

Van Dyke

Fall 1982 Report

Note (1): Since I was in Europe for most of the summer and did not return to Iowa until the second week of September, this report depends for its August observations largely on the contributions of others (particularly Gordon Brand).

Note (2): Because of my absence, two important summer reports came belatedly to my attention. They are the following:

- White-eyed Vireo: observed by Ken Hollinga in Oak Grove State Park on May 31. North-west Iowa is well to the north of this bird's normal range (cf. September 1982 issue of American Birds, p. 867, reporting a White-eyed Vireo as highly unusual in Minnehaha County, South Dakota, less than 40 miles away from here).
- Lark Bunting: observed by Gordon Brand about 8 miles west of Sioux Center on June 19.

Weather for the period:

September was mild and wet. During the last week of the month it was unusually warm (temperatures 70's to 80's, tornado watch in effect on September 28-29). October was cool with near normal precipitation. On October 19 a tremendous snowstorm hit north-west Iowa: six inches of heavy wet snow fell, creating enormous damage to trees (most of which were still in leaf). It was a weird experience to be outside (to keep the snow off the fruit trees) and hear the loud cracking and snapping of heavy branches and trees all over town. November: cloudy weather patterns, but otherwise normal. Coldest morning of the period: November 12, when the temperature fell to 6° F. At the end of November we experienced unusually mild weather with persistent fog.

Species report:

- ✓ - Eared Grebe: observed by Gordon Brand on Sioux-preme packing plant lagoon at Sioux Center on August 24.
- ✓ - White Pelican: several flocks of about 50 individuals each traveled southward over Sioux Center on October 5.
- ✓ - Black-crowned Night Heron: Gordon Brand observed an immature on October 16, between Doon and Rock Valley.
- Geese: normal migration of all species throughout the fall.
- ✓ - American Black Duck: Gordon Brand is quite sure he observed one among a flock of Blue-winged Teal on August 30 near Sioux Center.
- Wood Duck: I observed a flock of 9 individuals along Rock River on October 16.
- ✓ - Northern Goshawk: very fine observation, see enclosed documentation by Gordon Brand.
- Sharp-shinned Hawk: observed by Gordon Brand on October 16 between Doon and Rock Valley.
- ✓ - Cooper's Hawk: Gordon Brand saw one at Otter Creek, north of Boyden, on September 4. I observed an individual in Oak Grove Park on September 25.
- ✓ - Rough-legged Hawk: first occurrence on October 23 near Oak Grove Park.
- ✓ - Northern Harrier: migrated in goodly numbers in September and October.

- ✓ - Osprey: observed by Gordon Brand near Rock Valley on October 16.
- American Kestrel: an abundant migrant throughout the period (beginning in September).
- ✓ - Sandhill Crane: Mr. A.J. Boersma reports a sighting of a large (exact number undetermined) flock over extreme western Sioux Co. during first week of November.
- ✓ - American Avocet: a bird in breeding plumage was present at lagoon at Sioux Center on August 3. Another individual, in winter plumage was present in the same place (personally observed) from October 11 through October 14.
- Upland Sandpiper: small numbers observed by Gordon Brand in Sioux Co. in August.
- Greater & Lesser Yellowlegs: still present at Sioux Center in mid-October.
- ✓ - Northern Phalarope: two individuals were present at the Sioux Center lagoon from August 24 through September 2, observed by Gordon Brand.
- ✓ - Sanderling: I observed two individuals at Sioux Center lagoon on September 24.
- ✓ - Western Sandpiper: two observations by Brand: one on August 8 near Rock Valley, another one at Sioux Center on August 27, one individual in both instances.
- ✓ - Baird Sandpiper: six individuals present on August 30 (G. Brand), 3 individuals on September 21 and 22.
- ✓ - Stilt Sandpiper: Gordon Brand saw 3 individuals at lagoon on August 30, I observed 7 individuals at same lagoon in Sioux Center on September 24.
- ✓ - Common Nighthawk: migrated in splendid numbers, still moving by October 15.
- ✓ - Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: from September 30 to October 2 small flocks moved through Sioux Center (in groups of 2 to 4).
- Hairy Woodpecker: continues to do well in Sioux Co.
- ✓ - Western Kingbird: Gordon Brand observed one at Sioux Center on August 3.
- White-breasted Nuthatch: compared to last year, sharply declined in number.
- ✓ - Red-breasted Nuthatch: unusually abundant this fall, since October 12. They pretty well outnumber White-breasted Nuthatch in this area.
- ✓ - Brown Creeper: arrived on September 30, and have been plentiful since.
- ✓ - Gray Catbird: still present in Orange City on October 31, and in Sioux Center on November 2.
- ✓ - Hermit Thrush: 3 individuals were present in Orange City on October 31.
- ✓ - Gray-cheeked Thrush: still migrating on unusually late date of October 12 (through Sioux Center.) Cf. W. H. Brown, Annotated List.
- ✓ - Ruby-crowned Kinglet: during the last week of September and the first week of October swarms of these little birds moved through the area. One of the most spectacular Ruby-crowned Kinglet migrations I have seen.
- ✓ - Golden-crowned Kinglet: the first individuals arrived on October 12, overlapping the Ruby-crowned Kinglet. The Golden-crowned has been present, since its arrival, in what seem to me abnormally large numbers. This has certainly been a year of the Kinglets!
- ✓ - Water Pipit: moved through Sioux Co. in small but steady numbers from September 21 through mid-October.
- ✓ - Philadelphia Vireo: small numbers migrated through Sioux Center on the late date of October 3 (cf. Brown's Annotated List).

- Warbler migration: later and better than normal.
- ✓ - Black-throated Green Warbler: I observed an individual in Sioux Center on September 30. An unusual warbler this far to the north-west.
- ✓ - Wilson's Warbler: several individuals moved through Sioux Center on October 13 and 14.
- ✓ - Scarlet Tanager: a fall-plumaged individual appeared in our neighbor's yard on October 2. This bird is uncommon to rare in our area.
- Purple Finch: Gordon Brand reported observing 10 individuals in Oak Grove State Park on October 23.
- Rufous-sided Towhee: Mr. A.J. Boersma reported seeing one at his feeder in the first week of November. I could not determine whether he saw the regular eastern form or the western spotted form.
- ✓ - Northern Junco: arrived early in Sioux Co., on October 3.
- ✓ - American Tree Sparrow: we observed the first arrivals on October 16.
- ✓ - Clay-colored Sparrow: migrated in large numbers through western Sioux Co. in mid-October.
- Fox Sparrow: goodly numbers (flocks of 3-6) migrated through Sioux Co. from October 16 to October 23.
- Swamp Sparrow: observed by Gordon Brand near Rock Valley on October 23.
- Lapland Longspur & Snow Bunting: none observed.

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