhead - no bird photos.

4/11/22 results: Spring Creek - a few photos; Oreville - 20,000 photos; Ft. Welikit - about 3500 photos; Willow Creek - no bird photos; Horsethief Campground - 20,000 photos; Horsethief trailhead - no bird photos.

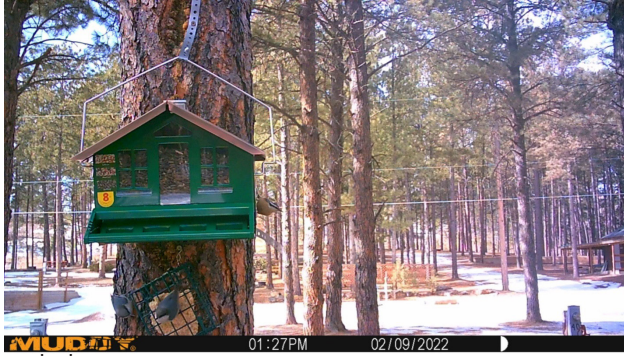
I really didn't think I was going to write the account of the survey, especially when the 16 GB photo cards were maxed out at one site and cards at two other sites had a couple of thousand photos each. The correct way would have been to record each photo and keep a running list of each species per site during a two-week period. I also should have bought more photo cards. At the beginning I was erasing photos to reuse the card at the next visit. By the time I woke up and thought about documenting each photo, some of my data was lost!!!

The following are the fourteen bird species photographed:

- Downy Woodpecker
- Hairy Woodpecker
- Canada Jay
- American Crow
- Blue Jay
- Black-capped Chickadee
- Red-breasted Nuthatch
- Pygmy Nuthatch
- White-breasted Nuthatch
- Brown Creeper
- Pine Siskin
- American Goldfinch
- Junco - White-winged and Slate-colored
- Song Sparrow

Above: Canada Jay. Next Page: Pygmy & Red-breasted Nuthatches





Other species photographed:

- Homo sapiens
- Raccoon
- White-tailed deer
- Red Squirrel
- Least Chipmunk
- Northern Flying Squirrel (*Glaucomys sabrinus*)

Homo sapiens on wheels



The Northern Flying Squirrel observations were the best data collected. They were photographed at all feeder sites, visiting some feeders just once but others many times. This is a species tracked by the Natural Heritage Database of SD GF&P. All of my flying squirrel data was reported to the Natural Heritage database manager. This species is nocturnal, thus population numbers and range data in the Black Hills are always appreciated.



Northern Flying Squirrel

I had never put out trail cameras, so I learned many things. The wind blowing branches creates photos, as do the rising and setting sun. Always double check that the camera is set to take photos before you leave. But I also think the Homo Sapiens in the area found the cameras at a couple of sites and knew how to turn them off without getting their photo taken.



I soon learned that the seed would not last over two weeks and at some sites, less. Also, the 16GB camera card maxed out twice in just two weeks. I started checking sites every two weeks after the first monthly visit.

There was an interesting behavior I noted. In the Pierre area, Juncos, mainly Slate-colored with a few Oregon and Pink-sided mixed in, usually feed on the ground, rarely flying up to the feeder to eat. On this survey in the Black Hills, almost all the Juncos were White-winged with just a couple of Slate-colored observed. In this study area the White-winged Juncos readily flew up and fed at the feeders!

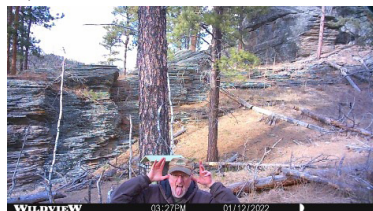
Another main lesson learned occurred at the campground sites where campers or hosts put up feeders at some times during the year. The frequency of birds eating at these campground feeders was substantial and the species diversity at these feeders was quite high compared to other sites. In my opinion, coming to feeders is a learned behavior. The sites that probably never had feeders had very few or no bird photos over the course of the survey.

AFTER THE SURVEY

Surveying sometimes is all luck and timing. The following winter there was another eBird report just west of a previous sighting at Ft. Welikit. The observation was an audio picked up by the Merlin app near a person's feeder. This report was dismissed because Mountain and Black-capped Chickadee calls can be very similar and Merlin sometimes makes mistakes. The dagger to the heart was, when telling a friend who lived in Custer about my survey, he replied that in the winter of 2022-23 he had a Mountain Chickadee at his peanut butter log a couple of times! He didn't realize that there were so few records of Mountain Chickadee in South Dakota. Since then, a Mountain Chickadee has not returned to his feeders, of course.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Kenny Miller went with me each time to check the feeders. Without his height, balance and billy goat sure-footedness I could not have completed the study.



The 2025 Summer Season 01 June 2025 to 31 July 2025

Compiled By: Chris Anderson

The primary goal of the Summer Season compilation is to report Confirmed Breeding records observed during the season. There were 104 species reported as Confirmed Breeding this year, including 6 first county breeding records. The ten-year (2015-2024) average of Confirmed Breeding species is 102, with a high of 128 in 2018. Secondary objectives of the Summer Season summary include sightings of rare (or at least infrequently reported) species, late spring and early fall migration dates, and species that are reported

from unusual locations. Records in bold are either new county records (breeding or otherwise), or new latest spring/earliest fall observations of non-breeding species. There were 246 total species, including 2 rarities (Tricolored Heron, late White-throated Sparrow) and 5 first county observations reported during the season. The ten-year (2015-2024) average is 245 with a high of 256 in 2019. A full listing of all reported sightings can be obtained from the online database (<https://research.dsu.edu/sdousbor/default.aspx>). This report contains those sightings and species which are consistent with the objectives of the Summer Season as described above.

At the end of this report is a list of additional validated species reported to eBird during the season, including species that were not reported to the SDOU online database or were otherwise noteworthy.

Snow Goose All Reports: 09 Jun Yankton RND; 14 Jun Minnehaha CA; 22 Jun Stanley KM; 12 Jul Kingsbury JSP; 20 Jul Brookings CA; 20 Jul Brown GO; 26 Jul Brookings CA

Canada Goose Confirmed Breeding: Beadle, Brown, Brule, Codington, Davison, Hand, Hyde, Kingsbury, Miner, Minnehaha, Pennington, Roberts, and Yankton counties

Trumpeter Swan Confirmed Breeding: **13 Jul Roberts (PY) CV**

Wood Duck Confirmed Breeding: 02 Jun Pennington (PY) CLG; 10 Jun Roberts (PY) CV; 13 Jun Davison (PY) JSP; 17 Jul Brookings (PY) JSP; 19 Jul Minnehaha (PY) CA

Blue-winged Teal Confirmed Breeding: Brown, Brule, Codington, Hand, Hyde, Marshall, Miner, Minnehaha, and Pennington counties

Cinnamon Teal Only Report: 06 Jul Hand ND

Northern Shoveler Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jul Brule (PY) CA; 05 Jul Hyde (PY) ND; 05 Jul Minnehaha (PY) JSP; 26 Jul Brown (PY) CV

Gadwall Confirmed Breeding: 14 Jun McCook (PY) CA; 05 Jul Brule (PY) CA; 05 Jul Hyde (PY) ND; 06 Jul Hand (PY) ND

Mallard Confirmed Breeding: Brown, Brule, Clay, Codington, Custer, Davison, Hyde, Miner, Minnehaha, Moody, Pennington, and Sully counties

American Black Duck Only Report: 22 Jun Marshall GO

Northern Pintail Confirmed Breeding: 07 Jun Beadle (PY) JSP; 28 Jun Brown (PY) ND; 30 Jun Hyde (PY) ND; 05 Jul Brule (PY) CA

Redhead Confirmed Breeding: 19 Jul Minnehaha (PY) CA

Ring-necked Duck All Reports: 13 Jun Clark KM; 14 Jun McCook CA; 22 Jun Roberts CV; 28 Jun Brown ND; 27 Jul Brown RDO; 27 Jul Marshall CV

Hooded Merganser Confirmed Breeding: 13 Jul Brookings (PY) JSP, CV; 26 Jul Brown (PY) CV

Common Merganser Reported East: 06 Jun Stanley RDO; 24 Jun Yankton RND

Ruddy Duck Confirmed Breeding: 26 Jun Roberts (PY) CV; 28 Jun Brown (PY) ND; 13 Jul Brookings (PY) CV

Northern Bobwhite Only Report: 22 Jul Gregory KP

Wild Turkey Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jul Brule (PY) CA; 30 Jul Pennington (PY) ND

Ruffed Grouse Only Report: 12 Jul Lawrence EK

Sharp-tailed Grouse Confirmed Breeding: 08 Jul Custer (PY) MMM

Greater Prairie-Chicken All Reports: 04 Jun Hyde ND; 12 Jun Stanley KM; 28 Jul Sully KM

Gray Partridge All Reports: 26 Jun Meade ND; 09 Jul Custer MMM

Ring-necked Pheasant Confirmed Breeding: 11 Jun Hyde (PY) ND; 12 Jul Brookings (PY) CV; 27 Jul Bennett (PY) ND

Eurasian Collared-Dove Confirmed Breeding: 17 Jul Lawrence (CN) ND

Mourning Dove Confirmed Breeding: 14 Jun Codington (FL) CV; 23 Jul Butte (ON) ND; 26 Jul Brown (FL) CV; 26 Jul Fall River (NE) ND; 27 Jul Bennett (ON) ND

Common Poorwill All Reports: 12 Jun Stanley KM; 13 Jul Sully KM

Eastern Whip-poor-will Only Report: 20 Jul Charles Mix KP

Chimney Swift Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jul Douglas (NY) KP

Broad-tailed Hummingbird Confirmed Breeding: 13 Jul Pennington (FY) ND

American Coot Confirmed Breeding: 11 Jun Sully (ON) ND; 14 Jun Mcook, Minnehaha (PY) CA; 28 Jun Lake (PY) JSP; 06 Jul Hand (PY) ND; 26 Jul Lake (PY) CA

Black-necked Stilt Confirmed Breeding: 26 Jul Brown (PY) CV

American Avocet Confirmed Breeding: 14 Jun Codington (PY) CV; 18 Jun Brown (ON) ND

American Golden-Plover Only Report: 18 Jun Clay DS

Killdeer Confirmed Breeding: Brookings, Brule, Codington, Davison, Hand, Harding, Hyde, McCook, Meade, Moody, Pennington, and Roberts counties

Semipalmated Plover All Reports: 20 Jul Brown GO; 25 Jul Marshall JSP

Piping Plover All Reports: 07 Jun Hughes KM; 19 Jun Clay GJS; 06 Jul Clay GJS; 14 Jul Hughes KM; 22 Jul Charles Mix KP; 30 Jul Hughes KM

Whimbrel Only Report: **07 Jun Hand ND (first county record)**

Long-billed Curlew Only Reports: 10 Jun Stanley RDO; 29 Jul Custer MMM

Stilt Sandpiper Early: 05 Jul Brule CA; 05 Jul Minnehaha JSP; 06 Jul Hand ND; 12 Jul Douglas KP; 12 Jul Kingsbury JSP

Sanderling Only Report: 20 Jul Moody CA

Dunlin Only Report: 07 Jun Hand ND

Baird's Sandpiper Early: 12 Jul Brown GO; 12 Jul Douglas KP; 14 Jul Hughes KM; 20 Jul Miner CA; 27 Jul Bennett ND

Least Sandpiper Late: 30 Jun Roberts CV; 28 Jun Brown ND ... Early: 05 Jul Brule CA; 05 Jul Hyde ND; 05 Jul Minnehaha JSP; 06 Jul Hand ND; 12 Jul Brown GO; 27 Jul Bennett ND

White-rumped Sandpiper Late: 14 Jun Codington CV; 14 Jun McCook CA; 13 Jun Clark KM; 13 Jun Davison JSP; 12 Jun Minnehaha CA; 11 Jun Clay DS; 11 Jun Sully ND; 01 Jun Pennington ND

Buff-breasted Sandpiper All Reports: 30 Jul Hughes KM; **31 Jul Moody CA (first county record)**

Pectoral Sandpiper Late: 30 Jun Roberts CV; 26 Jun Clay DS; 08 Jun Brookings JSP ... Early: 05 Jul Brule CA; 05 Jul Minnehaha CA; 17 Jul Brookings JSP; 20 Jul Brown GO; 20 Jul Kingsbury, Miner, Moody CA; 27 Jul Bennett ND

Semipalmated Sandpiper Late: 29 Jun Douglas KP; 28 Jun Brown ND; 26 Jun Clay DS ... Early: 05 Jul Brule CA; 05 Jul Minnehaha JSP; 12 Jul Douglas KP; 17 Jul Brookings JSP; 27 Jul Bennett ND

Short-billed Dowitcher All Reports: 20 Jul Brown GO; 26 Jul Brown CV

Long-billed Dowitcher Late: 25 Jun Faulk, Potter ND ... Early: 05 Jul Brule CA; 12 Jul Douglas KP; 20 Jul Brown GO; 20 Jul Miner CA

Solitary Sandpiper Early: 05 Jul Brule CA; 05 Jul Hyde ND; 06 Jul Hand ND; 12 Jul Kingsbury JSP; 27 Jul Bennett ND

Lesser Yellowlegs Late: 30 Jun Roberts CV; 29 Jun Douglas KP; 28 Jun Brown ND; 26 Jun Clay DS ... Early: 04 Jul Roberts CV; 05 Jul Brule CA; 05 Jul Hyde ND; 05 Jul Minnehaha JSP; 06 Jul Hand ND; 27 Jul Bennett ND

Willet Late: 28 Jun Faulk, Spink GO; 26 Jun Clay DS ... Early: 05 Jul Hyde ND; 06 Jul Hand ND; 20 Jul Brown GO

Greater Yellowlegs Late: 30 Jun Roberts CV; 29 Jun Douglas KP; 25 Jun Potter ND ... Early: 04 Jul Roberts CV; 05 Jul Brule CA; 05 Jul Hyde ND; 06 Jul Buffalo, Hand, Pennington ND

Franklin's Gull Confirmed Breeding: **07 Jun Hand (CN) ND**

Ring-billed Gull Confirmed Breeding: **24 Jun Miner (FL) JSP**

Herring Gull Only Report: 13 Jul Roberts CV

Least Tern Confirmed Breeding: 17 Jul Charles Mix (CF) KP

Common Tern Only Report: 23 Jul Stanley RDO

Forster's Tern Confirmed Breeding: 07 Jun Hand (ON) ND

Pied-billed Grebe Confirmed Breeding: 14 Jun McCook (PY) CA; 18 Jul Charles Mix (PY) GJS; 19 Jul Minnehaha (PY) CA; 26 Jul Brown (PY) CV

Red-necked Grebe Confirmed Breeding: 22 Jun Roberts (ON) CV

Eared Grebe Confirmed Breeding: 06 Jul Hand (PY) ND; 06 Jul Pennington (NB) ND

Western Grebe Confirmed Breeding: 07 Jun Hand (PY) ND; 11 Jun Sully (PY) ND; 05 Jul Hyde (PY) ND; 26 Jul Brown (PY) CV

Clark's Grebe Only Report: 22 Jun Brown GO
Common Loon Only Report: 09 Jun Yankton RND
Double-crested Cormorant Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jul Brule (ON) CA; 05 Jul Hyde (NY) ND; 13 Jul Brookings (FL) CV; 26 Jul Brown (FL) CV
Neotropic Cormorant Only Report: 27 Jul Brown GO
Glossy Ibis All Reports: **19 Jul Minnehaha CA (first county record)**; 25 Jul Spink JSP
White-faced Ibis Confirmed Breeding: 07 Jun Hand (CN) ND
Least Bittern Only Report: 22 Jun Brown GO
Great Egret Confirmed Breeding: 26 Jul Brown (FL) CV
Great Blue Heron Confirmed Breeding: 02 Jun Pennington (NY) CLG; 14 Jun McCook (FY) CA; 05 Jul Brule (NY) CA; 18 Jul Custer (NY) ND
Osprey Confirmed Breeding: 02 Jun Pennington (ON) CLG; 06 Jun Custer (ON) KP; 12 Jul Lawrence (NY) ND
Golden Eagle All Reports: 09 Jun Custer KP; 26 Jun Meade ND; 20 Jul Custer ND
Sharp-shinned Hawk Confirmed Breeding: 24 Jul Meade (CF) ND
Bald Eagle Confirmed Breeding: Brown, Charles Mix, Day, Fall River, Hand, Hughes, and Meade counties
Broad-winged Hawk All Reports: 09 Jun Custer KP; 12 Jul Lawrence ND; 22 Jul Lawrence ND
Red-tailed Hawk Confirmed Breeding: 06 Jun Harding (ON) ND; 14 Jun Codington (ON) CV; 27 Jul Marshall (FL) CV
Ferruginous Hawk All Reports: 06 Jun Harding ND; 13 Jul Brookings CV
American Barn Owl Confirmed Breeding: 01 Jun Stanley (NY) KM; 07 Jun Sully (ON) KM
Burrowing Owl Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jul Hughes (FL) ND
Short-eared Owl Only Report: 22 Jun Day GO
Red-naped Sapsucker Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jun Lawrence (NY) EK; 13 Jul Pennington (NY) ND
Lewis's Woodpecker All Reports: 05 Jun Custer KM; 06-09 Jun Custer KP
Red-headed Woodpecker Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Custer (ON) KP; 25 Jul Clay (FL) GJS
Red-bellied Woodpecker Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jul Roberts (FY) CV
American Three-toed Woodpecker All Reports: 03 Jun – 26 Jul Lawrence ND, EK, KM, DS
Black-backed Woodpecker Only Report: 19 Jun Lawrence EK
Downy Woodpecker Confirmed Breeding: 114 Jun Fall River (CF) MMM; 22 Jun Roberts (FY) CV
Hairy Woodpecker Confirmed Breeding: 21 Jun Roberts (FY) CV
Pileated Woodpecker All Reports: 01-10 Jun Roberts CV
Northern Flicker Confirmed Breeding: 29 Jun Fall River (FL) MMM; 04 Jul Douglas (NY) KP; 11 Jul Clay (FL) GJS
Prairie Falcon All Reports: 19 Jun Custer MMM; 26 Jul Fall River ND
Olive-sided Flycatcher All Reports: 09 Jun Stanley KM; 19 Jun Lawrence EK; 05 Jul Lawrence EK; 26 Jul Lawrence EK
Western Wood-Pewee Confirmed Breeding: 06 Jun Harding (NB) ND; 20 Jul Custer (FL) ND
Eastern Wood-Pewee Confirmed Breeding: 15 Jun Lincoln (CF) CA; 24 Jun Roberts (FY) CV
Alder Flycatcher All Reports: 01 Jun Brown GO; 02 Jun Roberts CV; 02 Jun Minnehaha CA; 03 Jun Roberts CV
Willow Flycatcher Confirmed Breeding: 27 Jul Bennett (CF) ND
Dusky Flycatcher Confirmed Breeding: 07 Jun Custer (NB) KP
Western Flycatcher Confirmed Breeding: 13 Jul Pennington (NY) ND; 17 Jul Lawrence (NY) ND
Say's Phoebe All Reports: 10 Jun Custer KP; 21 Jun Hughes ND; 26 Jul Fall River ND
Great Crested Flycatcher Confirmed Breeding: 14 Jul Roberts (CF) CV
Western Kingbird Confirmed Breeding: 06 Jun Perkins (CN) ND; 05 Jul Davison (FL) CA; 21 Jul Fall River (NY) MMM
Eastern Kingbird Confirmed Breeding: 07 Jun Sully (ON) KM; 12 Jul Kingsbury (FL) JSP; 13 Jul Brookings (FL) CV; 27 Jul Bennett (NY) ND; 27 Jul Brown (FL) CV; 31 Jul Douglas (FL) KP
White-eyed Vireo All Reports: **13 Jul Brookings CV; 17 Jul Brookings JSP; 26 Jul Brookings CA (first county record)**

Yellow-throated Vireo Reported: 17 Jun Codington CV (first county record)
Western Warbling Vireo Confirmed Breeding: 13 Jul Pennington (CF) ND
Loggerhead Shrike All Reports: 06 Jun Harding ND; 22 Jun Day GO; 26 Jun Meade ND; 12 Jul Brown GO; 26 Jul Fall River ND
Canada Jay All Reports: 04 Jun Lawrence KM; 05-09 Jun Custer KP; 13 Jul Pennington ND; 15 Jul Lawrence ND
Blue Jay Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jul Roberts (FY) CV
Black-billed Magpie Confirmed Breeding: 11 Jun Custer (CF) KP
Clark's Nutcracker Only Report: 18 Jul Custer ND
Common Raven All Reports: 05 Jun Custer KM; 07-09 Jun Custer KP
Black-capped Chickadee Confirmed Breeding: 13 Jun Roberts (FY) CV; 24 Jun Fall River (CF) MMM; 13 Jul Pennington (FY) ND; 14 Jul Custer (FY) ND
Horned Lark Confirmed Breeding: 03 Jun Hyde (FL) ND; 30 Jun Roberts (FL) CV
Bank Swallow Confirmed Breeding: 14 Jun McCook (ON) CA
Tree Swallow Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jul Brule (ON) CA; 05 Jul Charles Mix (FL) KP
Violet-green Swallow Confirmed Breeding: 07 Jun Custer (ON) KP
Purple Martin Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Roberts (ON) CV; 13 Jul Brookings (NY) CV
Barn Swallow Confirmed Breeding: 02 Jun Pennington (ON) CLG; 06 Jul Buffalo (FL) ND; 13 Jul Brookings (FL) CV
Cliff Swallow Confirmed Breeding: 07 Jun Fall River (NB) KP; 05 Jul Buffalo (ON) CA; 22 Jul Pennington (ON) ND; 31 Jul Roberts (FY) CV
Golden-crowned Kinglet All Reports: 03 Jun Lawrence KM; 12-15 Jul Lawrence ND; 30 Jul Pennington ND
Ruby-crowned Kinglet Late East River: 02 Jun Minnehaha CA
White-breasted Nuthatch Confirmed Breeding: 14 Jul Roberts (FY) CV
Canyon Wren All Reports: 07 Jun Custer KP; 18 Jul Custer ND
Northern House Wren Confirmed Breeding: 09 Jul Fall River (ON) ND; 22 Jul Roberts (FL) CV
American Dipper Confirmed Breeding: 15 Jul Lawrence (UN) ND
European Starling Confirmed Breeding: 15 Jun Clay (FL) GJS; 30 Jun Roberts (FL) CV; 05 Jul Brule (CF) CA; 12 Jul Lawrence (FS) ND; 25 Jul Pennington (FL) OCW
Gray Catbird Confirmed Breeding: 27 Jun Fall River (FL) MMM; 27 Jun Roberts (FL) CV; 13 Jul Pennington (CF) ND
Brown Thrasher Confirmed Breeding: 06 Jun Minnehaha (CN) CA; 10 Jul Custer (CF) MMM
Northern Mockingbird All Reports: 13 Jun Lyman RDO; 14 Jun Meade ND
Eastern Bluebird Confirmed Breeding: 07 Jun Pennington (FL) JLB
Mountain Bluebird Confirmed Breeding: 01 Jun Fall River (CF) MMM; 12 Jun Custer (CF) KP
Townsend's Solitaire Confirmed Breeding: 13 Jul Pennington (FL) ND
Veery All Reports: 10 Jun Lawrence KP; 15 Jun Lincoln CA; 19 Jun Lawrence EK; 04 Jul Lincoln CA
Swainson's Thrush Confirmed Breeding: 13 Jul Pennington (FL) ND
Wood Thrush All Reports: 15 Jun Lincoln CA; 04 Jul Lincoln CA
American Robin Confirmed Breeding: Brule, Clay, Codington, Davison, Hyde, Lawrence, Meade, and Pennington counties
House Sparrow Confirmed Breeding: 10 Jun Roberts (ON) CV; 13 Jul Brookings (NY) CV; 14 Jul Douglas (CN) KP
House Finch Confirmed Breeding: 25 Jun Roberts (FY) CV
Pine Siskin Late East River: 01 Jun Roberts CV
Lesser Goldfinch All Reports: 07 Jun Fall River KP; 27 Jun Fall River RDO
American Goldfinch Confirmed Breeding: 06 Jul Roberts (CN) CV
Chestnut-collared Longspur Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jul Hughes (CF) ND
Grasshopper Sparrow Confirmed Breeding: 30 Jun Hyde (CF) ND; 05 Jul Hughes (CF) ND
Chipping Sparrow Confirmed Breeding: 28 Jun Pennington (CF) KM; 04 Jul Clay (CF) GJS; 07 Jul Roberts (FL) CV; 09 Jul Custer (FY) ND; 31 Jul Douglas (FL) KP

Field Sparrow Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jul Brule (FL) CA
Dark-eyed Junco Confirmed Breeding: 18 Jul Custer (NE) ND
LeConte's Sparrow All Reports: 13 Jul Brookings CV; 26 Jul Marshall CV
Nelson's Sparrow Only Report: 17 Jul Brookings JSP
Song Sparrow Confirmed Breeding: 13 Jul Pennington (FL) ND; 26 Jul Lawrence (CF) EK
Yellow-headed Blackbird Confirmed Breeding: 06 Jun Miner (NY) JSP; 07 Jun Hand (CF) ND; 16 Jul Minnehaha (FL) CA
Bobolink Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jul Hughes (CF) ND
Western Meadowlark Confirmed Breeding: 06 Jun Harding (CF) ND; 08 Jun Custer (CF) KP; 26 Jun Meade (CF) ND; 30 Jun Hyde (CF) ND; 05 Jul Hughes (CF) ND; 17 Jul Brookings (CF) JSP
Eastern Meadowlark All Reports: 15 Jun Lincoln CA; 20 Jun Clay GJS
Orchard Oriole Confirmed Breeding: 12 Jul Custer (FY) MMM; 26 Jul Brown (FL) CV; 27 Jul Bennett (CF) ND
Bullock's Oriole Confirmed Breeding: 09 Jul Fall River (NY) ND; 20 Jul Custer (FY) ND
Baltimore Oriole Confirmed Breeding: 15 Jun Lincoln (NY) CA; 16 Jun Roberts (CF) CV
Red-winged Blackbird Confirmed Breeding: 05 Jun Codington (CN) CV; 07 Jun Hand (FL) ND; 30 Jun Hyde (CF) ND; 04 Jul Roberts (FL) CV
Brown-headed Cowbird Confirmed Breeding: 26 Jul Brown (FL) CV
Common Grackle Confirmed Breeding: Brown, Clay, Codington, Hand, Meade, Minnehaha, Pennington, and Roberts counties
Great-tailed Grackle Confirmed Breeding: **05 Jul Davison (FL) CA**
Blue-winged Warbler All Reports: 15 Jun Lincoln CA; 04 Jul Lincoln CA
Black-and-white Warbler All Reports: 01 Jun Brown GO; 10 Jun Lawrence KP; 31 Jul Pennington CLG
Tennessee Warbler Late: 03 Jun Clay DS; 01 Jun Stanley KM
Virginia's Warbler All Reports: 05 Jun Custer KM; 10 Jun Custer KP; 14 Jul Custer ND
Mourning Warbler Late: 01 Jun Brown GO
Hooded Warbler All Reports: 15 Jun Lincoln CA; 04 Jul Lincoln CA
American Redstart Confirmed Breeding: 13 Jul Pennington (FY) ND
Yellow Warbler Confirmed Breeding: 15 Jun Lincoln (CF) CA; 13 Jul Brookings (CF) CV; 27 Jul Bennett (CF) ND
Yellow-rumped Warbler Confirmed Breeding: 06 Jun Harding (NY) ND; 15 Jul Lawrence (FY) ND
Canada Warbler Only Report: 02 Jun Roberts CV
Scarlet Tanager All Reports: 04 Jun Lincoln BB; 04 Jul Lincoln CA
Western Tanager Confirmed Breeding: 13 Jul Pennington (CF) ND; 20 Jul Custer (CF) ND
Rose-breasted Grosbeak Confirmed Breeding: 16 Jun Roberts (CF) CV
Dickcissel Confirmed Breeding: 30 Jun Hyde (CF) ND

Species Expected But Not Reported

Greater White-fronted Goose (2), Ross's Goose (4), Red-necked Phalarope, Lesser Black-backed Gull (3), Eastern Screech-Owl (3), Barred Owl (2), Long-eared Owl (4), Northern Saw-whet Owl (4), Merlin, Peregrine Falcon (4), Pinyon Jay (3), White-winged Crossbill (3), Brewer's Sparrow, Baird's Sparrow (2)

Reports Requiring Acceptance By The Rare Bird Records Committee

Tricolored Heron: 25 Jul Brown JSP
White-throated Sparrow: 22 Jun Roberts CV (already approved by committee)

Additional Notable Reports from eBird:

White-winged Dove: 03, 17 Jun Union T. Larson
Snowy Plover: 19-20 Jun Bon Homme G. MacDonald, S. Manning, R. Swift
Pileated Woodpecker: 04 Jun Deuel A. Fischer

Peregrine Falcon: 13 Jun S. Velagapudi; 26 Jul Tripp M. & T. Hibbitts
Pacific Wren: 12 Jun Lawrence S. Barton and P. Svingen
Sage Thrasher: 20 Jun Fall River B. Muenchau
Henslow's Sparrow: 06 Jul Lake M. Keppen

Contributing Observers

CA	Chris Anderson
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BB	Bob Bork
CLG	Canyon Lake Group
RND	Roger Dietrich
EDS	Eileen Dowd Stukel
ND	Nancy Drilling
EK	Elizabeth Krueger
MMM	Michael M. Melius
KM	Kenny Miller
GO	Gary Olson
RDO	Ricky D. Olson
OCW	Outdoor Campus West
JSP	Jeffrey S. Palmer
KP	Kelly M. Preheim
GJS	Gary & Jan Small
DS	David Swanson
CV	Cheryl Vellenga



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