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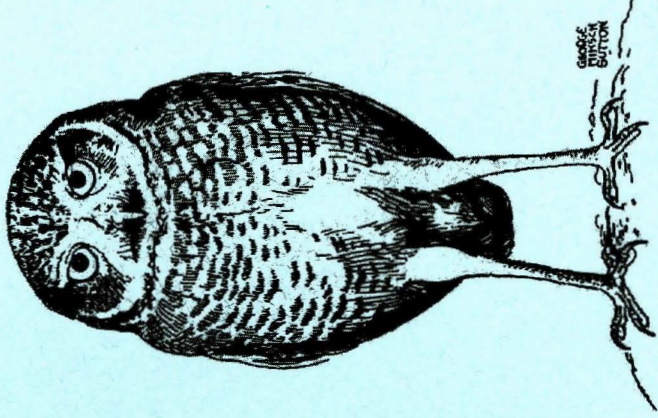
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SUMMER FIELD REPORT, June-July 2016

Compiled by W. Ross Silcock
P.O. Box 57, Tabor, IA 51653
silcock@rosssilcock.com

INTRODUCTION

This was a routine summer, if there is such a thing. Items of interest involved some rarities, most of which were distributional and temporal, some range changes, and a few issues that triggered more discussion than usual.

The only mega-rarity was Nebraska's second Swallow-tailed Kite; this species has apparently moved northward on the Great Plains in the last couple of years. Distributional rarities included the 3rd record for the east of Long-billed Curlew, a White-eyed Vireo in Cherry Co, the 2nd fall Yellow-throated Vireo record for the Panhandle, the 6th Cherry Co record for Purple Martin, and the 5th and 6th Tufted Titmouse records in Jefferson Co. Temporal rarities were a Dunlin that was state record early by 2 days in Knox Co, the 3rd Jun record of Blackburnian Warbler, and a record late Black-throated Green Warbler.

Interesting actual or potential changes in ranges involved possible breeding Mississippi Kites in Kearney and Omaha, probable breeding Red-shouldered Hawk in Jefferson Co, American Avocet nesting eastward in Rock Co, two reports of Barn Owl in the northeast, and the second breeding record for the state of Sage Thrasher in Sioux Co.

Issues discussed in the species accounts are the situation with American Black and Mottled Ducks and their apparent hybrids and other similar-looking possibilities, the continuing nesting success of Osprey, including a nice congruence of power company and Osprey interests, the apparent discernment of two Marbled Godwit migratory populations in Nebraska, and discussions on distribution of five rather common but patchily-distributed species: Sedge and Marsh Wrens, Vesper Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, and Great-tailed Grackle.

ABBREVIATIONS

ad: adult
BBS: Breeding Bird Survey
BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co
Cem: Cemetery
CLNWR: Crescent L NWR, Garden Co
ConL: Conestoga L, Lancaster Co
Co(s): County(ies)
CPBS: Cedar Point Biological Station, L Ogallala, Keith Co
CSP: Chadron SP, Dawes Co
EEDs: Expected Early Dates
ELDs: Expected Late Dates
FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co
fem: female
GPD: Gavins Point Dam, Knox and Cedar Cos

HCR: Harlan County Res, Harlan Co
ICSP: Indian Cave State Park, Richardson/Nemaha Cos
imm: immature
Jack Sinn: Jack Sinn Memorial WMA, Saunders and Lancaster Cos
juv: juvenile
L: Lake
LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co
LO: L Ogallala (includes contiguous Keystone L), Keith Co
LSWNP: Lincoln Saline Wetlands Nature Park, Lancaster Co
m. ob.: many observers
NC: Nature Center
NM: National Monument
NLB: North Lake Basin WMA, Seward Co
NNF: Nebraska National Forest
NVP: Niobrara Valley Preserve, Brown, Keya Paha, Rock Cos
NWR: National Wildlife Refuge
PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co
PRSP: Platte River SP, Cass Co
PSP: Ponca SP, Dixon Co
RA: Recreation Area
Res: Reservoir
RWB: Rainwater Basin, including parts of Phelps, Hamilton, York, Clay, Fillmore,
and Thayer Cos
SCP: Spring Creek Prairie, Denton
SHP: State Historical Park
SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)
SP: State Park
SRA: State Recreation Area
WHNC: Wildcat Hills NC, Scotts Bluff Co
WMA: (State) Wildlife Management Area
WP: Wildmess Park, Lincoln
WPA: (Federal) Waterfowl Production Area

OBSERVERS

AJo: Adam Jones, eBird
AG: Alan Grenon, Seattle, WA
AVe: Alan Versaw, eBird
AGI: Andy Glidden, eBird
BBr: Barbara Brown, Kearney
BS: Becky Steidl, eBird
BHe: Ben Heppner, Lincoln
BR: Ben Ream, eBird
BFH: Bill F. Huser, South Sioux City
BM: Brian Moody, eBird
BP: Brian Peterson, Omaha
BRe: Brian Reichert, eBird
BSc: Brian Schmidt, eBird

CCr: Charlotte Croshaw, Fremont
CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, Bellevue
CLa: Connor Langan, eBird
CVD: Cynthia Van Den Broeke, Lincoln
DL: Dan Leger, Lincoln
DVe: Dan Versaw, eBird
DHo: Daniel Horton, eBird
DH: David Heidt, Norfolk
DRy: David Rymal, eBird
DSt: David Stage, Omaha
DWi: David Willard, eBird
DMy: Dollyann Myers, eBird
EJo: Earl Johnson, eBird
EBo: Edward Boyd, eBird
ERa: Edward Raynor, Lincoln
EB: Elliott Bedows, Bellevue
EWo: Eric Wood, eBird
EJa: Esa Jarvi, Lincoln
GR: Gary Roberts, Fremont
GRi: Gene Ricks, eBird
GWa: Glenn Walbek, eBird
GW: Gordon Warrick, eBird
JHa: James Haver, Gothenburg
Ji: Jan Johnson, Wakefield
JSS: Jason St. Sauver, Lincoln
JDe: Jerry DeBoer, eBird
JB: Jessie B, eBird
J&LS : Jim & Linda Swenson
JM: Jim Mountjoy, eBird
JO: Jim Ochsner, Ogallala
JSt: Jim Stasz, eBird
JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Lincoln
JSc: John Schukman, eBird
JG: Joseph Gubanyi, Denton
JHi: Justin Hill, eBird
JR: Justin Rink, Omaha
KVS: Karen Viste-Sparkman, eBird
KFr: Kate French, eBird
KCR: Kathleen Crawford-Rosc, Bellevue
KD: Kathy DeLara, Mitchell
K&MO: Ken & Mary Ostermiller, eBird
KSh: Ken Shuster, Fremont
KS: Kent Skaggs, Kearney
KPi: Kim Pierce, eBird
LR: Larry Randolph, Minden
LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln
LCa: Lea Callan, eBird
LFe: Linda Ferring, eBird

LRu: Linda Rudolph, eBird
MH: Mace Hack, Omaha
MS: Marie Smith, Gering
MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton
MR: Mark Robbins, eBird
MLa: Mathieu Langlois, eBird
MB: Matt Beisel, eBird
MSh: Matt Shurtliff, Omaha
MW: Michael Willison, Lincoln
MLe: Mike Leite, eBird
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R&KH: Roger & Kathleen Horn, eBird
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VC: Virginia Clark, North Platte
WF: William Flack, Kearney
WWH: Walt Wagner-Hecht, eBird
WK: William Kaempfer, eBird
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA
ZWa: Zeke Watkins, eBird

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Greater White-fronted Goose: This species occurs rarely in summer: singles were in Jefferson Co 23 Jun (CNK) and York Co 9 Jul (JGJ).

Snow Goose: Reports were routine of this uncommon summer visitor central, rare elsewhere.

Cackling Goose: As with Greater White-fronted Goose, this species is rare in summer; the only report was of one at ConL 13 Jul (LE).

Canada Goose: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Trumpeter Swan: A pair at the southerly breeding location near Ravenna had success again this year; the ads and one cygnet were present 5 and 31 Jul (WF).

Wood Duck: Reports were routine of this common breeder east and central, uncommon west.

Gadwall: Reports were routine of this common breeder north-central and Sandhills, uncommon south-central, rare casual elsewhere.

American Wigeon: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide spring migrant; ELDs are 10-11 Jun.

American Black Duck/possible hybrid: Following a report 31 May at Jack Sinn (LE) of a dark bird treated in the Spring Report as an American Black Duck/Mottled Duck, a similar bird was seen about 4 miles farther east 7 Jun (MW). Photos of the latter bird were inconclusive, but it seems likely these sightings were of the same bird. There are several hybrid possibilities that could result in a dark Mallard- or American Black Duck-like bird (JGJ).

Mallard: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant and common statewide breeder.

Blue-winged Teal: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant and uncommon, locally common, statewide breeder.

Cinnamon Teal: None were reported of this locally uncommon breeder west, rare casual elsewhere.

Northern Shoveler: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide spring migrant and locally common breeder north-central, rare elsewhere.

Northern Pintail: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide spring migrant and uncommon, locally common statewide breeder.

Green-winged Teal: Nine males in Clay Co 18 Jun may have been non-breeders (JGJ); there are only about 5 breeding records for the RWB.

Canvasback: This species is a rare to locally uncommon breeder in the western Sandhills; there were 3 reports 2-6 Jun from Garden and Cherry Cos (CNK, RHo, DMy, ERa).

Redhead: The 98 in Clay Co 18 Jun (JGJ) is not unprecedented; although confirmed breeding in the RWB is rare, large numbers of presumed non-breeders are found there on occasion during Jun and Jul.

Ring-necked Duck: The only report was of a straggler in York Co 1 Jun (LE); ELDs are 6-7 Jun.

Lesser Scaup: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide spring migrant; ELDs are 12-17 Jun.

Bufflehead: None were reported of this common, locally abundant statewide spring migrant; ELDs are 29 May-1 Jun.

Hooded Merganser: This species is a rare summer visitor east and central; 4 were near Mullen 17 Jun (MH).

Common Merganser: There are several Jun-early Jul records from LO in recent years, too early to be molt migrants, and more likely lingerers from the huge numbers that migrate through the LM area. This year there were 6-7 at LO 13 Jun-8 Jul (JGJ).

Ruddy Duck: A fem in Douglas Co 29 Jul (JR) may have been a non-breeder; Ruddy Ducks do not breed until their second summer. Breeding-plumaged males in suitable breeding habitat suggests breeding; the fems may be on eggs. Three males at BOL 1 Jul (LE) and one in Madison Co 19 Jul (WF) may have been examples.

Northern Bobwhite: At the northwest edge of the range were 2 at Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 5 Jun (KPi). This species may be more common in central Nebraska than in the east; finding one in Douglas Co 15 Jul eliminated one observer's nemesiis (JR).

Gray Partridge: The only reports were from locations about 50 miles apart in southern Knox and southeastern Cedar Cos, an area where numbers of partridge have been low since about 2010. One was near Winnetoon 5 Jul (MB); the observer noted "it has been several years since I have found Gray Partridge in Knox County". Encouraging were the pair with 6 young northwest of Laurel, Cedar Co, 22 Jul, "the first time I have seen partridge in this area for over 10 years." (DSt).

Ring-necked Pheasant: Reports were routine of this fairly common, locally common, statewide resident.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Encouraging were several reports from the northeast part of the range in Keya Paha, Brown, and Rock Cos (m. ob.), with best count 14 at Hutton Sanctuary, Brown Co (JSc).

Greater Prairie-Chicken: This species is rare to absent over most of the Panhandle, with the few recent reports from Sheridan Co, where there are only 4 reports since 2006. Only the 5th report for Sheridan Co was the 3 birds about 20 miles south of Gordon 7 Jun (CNK).

Wild Turkey: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide resident.

Common Loon: Summering immes are expected on western reservoirs and lakes, but reports in the east are rare after the ELDs 30-31 May. An imm at Verdon L, Richardson Co, 4-24 Jun (BP, JGJ, SQ) was only the second Jun report from the east.

Pied-billed Grebe: Reports were routine of this common regular breeder Sandhills, fairly common elsewhere.

Horned Grebe: None were reported of this fairly common statewide spring migrant; ELDs are 4-5 Jun.

Red-necked Grebe: Tantalizing was the presence of two breeding-plumaged birds at LO through May (Spring Report); however, subsequent reports were only of single birds through the Summer period (m. ob.). Perhaps the spring birds were both males?

Eared Grebe: Reports were routine of this common regular spring migrant central and west, fairly common east, and common regular breeder north and west, rare east.

Western Grebe: One at Yankee Hill Res, Lancaster Co, 3 Jul (SMa) may have been the same single that was at BOL 11 Jun through the period (MW, ERa, LE); if so, it provided only the 10th report from the east from late Jun-Aug.

Clark's Grebe: This species is regular in low numbers during summer on LM, where it breeds; as many as 5 (6 Jul, LRu photo) were present 2-14 Jul (BP, RSt). The only other report was of one at Oliver Res, Kimball Co, 6 Jun (JDe), presumably a tardy migrant.

American White Pelican: Reports were routine of this uncommon, locally common, summer visitor central and west, uncommon elsewhere.

Double-crested Cormorant: This species is rare in mid-summer (late Jun-early Jul) in the southeast (except for BOL); EEDs for fall are 11-12 Jul, and so an

apparent breeding-plumaged bird in Dodge Co 5 Jul (CCr photo) was unexpected. As many as 16 (1 Jul, LE) summered at BOL (m. ob.).

American White Pelican: Reports were routine of this uncommon, locally common, summer visitor central and west, uncommon elsewhere.

American Bittern: This species is a fairly early migrant in spring and so Jun reports away from the expected breeding range (north, west, RWB) are indicative of breeding. A flyover in Sarpy Co 16 Jun (SMa) and two calling at Peru Bottoms WMA, Nemaha Co, 5 Jun (WRS) were possibly breeding. Confirmed breeding is not often reported, but ads with two young were in Holt Co 10 Jul (SB).

Least Bittern: There were a number of reports of this usually elusive species from several locations in the southeast and in the western Sandhills. Reports were indicative of excellent water conditions: 1-2 were at Jack Sinn through at least 10 Jul (m. ob.), and singles were at NLB 1 Jun (LE), Wood Duck WMA, Stanton Co, 8 Jun (WF), Blyburg L, Dakota Co, 11 Jun (BFH), LaPlatte Bottoms, Sarpy Co, 19 Jul (AG), and Louisville SRA, Cass Co, 30 Jul (MSH). That CLNWR was "littered" with Least Bitterns 7-8 Jun (fide JGJ) is indicative of excellent habitat there.

Great Blue Heron: Reports were routine of this locally common breeder west and central, uncommon east.

Great Egret: Reports were routine of this common summer visitor east and central, rare west.

Snowy Egret: None were reported of this uncommon summer visitor central, rare elsewhere.

Little Blue Heron: The only report for the Spring and Summer periods was of an ad in western Seward Co 1 Jun (LE).

Cattle Egret: Reports were routine of this uncommon, locally common, summer visitor east and central, rare west.

Green Heron: This species is rare in the northwest and Panhandle; thus an edge-of-range report was of one at Bridgeport SRA 21 Jun (VRo, LCa). There are two other reports from Bridgeport and one from Scotts Bluff Co. Northwesternly were singles in Greeley Co 29 Jun (WF) and Wheeler Co 15 Jun (WF).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Two at the Kearney I-80 Westbound Rest Area in Buffalo Co 5 Jul (CLa) were likely early fall wandering non-breeders; this species does not breed until 2-3 years of age.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: The only reports of this rare summer visitor to the southeast and south-central were of singles at NLB 1 Jun (LE) and at Harvard Marsh 18 Jun (JGJ).

Glossy Ibis: The only report of a conclusively-identified Glossy was of one with 11 White-faced Ibis in western Seward Co 1 Jun (LE).

White-faced Ibis: ELDs for spring are 14-18 Jun where not breeding; early fall migration dates are not well known. Five in York Co 9 Jul (JGJ) were likely migrants; summering birds were not reported there. A flock flew over Seward Co 25 Jul (TG).

Turkey Vulture: Reports were routine of this locally uncommon statewide breeder.
Osprey: Last year's initial breeding success led to success again this year; the nest below Keystone Dam, Keith Co, had 3 nearly-fledged young 8 and 15 Jul (JGJ, RSt), and the Scottsbluff nests at the North Platte River bridge on Highway 92 and at the Western Sugar Factory both fledged at least two young (KD). At a

third Scotts Bluff Co site, according to Kathy DeLara: "The pair that attempted to nest just off Highway 26 and Spring Creek Road west of Scottsbluff last year tried again this year. The nest once again blew off the pole in a storm. They started to build a second nest, even though it was late in the season, on a Roosevelt Public Power pole on Berggren Road. RPPD took it down and ... put up a nesting platform for them. I didn't see any activity on the platform until just recently and they have put some sticks on it. I saw one of them carrying sticks to it on August 19th but haven't seen them since (KD)." One hunting in Dakota Co 11 Jun (BFH) may have been a tardy (non-breeding?) migrant, while the 4 at Fort Robinson SHP, Dawes Co, 30 Jul (AJo) were likely a family group that perhaps bred in Wyoming. ELDs for spring are 5 Jun (3 times), and EEDs for fall are 12-13 Aug.

Swallow-tailed Kite: Apparently part of a significant influx of this species to the Great Plains was one photographed near Kearney 25 Jul (fide JGJ). This is Nebraska's second modern documented record. Northerly sightings of this species have increased in the past few years, and there have been several sightings from neighboring states this summer, including one at the Hitchcock Hawk Watch in Pottawattamie Co, Iowa.

Mississippi Kite: No reports were received from Nebraska's kite capital, Ogallala, but there were interesting developments elsewhere. Summering birds continued at Imperial, where up to 3 were present 28 Jun-12 Jul (JGJ, BRc); there have been kites at Imperial since 2011. A new site is Kearney, where up to 4 were seen near 27th St and First Ave 10 Jun-6 Jul (BM fide KS, m. ob.). No breeding was confirmed, although one was "plucking leaves" 12 Jun (KS). Far to the east, in Omaha, 2 birds were seen around 122nd and Center 10-13 May (RS) and 2 again 16 Jul (RS). No breeding evidence was noted, but the timing is suggestive of breeding; EEDs for fall migrants are 10-16 Aug.

Bald Eagle: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide breeder (except southwest), and uncommon statewide summer visitor.

Northern Harrier: This species is a rare, locally uncommon, breeder statewide, although most summer reports are from the Panhandle, Sandhills, and RWB. This summer was no exception, although a male dropping food to a fem that then dropped into a wheat field near Roscoe 7 Jun was indicative of a pair feeding young at the edge of the Sandhills (TJW).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: This species is a rarely-reported low density breeder in the central Niobrara River Valley; thus of interest was a report from Fort Niobrara, Cherry Co, 21 Jun (JSt, EBo).

Cooper's Hawk: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide breeder.

Red-shouldered Hawk: Following reports from two locations this spring, reports from a third location, Rose Creek WMA, Jefferson Co, were encouraging for this rare breeder. One was recorded 3 Jun (SSc) and another very vocal bird was there 27 Jul (TJW).

Broad-winged Hawk: Although breeding is not often documented, Broad-wings are reported every summer in the southeast. This summer, reports were from 5 locations 14 Jun-25 Jul, including Lancaster (EJa), Washington (SSc), Douglas (JR, BR, SMa), and Sarpy (SMa) Cos.

Swainson's Hawk: This species breeds almost statewide, but less-than-annually in the far southeast. Reports in Washington Co 5 Jun (LCa) and Pawnee Co 6 Jun

(SQ) may have been tardy migrants, but singles in Webster Co 14 Jul (GWa) and Lancaster Co 27 Jul (MBe) may have been breeding locally.

Red-tailed Hawk: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide breeder.

Ferruginous Hawk: Reports were routine of this uncommon breeder west, southwest, and north.

Golden Eagle: Reports were routine of this uncommon western resident.

Virginia Rail: Two reports from the southeast, 30 Jul at Jack Sinn (LE) and 31 Jul at LSWNP (BHe photo), were of juvs; these were likely early migrants. Previous EEDs for fall were 8-12 Aug.

Sora: As with Virginia Rail, late Jul reports of Sora are likely early fall migrants; there were 7 reports from the southeast beginning 17 Jul (m. ob.) in this category. Data is accumulating suggestive of fall migration beginning in mid-Jul with EEDs 12-17 Jul. However, Sora is a likely breeder anywhere in the state, although uncommon in the southeast. Reports suggestive of breeding were of singles at Harvard Marsh 18 Jun (JGJ) and LSWNP 29 Jun (CVD).

American Coot: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant breeder north-central, fairly common elsewhere. Users of eBird will notice that this species is listed as "American Coot (Red-shielded)"; David Sibley has discussed this at <http://www.sibleyguides.com/2011/03/the-caribbean-coot-in-north-america/>.

Sandhill Crane: Breeding has occurred at Chet and Jane Fleisbach WMA, Morrill Co, since 2005; this year a pair with a colt was seen there 2 Jun (JGJ). There were several reports without evidence of breeding, although a pair in York Co 18 Jun and 9 Jul (JGJ) were suggestive, as was a pair in Knox Co 27 Jul (MB, photo). Singles, likely non-breeding wanderers, were reported in Saunders Co 26 Jul (LE), Rock Co 3 Jun (JSc), and Dawson Co 1 Jul (TJW).

Black-necked Stilt: Routine reports were from traditional locations in Garden and Sheridan Cos (BP, J&LS), but the first RWB nesting since 2011 involved a pair at Sinninger WPA, York Co. A nest with 4 eggs was found 18 Jun, and, based on the actions of the ads, young may have been present 9 Jul; however, the area had dried out by 28 Jul and so the outcome is unknown (JGJ).

American Avocet: What appears to be the easternmost nesting record known in the north was one with 4 eggs southeast of Bassett in Rock Co 22 Jun (AGI photo, fide JGJ). Migrants appear as early as mid-Jul, many of which are likely failed breeders; 9 in breeding plumage were at Scottsbluff SL 7 Jul (KD photo). A drive across Highway 2 on 22 May yielded no avocets on traditionally-occupied ponds adjacent to the highway; water levels were high, inundating exposed shoreline (WRS).

Black-bellied Plover: None were reported of this uncommon, locally common, statewide spring and fall migrant. ELDs in spring are 14-21 Jun and fall EEDs are 25-28 Jul.

American Golden-Plover: None were reported of this locally common fall migrant east and central, uncommon west. EEDs for fall are 8-11 Jul; such early migrants are ads, of which there are only 21 records.

Semipalmated Plover: Reports were routine of this fairly common fall migrant east and central, uncommon west.

Piping Plover: Reports of interest away from known breeding areas were of one on a chute sandbar at Hamburg Bend WMA, Otoe Co, 12 Jul, thought to be

“wandering rather than breeding in the area” (SMa photo, BR), and 2 on a South Platte River sandbar between Brule and Big Springs in Keith Co (VRO, LCa). Best fall tally was the 15 at the Niobrara River mouth, Knox Co, 27 Jul (MB).

Killdeer: The 340 at ConL 29 Jun (LE) was 3rd-highest summer count on record after 1012 and 750, both in the RWB.

Mountain Plover: None were reported of this fairly common breeder extreme southwest Panhandle.

Spotted Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide breeder and fairly common statewide spring and fall migrant.

Solitary Sandpiper: One in Dawson Co 26 Jun (LR, RH) was rather early; EEDs for fall are 24-25 Jun.

Greater Yellowlegs: One in Cherry Co 18 Jun (ERa) became one of 15 overall records 6-18 Jun; these are likely one-year-old birds that didn't complete migration. Fall EEDs are 22-24 Jun.

Willet: One in York Co 18 Jun was likely a “southbound migrant” (JGJ); there are 3 other previous dates 15-20 Jun, and EEDs for fall in non-breeding locations are 23-26 Jun. An easterly breeding record was of an ad with a flightless chick in Holt Co 10 Jul (SB).

Lesser Yellowlegs: Four in Clay Co 18 Jun (JGJ) were rather early fall migrants; previous EEDs for fall were 16-19 Jun.

Long-billed Curlew: Easterly limits of the Sandhills breeding range are not well known, but records suggest they occur east to Brown, Rock, and Holt Cos. Hutton Sanctuary, Rock Co, hosted 1-2 birds 1-2 Jun (RK1, JSc). Only the 3rd all-time record for the East was of one at ConL 23 Jul (LE details).

Upland Sandpiper: The 38 on the Sumner BBS route, mostly in Dawson Co, 26 Jun (LR, RH) was a good count; previous highs were 36-40.

Hudsonian Godwit: There are only 3 documented fall records. This species migrates in fall along the Atlantic Coast; the few interior records are of juvs.

Marbled Godwit: Telemetry studies suggest that mid-continent North American breeding Marbled Godwits consist of two separate migratory populations (Olson: *The Biogeography of Marbled Godwit* (Limosa fedoa) *Populations in North America* 2011). Breeders in the Dakotas winter on the Atlantic Coast and tend to migrate in Apr; the apparently few Nebraska breeders are likely part of this population. However, there are a number of May records for Nebraska and even a few in very early Jun. Whether these are failed breeders, which can depart breeding grounds very early, like Long-billed Curlews, or whether they are later migrants from southwestern US wintering areas is conjectural. One such was in Wayne Co 5 Jun (WF); there are 5 previous records 5-9 Jun. Possible breeding birds were singles in Cherry Co 18 Jun (ERa) and Garden Co 2 Jul (BP photo).

Stilt Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common central fall migrant, uncommon east and west.

Sanderling: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Dunlin: This species migrates late in fall, as ads move south with juvs. One in Knox Co 27 Jul (MB) was the earliest on record by two days; there are only 2 records for Jul and 3 for Aug.

Baird's Sandpiper: Two reports in mid-June add to the 15 previous such reports 11-24 Jun: one at ConL 11 Jun (MW) and two in Clay Co 18 Jun (JGJ). These are likely one-year-old non-breeders that did not complete migration.

Least Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

White-rumped Sandpiper: The 695 at a single location in western Cass Co 1 Jun (LE) was a good count; spring highs, however, are 4000-7000!

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: The only reports of this uncommon fall migrant were in the east: up to 5 were at ConL 24-29 Jul (SKr, m. ob.), 4 were in two Knox Co locations 27 Jul (MB), and 3 were in Sarpy Co 28 Jul (CNK).

Pectoral Sandpiper: One at ConL 3-4 Jul (R&KH, LE) was rather early; EEDs for fall were 4-5 Jul.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: One at ConL 3 Jul (ERa) was rather early; previous fall EEDs were 2-4 Jul.

Western Sandpiper: None were reported of this fairly common statewide fall migrant; EEDs are 4-6 Jul.

Short-billed Dowitcher: Rather early fall migrants were 3-6 at ConL 3 Jul (ERa details, R&KH). Previous early fall reports are 29 Jun and 9 Jul. According to Jehl et al. (*Birds of North America Online* 2001) failed breeders begin to leave the breeding range in late Jun.

Long-billed Dowitcher: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Wilson's Snipe: Two at Jack Sinn 30 Jul (LE) were likely early migrants, although breeding has occurred there.

American Woodcock: None were reported of this uncommon eastern and rare central breeder.

Wilson's Phalarope: Reports were routine for this common, locally abundant, statewide spring and fall migrant, and uncommon, locally common breeder north-central and west, rare elsewhere.

Red-necked Phalarope: None were reported of this fairly common fall migrant west and central, uncommon east; EEDs in fall are 22-28 Jul.

Franklin's Gull: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide summer visitor.

Ring-billed Gull: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide summer visitor.

California Gull: As might be expected, the three reports were from LM, where it is an uncommon summer visitor, 6-18 Jul. At least 2 ads and one imm were present (LRu, JGJ, RSt).

Herring Gull: None were reported of this uncommon summer visitor at LM, less than annual elsewhere.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: The only report was of an ad at LO 24 Jul (WK). In Nebraska this species is essentially a spring and fall migrant; between 2 May and Aug 24 there were only 8 previous records.

Least Tern: Generally this species is a sandbar specialist in major river drainages. Thus unexpected were 2 at Hackberry L, CLNWR, 7 Jun (fide JGJ), although they may have been migrants. Sightings at unexpected locations during breeding season were of 2 on the South Platte River near Brule 20 Jun (VRO, LCa), and 2 at BOL 1 Jul (LE). Two at Hamburg Bend, Otoe Co, on a Missouri River chute sandbar 12 Jul (SMa, BR) were likely early migrants.

Caspian Tern: Only the 8th record in summer (11 Jun-9 Jul) away from LM (where rare at this time) were of 2 in Dodge Co 29 Jun (RSa photo, KSh, GR).

Black Tern: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring and fall migrant.

Common Tern: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide spring and fall migrant.

Forster's Tern: Reports away from breeding locations in summer (12 Jun-3 Jul for this species), are few, and most are in the north and west. Such reports are rare in the south and east, and so these are significant: 9 were at BOL 1 Jul (LE), and 2 were at Yankee Hill Res, Lancaster Co, 3 Jul (SMa).

Rock Pigeon: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

White-winged Dove: As this species continues to increase in Nebraska, summer sightings are becoming almost routine. There were several reports of apparent pairs, but none of nesting. Reports of two birds together were from Ogallala 6 Jun (JO), Mullen 2 Jul (BP), and Franklin Co 13-14 Jul (at least one present 29 Jun-14 Jul; GWa). Elsewhere, one, and possibly 3, were near Jackson, Dakota Co, 20 Jun (BR), one was in Chapman, Merrick Co, 26 Jun (SM), two were at Johnson L SRA, Gosper Co, 27 Jun (not identified as being together; K&HO), 1-2 separate birds were in Benkelman, Dundy Co, 29 Jun (JGJ) and 3 Jul (BP), and one was at Iron Horse Park, Lincoln Co, 1 Jul (CLa).

Mourning Dove: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Reports were routine of this common breeder east and central, uncommon west.

Black-billed Cuckoo: The 13 reports statewide (m. ob.) were encouraging; recent years have seen few reports.

Barn Owl: There were 3 reports, including two from the northeast, where this species is least numerous. One southwest of Brady 6 Jun (TJW) was not unexpected, but reports at Niobrara SP, Knox Co, 3 Jul (MLa) and near Springfield in Knox Co 10 Jun (AJo) were.

Eastern Screech-Owl: A veteran observer noted that he is not finding Eastern Screech-Owls in Lancaster Co (LE); this situation may bear further scrutiny.

Great Horned Owl: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Burrowing Owl: An excellent tally of 17, including several juvs, was made at the two separate prairie-dog towns at Hultine WPA, Clay Co, 14 Jul (RSt). High counts are 30-44 at single locations. Hultine WPA appears to be the easternmost regular Nebraska breeding site for this species.

Barred Owl: Reports were routine of this fairly common eastern resident, rare casual elsewhere.

Long-eared Owl: None were reported of this rare statewide resident.

Short-eared Owl: The only report was of an ad and a begging young bird at Agate Fossil Beds NM, Sioux Co, 5 Jun (DHo); this is only the 9th documented breeding record since 1960.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: An intriguing report was of one calling at PSP 4 Jul (JHi); although eBird considered the report "Not Valid", there have been several records of calling birds in southern Knox and Antelope Cos in recent years.

Common Nighthawk: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Common Poorwill: Near the eastern edge of its breeding range in northern Nebraska, none were heard 15 Jun in the NVP (CNK) where previously they were regular; the fire of 2012 may have altered the habitat for this species (CNK).

Chuck-will's-widow: The area along River Road just northwest of Fairbury has a good population of this species; 9 were counted on a survey there 15 Jun, 5 of which were at the junction of 565 Ave and 717 Road (JG). Several observers reported multiple birds in the area 15 Jun-6 Jul (m. ob.). The only other report was from a regular Missouri River Valley site, ICSP, where one was calling 4 Jun (BP). Occurrence at Oak Glen WMA, Seward Co, is sporadic; a total of 6 have been reported there 2006-2016, but none this year (JG).

Eastern Whip-poor-will: This species is common along the Niobrara Valley west to eastern Cherry Co; at least 40 were tallied at Thomas Creek WMA, Keya Paha Co, 26 Jun (DH). Previous high summer counts were 9-30.

Chimney Swift: Reports were routine of this common breeder east and central, uncommon west.

White-throated Swift: Reports were routine of this uncommon Panhandle breeder.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Fall arrival was a little early; previous fall EEDs were 16-19 Jul where no summering birds were detected, and so significant were an imm in a Bellevue yard 10 Jul (EB), and another in an Omaha yard 13 Jul (RMa). All but two of the reports were from the east: one was in Adams Co 1 Jun (LE), a presumed spring migrant, and another far to the west was one in Scotts Bluff Co 30 Jul (MS fide KD). The latter is the 21st fall Panhandle record, all in the period 22 Jul-18 Oct.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird: About the 16th fall record for the east was a fem at the Jorgensen feeder in Lincoln 27-29 Jul (JGJ, m. ob.). First to arrive in the west was a fem at the DeLara feeders 22 Jul (KD); EEDs are 3-9 Jul.

Rufous Hummingbird: A male in the DeLara yard 23 Jun was earliest on record for fall by 9 days. EEDs are 11-12 Jul, but there are 4 previous records 3-9 Jul. Easternmost report was of one in an Ogallala yard 30 Jul (JO).

Calliope Hummingbird: The two reports were from Scotts Bluff Co; singles were in the DeLara yard 31 Jul (KD) and at the Smith residence 30 Jul (MS fide KD). Fall EEDs are 13-14 Jul.

Belted Kingfisher: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide breeder.

Lewis's Woodpecker: The only report was of one at the regular site below Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co, 17 Jul (JM).

Red-headed Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common breeder east and central, uncommon west.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: In recent years this species has spread slowly west in the North Platte Valley to Scotts Bluff Co; the only Panhandle report this summer was of one near Broadwater, Morrill Co, 21 Jun (VRo, LCa). In the Niobrara River Valley, it occurs west to the Valentine area; one was at Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 12 Jul (KPi).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: There are several previous late spring-early summer reports as late as 1 Jul, but only 5 for Jun-Jul; thus unexpected was one at SCP 30 May-1 Jun (JSS).

Downy Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common resident east and central, fairly common west.

- Hairy Woodpecker:** Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.
- Northern Flicker:** Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.
- Pileated Woodpecker:** Reports were, as expected, from locations in the Missouri River Valley, north to DeSoto NWR, Washington Co, (DWi); the population at FF may now be 5-6 individuals (AG).
- American Kestrel:** Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide breeder.
- Peregrine Falcon:** All reports were of resident pairs in Lincoln and Omaha.
- Prairie Falcon:** One at a prairie-dog town in southern Keya Paha Co 25 Jul (WF) was likely an early easterly migrant; EEDs east of the breeding range are 23-26 Aug, but there is evidence for earlier eastward movement on the Great Plains.
- Olive-sided Flycatcher:** None were reported of this uncommon spring migrant east and central, rare west. ELDs in spring are 14-16 Jun.
- Western Wood-Pewee:** The eastern range limit in the Niobrara River Valley is in the area of the boundary junction of Brown, Rock, and Keya Paha Cos, and especially the NVP. This summer a Western Wood-Pewee singing at Holt Creek WMA, Keya Paha Co, 24 Jul responded to a Western Wood-Pewee tape but not to an Eastern Wood-Pewee tape (WF, LR, RH). Along the North Platte River Valley, singing Westerns are reported in summer each year in Lincoln Co; this year one was observed on 6 Jun near Brady (TJW). One near Gothenburg, Dawson Co, 4 Jun (DVe, AVe) was likely an easterly migrant as there are no summering records that far east in the Platte River Valley (yet). One in Hitchcock Co 2 Jun (TJW) was also likely a migrant, although breeding has occurred in Dundy Co. One at NNF Halsey 18 Jun was recorded (MR); two were at the same location in 2015.
- Eastern Wood-Pewee:** One was westerly at Arcadia Diversion Dam, Custer Co, 17 Jul (WF). This species breeds regularly in the Valentine area; this summer there were multiple reports from Fort Niobrara NWR 21 Jun-13 Jul (m. ob.), and 2 were at the Valentine City Park 19 Jun (ERa).
- Acadian Flycatcher:** This species is consolidating its southeastern Nebraska range and expanding slightly; singles at Neale Woods, Douglas and Washington Cos, 23 and 25 Jun (JR), and one singing at WP, Lancaster Co, through the period (m. ob.) were the outliers.
- Alder Flycatcher:** Singles barely made it into each end of the period; one was at SCP 1 Jun (JSS) and another vocal bird was rather early there 28 Jul (ZWa). ELDs in spring are 4-5 Jun and EEDs in fall are 21-30 Jul.
- Willow Flycatcher:** Reports were routine of this uncommon breeder statewide except southwest.
- Least Flycatcher:** Last in spring were 5 along the Niobrara River east of Norden Road, Brown Co, 10 Jun (AJo), a location where breeding might occur, and first in fall 27 Jul in Knox Co (MB). Late spring and early fall dates for migrants are not clear-cut, but are likely around 10 Jun and 10 Jul. The breeding status of Least Flycatcher in Nebraska is unclear; there are no confirmed breeding reports (Mollhoff: *Nebraska Breeding Bird Atlas 2016*).
- Cordilleran Flycatcher:** Reports were routine of this uncommon northwestern breeder.
- Eastern Phoebe:** In the western third of Nebraska this species is rare, restricted mostly to the Pine Ridge, Republican River Valley, and the Platte River Valleys west to Keith Co. Reports in the western Sandhills are few;

westernmost this summer were singles in Thomas Co 20 Jun (WF) and Custer Co 5 Jun (TJW). The only Pine Ridge report was of one south of Chadron in Dawes Co 9 Jul (KVS).

Say's Phoebe: Easternmost report was of an apparently-nesting pair on a bridge in Howard Co 8 Jul (WF). This species is uncommon in the east half of the state, and occurs only rarely east to Howard and Hall Cos in the Platte River Valley.

Great Crested Flycatcher: Reports were routine of this common eastern breeder, locally common central, and uncommon west.

Cassin's Kingbird: The 14 in canyons south of Redington 2 Jun (JGJ) was an excellent summer tally; previous highs were 10-19.

Western Kingbird: Reports were routine of this common breeder west and central, fairly common east.

Eastern Kingbird: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: As has become the norm in recent years in southern Nebraska, this species was reported from three locations, and there were nesting pairs in two of those locations. A pair was nesting in Pawnee Co at their last year's site at 626 Ave and 710 Trail 4-6 Jun; a different male and a different fem were in the area also (SQ, LF, BP, BHe, MW). There were no subsequent reports, however. Another pair nested west of Lincoln on Denton Rd at SW 31st St. beginning 13 Jun (JG); the fem was incubating 29 Jun (LE), 4 "fuzzy" nestlings were there 8 Jul (SSc), and 3 well-feathered nestlings were being fed 18 Jul (NR) but apparently left the nest the same day (JG). The only other report was of one in Gosper Co 15 Jun (RSt).

Loggerhead Shrike: Loss of habitat (roadside thickets) was suggested as a reason why for the first time in several years none were found on a BBS route in Custer and Lincoln Cos 5 Jun (TJW).

White-eyed Vireo: Following two spring reports in the Douglas-Sarpy Cos area, two more were reported in early Jun. One was northwesterly at Cornell Bridge near Valentine 10 Jun (GW fide JGJ); the other was at FF 18 Jun (JR), possibly the bird that was there 26 Apr-17 May (Spring Report). There are now single records from Knox, Cherry, and Lincoln Cos, but only 8 records for Jun-Aug since 1976.

Bell's Vireo: This species is a rare, edge of range breeder in the Panhandle and so these reports are of interest: singles were at CLNWR and Ash Hollow SHP, both in Garden Co, 25 Jun (JB).

Yellow-throated Vireo: This species is less-than-annual west of the Missouri River confluence with the Niobrara River, with fewer than 10 such reports. Thus significant was one seen well just east of Norden Bridge, Brown Co, 10 Jun (CNK, EJa). Only the second fall record for the Panhandle was one heard and seen singing in Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co, 18 Jul (JM).

Plumbeous Vireo: Reports were routine of this uncommon Pine Ridge breeder.

Blue-headed Vireo: None were reported of this uncommon spring migrant east, rare casual central. ELDs for spring are 6-12 Jun.

Warbling Vireo: Two subspecies occur in Nebraska, western *Vireo gilvus brewsteri* in the Panhandle, and eastern *V. g. gilvus* over most of the rest of the state. The identity of birds in the west-central is unclear, although birds in Keith Co are thought to be *V. g. gilvus*, as it breeds along the South Platte River into

northeastern Colorado (Ted Floyd: <http://blog.aba.org/2011/06/pieplow-made-me-do-it.html>). This summer, 2 *V. g. gilvus* were at LO 24 Jul (WK).

Red-eyed Vireo: Reports were routine of this common breeder east, central, and northwest, rare casual Panhandle south of South Platte River.

Blue Jay: Reports were routine of this common breeder east and central, fairly common west.

Black-billed Magpie: All reports were from traditional locations where this species has been found in recent years. Easternmost was one at Ft Kearny SHP, Kearney Co, 21 Jun (RLo).

American Crow: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Horned Lark: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Purple Martin: This species is rare as far west as Cherry Co; only the 6th record is of one in Valentine 19 Jun (ERa). Purple Martins are reasonably common west to Ainsworth. The westerly colony in Benkelman, Dundy Co, continues with 20-25 birds 29 Jun (JGJ) and 3 Jul (BP); the species breeds throughout the Republican River Valley. The huge annual Omaha roost was getting underway by the end of Jul, when 100+ were present (JR).

Tree Swallow: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide breeder, uncommon southwest and southern Panhandle.

Violet-green Swallow: Somewhat easterly was a probable migrant near Whiteclay, Sheridan Co, 1 Jun (PMH); breeding is not known on the Pine Ridge east of Dawes Co.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Bank Swallow: Reports were routine of this common breeder east and central, uncommon west.

Cliff Swallow: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide breeder.

Barn Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Black-capped Chickadee: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide resident.

Tufted Titmouse: This species is mostly associated with counties bordering the Missouri River, with only small numbers west of there. There is a small population in Jefferson Co, with most reports from Rose Creek WMA and Flathead WMA. This summer singles were at Rose Creek WMA 27 Jul (TJW) and Flathead WMA 23 Jun (CNK). These are only the 5th and 6th reports overall from Jefferson Co.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: One in Buffalo Co 26 Jun (BBr photo) was a surprise; there are several incidences away from traditional breeding areas of this species lingering for some time where it wintered, sometimes resulting in a nesting effort.

White-breasted Nuthatch: This species (eastern subspecies) occurs regularly west in the Niobrara River Valley to the Valentine area; one was at the City Park 19 Jun (ERa) and another at Merritt Res 12 Jul (KPi). Reports are few west of LM in the North Platte Valley; singles were in Morrill Co 21 Jun (VRo, LCa) and Scotts Bluff Co 26 Jun (VRo, LCa).

Pygmy Nuthatch: Reports were routine of this common western resident, rare casual north.

Brown Creeper: The only report was of one at FF 18 Jun (JR), presumably one of the birds reported nesting there in spring (Spring Report).

Rock Wren: Reports were routine of this common breeder west and west-central, rare east-central, rare casual east.

House Wren: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Sedge Wren: ELDs for spring are 2-6 Jun, although it is difficult to understand late May-early Jun sightings of this species, especially singing birds. The latter may still be moving north, but recent years have seen an increase of Jun records in the east where previously this species was only a rare breeder. This summer there were multiple records of singing Sedge Wrens in eastern Nebraska suggestive of possible breeders: one singing persistently in Madison Co 3 Jun and other singers in Wayne Co 4-9 Jun (WF), 3 in Knox Co 12-13 Jun (EJo), 8 calling birds in Holt Co 18 Jun (DH), one singing in Burt Co 22 Jun (SMa), one in Stanton Co 25 Jun (DH), two in Douglas Co 1 Jul (JR), and one at LSWNP 4 Jul (TG). Presumed migrants were westerly singles in Cherry Co 5 Jun (DH) and Sheridan Co 7 Jun (CNK). In mid-Jul, Sedge Wrens return in good numbers and often breed in fall. A rather early returnee was one in Wheeler Co 8 Jul (WF); EEDs for fall are 8-10 Jul.

Marsh Wren: This species exhibits the same fall early arrival behavior as Sedge Wren, although perhaps not as noticeably. Of interest is the observation that birds involved in this behavior and not present during May-Jun that have had song type reported are of the eastern song type, presumably *Cistothorus palustris palustris*. There are locations in Holt and Rock Cos where both song types occur, although in these locations eastern song types are few (4 birds out of 102 total). At Spencer Dam, Holt Co, two western-type singers were heard 23 Jul (WF); these were at the eastern edge of the western song type range.

Carolina Wren: One nest-building in Bellevue 24 Jul (KCR) may have been on its second or even third nesting round. One in North Platte 22 Jul was the observer's first there since early Sep 2013 (TJW), although another (same bird?) was photographed a few days later on 29 Jul in a rural Lincoln Co yard (VC). Another westerly bird was in Dawson Co 18 Jul (JHa), and one in Franklin Co 29 Jun (GWa) was westerly in the Republican River Valley, where reports west of there and Harlan Co are rare.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: This species is least common in the Sandhills, but is expanding westward in the Niobrara River Valley and northwest. Two were at Ft Niobrara NWR, Cherry Co, 13 Jul (EWo), one was near Johnston, Brown Co, 9 Jun (EJa), and another at John Emerson WMA, Holt Co, 29 Jul (SSc). There are accumulating Keith Co reports; 3-4 were counted at CPBS 15-16 Jul (RS). Three south of Redington 2 Jun suggested eastward expansion in the Wildcat Hills (JGJ).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: One was singing on Chadron State College campus, Dawes Co, 3 Jun (MLe); ELDs for spring are 28-29 May, but there are 3 previous reports for Jun, all in the northwest.

Eastern Bluebird: Reports were routine of this common breeder east and central, uncommon west.

Mountain Bluebird: Reports were routine of this fairly common western breeder.

Townsend's Solitaire: The only report was of one at NNF Halsey 18 Jun; it was heard as a background singer in a Western Wood-Pewee recording ML 515864

(MR); this recording can be found in the Macaulay Library at <http://macaulaylibrary.org/audio/515864>. There are no confirmed records of breeding in Nebraska, but there are several reports of territorial birds (Mollhoff: *Nebraska Breeding Bird Atlas 2016*).

Veery: None were reported of this rare spring migrant east and west, rare casual central. ELDs in spring are 5-7 Jun.

Gray-checked Thrush: None were reported of this uncommon spring migrant east, rare central, and rare casual west. ELDs in spring are 3-6 Jun.

Swainson's Thrush: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant. ELDs in spring are 6-7 Jun in the south and east and 17-19 Jun in the north and west.

Hermit Thrush: None were reported of this uncommon spring migrant east and central, rare west. ELDs in spring away from the east are 2-4 Jun.

Wood Thrush: Reports were routine of this uncommon breeder east and north.

American Robin: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Gray Catbird: A cautionary note: one in Valley Co 29 Jun was imitating a Willow Flycatcher's "fitz-bew" song (WF).

Brown Thrasher: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Sage Thrasher: An apparent family group of 4 was at Toadstool Geologic Park, Sioux Co, 9 Jun (J&LS); a single bird was photographed there 1 Jun (BS fide RB). These reports, along with a spring sighting in the area 23 May (MW photo, WRS), suggest successful breeding occurred. There is only one confirmed record of breeding, in western Kimball Co in 2009.

Northern Mockingbird: This species is a rare breeder north of counties in the Platte and North Platte River Valleys, thus significant were reports of singles at Thomas Creek WMA, Keya Paha Co, 1 Jun (JSc), Fort Robinson, Dawes Co, 2 Jun (RB), and Dakota Co 11 Jun (BFH).

European Starling: Reports were routine of this common regular resident statewide, uncommon northwest.

Cedar Waxwing: Reports were routine of this fairly common breeder east and central, uncommon west.

Chestnut-collared Longspur: This species breeds east in northern Nebraska to Keya Paha and Holt Cos, where traditional sites in the Springview and O'Neill areas have been occupied for several years. This year, 6 were found a mile west of Springview 24 Jul (LR, RH, WF), but a previously unreported site is 5 miles west of Norden, where one was found 18 Jun (MH).

McCown's Longspur: An ad with two fledglings was seen in Kimball Co 18 Jun (KD); there are few such reports.

Ovenbird: This species breeds regularly in the east and north, although with few reports in the central Niobrara Valley between Valentine and the Pine Ridge and no proven breeding elsewhere (Mollhoff: *Nebraska Breeding Bird Atlas 2016*). One was at CPBS 16 Jul (RSt); although there is no evidence for nesting at this location, several birds with brood patches have been netted there 2 Jul-7 Aug in past years (Brown et al.: *Journal of Field Ornithology 2014*).

Louisiana Waterthrush: This species often uses streams in inhospitable locations; a territory at FF may have had nestlings 1 Jun although the tall nettles and mosquitos were rather daunting to the observer (CNK); interestingly, this territory, which appears to include water running along the railroad tracks near

Gifford Road, may have been in use for some 30 years. It was described by Paul Bedell in 1982 (*Nebraska Bird Review*, Vol 50, No 4). Additional reports were from known or expected locations north to Neale Woods and west to Jefferson Co (m. ob.). Unexpected, however, was one in the Bow Creek drainage in northeast Nebraska 22 Jul (WF); this location is about 20 miles west of PSP, the nearest breeding area. It was not found 24 Jul (JI, SSc) and was likely a dispersing fall migrant; there are a few spring and fall records from extreme southeastern South Dakota.

Black-and-white Warbler: Evidence for breeding in the Missouri River Valley is poor, but there are reports over the years that suggest it may occur, mostly in Saryp Co. This spring, however, there were unprecedented reports away from the Missouri River Valley in the southeast of single birds from Johnson Co, where one was seen 20 Jun (SQ), and Lancaster Co, where one was seen 17 Jul (MW).

Prothonotary Warbler: The only report was of a pair delivering food to a nest box at FF 7 Jun (SSc). These birds had been there in spring at this now-regular breeding site.

Tennessee Warbler: None were reported of this common spring migrant east, uncommon central, rare west. Spring ELDs are 10-11 Jun.

MacGillivray's Warbler: None were reported of this uncommon spring migrant west, rare casual elsewhere. Spring ELDs are 3-8 Jun.

Mourning Warbler: None were reported of this fairly common spring migrant east, uncommon central, rare casual west. Spring ELDs are 12-15 Jun.

Kentucky Warbler: Reports were routine of this uncommon eastern breeder.

Common Yellowthroat: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Hooded Warbler: A single at FF 17 Jun (JR) was the 7th record for Jun. ELDs in spring are 28-31 May.

American Redstart: Reports were routine of this common breeder north, northwest, and east.

Cerulean Warbler: None were reported of this rare casual eastern breeder, despite a "flurry" of spring reports, latest of which was 24 May.

Northern Parula: Reports were routine of this uncommon eastern breeder.

Magnolia Warbler: None were reported of this fairly common spring migrant east, uncommon central, rare casual west. Spring ELDs are 4 Jun (3 times).

Blackburnian Warbler: Only the 3rd Jun record for the state was one at FF 17 Jun (JR). ELDs for spring are 30-31 May.

Yellow Warbler: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: None were reported of this fairly common spring migrant east, uncommon central, rare casual west. Spring ELDs are 5-8 Jun.

Blackpoll Warbler: None were reported of this fairly common spring migrant east and central, uncommon west. Spring ELDs are 4-7 Jun.

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler: None were reported of this uncommon western breeder.

Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler: None were reported of this common statewide migrant. ELDs are 10-15 Jun in the north and west, 1-2 Jun elsewhere.

Yellow-throated Warbler: None were reported of this uncommon eastern breeder; last spring report was 14 May.

Black-throated Green Warbler: A tardy bird was heard at FF 8-11 Jun (JR); this is only the 3rd, and latest, Jun record for Nebraska.

Yellow-breasted Chat: There were two reports from the east, where this species is less-than-annual: one away from the Niobrara River Valley 5 Jul was unexpected there for Knox Co (MB), and a more unexpected sighting was of one well-seen at Boyer Chute NWR, Washington Co, 5 Jul (DL). The latter is only the 10th report from the east since 1980.

Green-tailed Towhee: None were reported of this rare western spring migrant. Spring ELDs are 4-7 Jun.

Spotted Towhee: This species breeds statewide except for the southeast; reports from there were of singles in Seward Co 19 Jun (RSt), Clay Co 14 Jul (RSt), two in Jefferson Co 27 Jul (TJW), and three reports from SCP, Lancaster Co, 1-23 Jun (JSS, RSt). The incidence of introgressants in the southeast is fairly high; birds should be carefully studied or heard well before being identified as "pure" individuals of either species.

Eastern Towhee: In the eastern third of Nebraska away from the south and east hybrids are common and phenotypic Easterns are often reported, most of which are probably introgressants. Reports this summer were west to Fort Niobrara, where 2 were found 14 Jul (KFr), and Frontier Co, where 3 singles were reported 21-26 Jun (TJW, WF).

Cassin's Sparrow: Reports of this rare and erratic breeder were as expected from the southwest: singles were in Perkins Co 15 Jun (RSt) and Hitchcock Co 1 Jun, likely the same bird that was seen there 25 May (TJW).

Chipping Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder, uncommon southwest.

Brewer's Sparrow: None were reported of this fairly common western Panhandle breeder.

Field Sparrow: The only report from the Panhandle, where Field Sparrow is a rare breeder, was of one at Agate Fossil Beds NM, Sioux Co, 1 Jun (DHo); this was probably a tardy migrant, as there were several Panhandle reports during May.

Vesper Sparrow: This species is a common breeder in the north and northwest as well as in the northeast; in the east it is gradually spreading westward and southward. Reports in the breeding season from the south, especially south of the Platte River Valley, are still scarce. There were these this summer: 2 in Adams Co 6 Jun (RSt), singles in Hall Co 22 Jul (DRy), Lancaster Co 13 Jun (BSc), and Johnson Co 20 Jun (SQ), 4 in Webster Co 14 Jul (GWa), and one in Franklin Co 29 Jun (GWa).

Lark Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common breeder north and west, uncommon south and east.

Lark Bunting: One was easterly in Franklin Co 29 Jun (GWa); this species is rare in east-central Nebraska.

Savannah Sparrow: This species is a locally common breeder in the west, usually in small colonies in damp areas. One was singing at the Chet and Mary Fleisbach WMA, Morrill Co, 2 Jun (JGJ photo). Surprising was one at Pawnee Prairie WMA, Pawnee Co, 6 Jun (SQ); this is the 4th Jun-Jul report in the east, where breeding is unknown.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Henslow's Sparrow: Most of the reports are from the regular location at SCP, where as many as 12 (RSt) were found 21 Jun-28 Jul (m. ob.). Elsewhere, singles were reported at Yankee Hill WMA, Lancaster Co, 25 Jun (MW) and 3 Jul (SMA), and one was heard at Pawnee Rd and 78th St in Omaha 11 Jun (BP).
Song Sparrow: This species is least common as a breeder in the Sandhills and southwest; singles were in Red Willow Co 26 Jun (WF) and Furnas Co 1 Jul (WF).

Swamp Sparrow: There are few summer reports in the southeast, likely due to lack of suitable cattail habitat. There are a few reports, however, including one this spring at Bennington L, Douglas Co, 30 Jul (LFe).

Harris's Sparrow: One in Cuming Co 7 Jun (LE photo) was tardy; spring ELDs are 9-10 Jun.

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: None were reported of this fairly common northern Panhandle resident.

Summer Tanager: Reports in Jun-Jul away from the Missouri River Valley in the southeast are few; of 5 such reports, 4 were this summer: 1-2 at Rose Creek WMA, Jefferson Co, 3-4 Jun (SSc, MW), one at Rock Creek SHP, Jefferson Co, 12 Jun (SSc), and one at Twin Oaks WMA, Johnson Co, 12 Jul (SSc, WRS).

Scarlet Tanager: Reports were routine of this uncommon breeder east and north.

Western Tanager: Reports were routine of this fairly common northwestern breeder.

Northern Cardinal: The Scotts Bluff Co population continues, with 2 in a Mitchell yard 7 Jul where none had been seen for two months (KD), and 2 along the North Platte River south of Morrill 26 Jun (VRo, LCa). Elsewhere in the North Platte Valley, singles were at Bridgeport SRA, Morrill Co, 21 Jun (VRo, LCa) and Ash Hollow SHP, Garden Co, 25 Jun (JB).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Westernmost was one in Ogallala 6 Jun (JO); there are now 11 Jun dates for this species from the western half of the state. An indication of the degree of introgression that occurs at the range boundaries of this species and Black-headed Grosbeak was the angry response and appearance by a previously unseen phenotypic Rose-breasted to a Black-headed-tape 4 Jul in Gosper Co (WF).

Black-headed Grosbeak: Reports were routine of this common regular breeder west and south, uncommon north, rare casual east.

Blue Grosbeak: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide breeder.

Lazuli Bunting: Reports were routine of this uncommon western breeder.

Indigo Bunting: Reports were routine of this common breeder east and central, uncommon west.

Dickcissel: This species is rare and erratic in the Panhandle, although there were 3 reports: singles in Sioux Co 3 Jun (DHo) and in Garden Co 2 Jul (BP), and 3 in Cheyenne Co 5 Jul (WWH).

Bobolink: Reports were routine of this common breeder north, uncommon south.

Red-winged Blackbird: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide breeder.

Eastern Meadowlark: The main stronghold of this species in Nebraska is the southeast, roughly bounded to the northwest by a line from Sioux City to Holdrege. Elsewhere, the distribution is complicated and patchy but essentially statewide although with low numbers or absence in the southwest, southern

Panhandle, and most of the Sandhills, where pockets occur in some high water table meadow areas. Surprisingly, from the North Platte River north in the Panhandle, records are fairly numerous, but there are very few RWB records. Reports this summer reflect this distribution (m. ob.).

Western Meadowlark: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide breeder.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Brewer's Blackbird: Reports were routine of this common northwestern breeder.

Common Grackle: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide breeder.

Great-tailed Grackle: Expansion of this species in Nebraska has essentially followed major river valleys westward (Platte, North and South Plattes, and the Niobrara region from Sioux City to Valentine), as well as the western edge of the Sandhills and the I-80 corridor from Omaha to Grand Island. Fewest reports are from the extreme south, notably the Republican River Valley, most of the Sandhills, and much of the northeast. Reports from the areas of lowest numbers included, in the central Sandhills, 3 at Stapleton, Logan Co, 21 Jun (WF) and one in Grant Co 6 Jun (CNK) and, in the south, singles in Imperial, Chase Co, 3 Jul (BP) and in Franklin Co 29 Jun (GWa).

Brown-headed Cowbird: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Orchard Oriole: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Bullock's Oriole: Reports were routine of this fairly common breeder west and extreme west-central.

Baltimore x Bullock's Oriole: Only two were reported; one in the known hybrid zone in the eastern Panhandle and extreme west-central, but the other a little easterly. One in Kimball Co 18 Jun was described as "one male, mostly Bullock's-looking except for dark face and cheeks, typical for around here" (KD), while easterly was one in southwestern Custer Co 5 Jun that "came in very nicely to a Bullock's Oriole song played on my phone – was a lighter orange than most male Baltimores but had full black hood" (TJW).

Baltimore Oriole: Reports were routine of this common breeder east and central, uncommon west.

House Finch: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Red Crossbill: The only report was of two in Carter Canyon, Scotts Bluff Co, 26 Jun (GRi), a not unexpected summer location.

Pine Siskin: Reports were routine of this common western breeder, rare casual elsewhere.

Lesser Goldfinch: Surprisingly, none were reported of this uncommon western summer visitor and less-than-annual Panhandle breeder.

American Goldfinch: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

House Sparrow: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide breeder.

A Documented Occurrence of Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*)

in Nebraska

Cody McGregor¹, Eric Bruster¹, Mary Bomberger Brown¹, Lauren R. Dinan², and Joel G. Jorgensen²

¹School of Natural Resources, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68583

²Nongame Bird Program, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Lincoln, NE 68503

INTRODUCTION

Black Rails (*Laterallus jamaicensis*) are the smallest of the rails found in North America. Even though they are broadly distributed in coastal tidal and inland freshwater marshes, they are rarely seen and consequently are poorly known (Eddleman et al. 1994). They prefer areas of moist soil interspersed with scattered small pools of shallow water surrounded by fine-stemmed rushes, grasses, and sedges for use during migratory stopover and nesting (Todd 1977, Eddleman et al. 1994). All populations of Black Rail have declined precipitously over the past century due to the draining of marshes and wetlands and demands on water resources (Eddleman et al. 1994). In 2011, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service initiated a review of the species' status to determine whether it warrants protection under the federal Endangered Species Act (<http://www.fws.gov/policy/library/2011/2011-24633.pdf>).

Adult Black Rails are 10-15 cm long with a wingspan of 22-28 cm, and body mass of 29-36 g. Males and females are of similar size, but males are darker overall in color. Adult plumage consists of varying shades of blackish-gray with the top of the head darker gray than the body. The nape of the neck and upper back are chestnut in color. The remainder of the back is varying shades of dark gray washed with chestnut and scattered white spots. The irises are red and the bill black (Eddleman et al. 1994).

During the breeding season the most common vocalization produced by Black Rails, presumably the male, is the 3-note *kickee-do* (also described as *kic-kic-keer*; Reynard 1974, Eddleman et al. 1994). This vocalization often is preceded by 1-4, usually 2, introductory notes and 1-3, usually 1, concluding notes. The duration of the call is 0.4 to 2.0 seconds, the frequency ranges from 1,200 to 3,400 Hertz (1.2 to 2.4 kHz), and the last note is usually lower in frequency than the initial notes (Eddleman et al. 1994). They are most vocal during the night and at dawn and dusk. The *kickee-*

do/kic-kic-keer vocalization is thought to be the male's mating call and not used in territorial defense (Repking 1975, Eddleman et al. 1994).

The status of the Black Rail in Nebraska is poorly known. Even though the Black Rail has been reported, documentation of its occurrence is very limited. There are approximately twenty reports of the species in the state, but only two (Ducey 1980, Brogie and Brogie 1987) have been accepted by the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (NOURC). One accepted record is based on the description of a brief observation of a bird flushing in front of the observer (Ducey 1980) and the other involves an audio recording that the observers noted was of poor quality (Brogie and Brogie 1987). All other sightings are supported by written statements or lack any supporting details. The Black Rail is thought to be a rare casual spring and fall visitor statewide and a possible summer visitor or breeder at Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge (NWR; Sharpe et al. 2001). As many as seven reports are from Crescent Lake NWR, including summer reports (Sharpe et al. 2001). Other reports are during spring and fall and are scattered across the state (Sharpe et al. 2001). Currently, there are no accepted records of Black Rails in South Dakota (<http://sdoubirds.org/Birds/Checklist.aspx>); they are considered accidental in Iowa (<http://www.iowabirds.org/Birds/Iowa.aspx>).

Here we report details and provide documentation of an observation of a Black Rail in Nebraska.

METHODS

During the summer of 2016, we conducted surveys for secretive marsh birds in wetlands distributed across Nebraska (by EB and CM). The survey locations included Rainwater Basin wetlands, Eastern Saline wetlands, and Sandhills wetlands. The surveys were conducted following the North American Marsh Bird Monitoring Protocol as developed by Conway (2011) and modified by Harms and Dinsmore (2014). The protocol employs call-broadcast point counts using a 14-minute call broadcast sequence provided by the North American Marsh Bird Monitoring Program coordinator (Conway 2011). Call broadcast surveys were played using a SanDisk MP3 player (Western Digital Technologies, Inc., Milpitas, CA) and JBL Flip 3 Portable Bluetooth speaker (Harmon International, Stamford, CT). The Black Rail *kickee-do/kic-kic-keer* vocalization is the first vocalization included in the call-broadcast sequence. All surveys were conducted from 15 May to 10 July. Each wetland was surveyed twice, once between 15 May and 13 June and once between 14 June and 10 July.

The Black Rail's response to the call-playback broadcast was recorded using a cell phone (iPhone 6, Apple Inc., Cupertino, CA). The spectrogram of the vocalization

was prepared using Raven Pro Version 1.5 acoustic analysis software (Bioacoustics Research Program).

RESULTS

On the evening (8:04 pm CDT) of 15 June 2016, EB and CM heard and recorded the distinctive *kickee-do/kic-kic-keer* Black Rail vocalization at Harvard Waterfowl Production Area (WPA) in Clay County, Nebraska. This was during the second set of surveys conducted at Harvard WPA for the season; no Black Rails were detected during the first survey on 5 May 2016. The bird vocalized constantly for approximately 20 minutes before becoming silent. We estimate the vocalizing bird was 10 meters from the researchers (EB and CM) in a wet sedge meadow (Figure 1). A brief, unsuccessful attempt was made to flush the bird for visual confirmation of the species identification. The wind was calm that evening, so the vocalization and the recording were not distorted.

See Figure 2 for the spectrogram illustrating the distinctive vocalization. Note in particular the 3-note structure of the vocalization (2 introductory notes and 1



Figure 1. Landscape in the general area where the Black Rail vocalization was recorded (photograph taken 18 June 2016; Harvard WMA, Clay County, Nebraska).

concluding note), the lower frequency concluding note, the ~ 0.5 second duration, and the ~1.5 to 2.5 kHz frequency range. The recording is available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xy_l2f4U1OE and has been submitted to NOURC, where it will be archived.

Only one Black Rail was heard vocalizing on 15 June; no other Black Rails responded to the vocalizing bird. Efforts to relocate the vocalizing bird on 18 June were not successful. No Black Rail vocalizations were heard in any of the other Rainwater Basin wetlands or other wetlands statewide during the remainder of the survey season.

DISCUSSION

The Black Rail observed at Harvard WPA was found in habitat typically occupied by the species (Todd 1977, Eddleman et al. 1994). The area was dominated by sedges that were < 0.3 m tall with variable water levels ranging from moist soil up to 0.5 m. Water levels were average to slightly higher than usual in June 2016 (EB, CM, JGJ, pers. obs.). The habitat at Harvard WPA is the result of wetland management treatments conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Rainwater Basin Wetland Management District (RWBWMD). The area is grazed and burned periodically to mimic historic patterns of disturbance. The RWBWMD installed a submersible well and buried a delivery pipeline at Harvard WPA to provide supplemental water to offset hydrologic deficiencies caused by sedimentation and decreased precipitation runoff. When water is pumped to the WPA, more suitable foraging area is available to marsh birds (J. Drahota, pers. comm.).

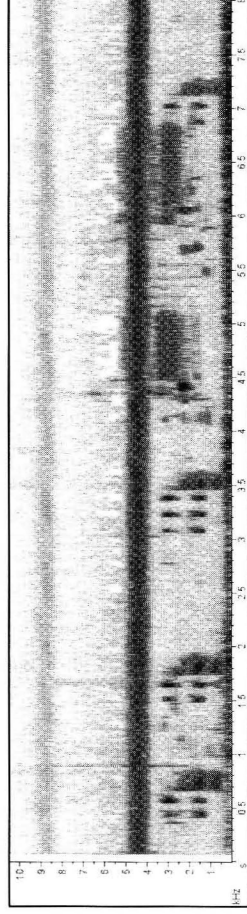


Figure 2. Spectrogram of Black Rail vocalization recorded on 15 June 2016 at Harvard WMA, Clay County, Nebraska, a Rainwater Basin wetland. See spectrograms in Kellogg (1962), Reynard (1974), and Eddleman et al. (1994) for comparison.

Nebraska is just north of areas where Black Rails regularly occur during summer and likely breed. Black Rails are reported regularly in Kansas at several sites including Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area, Coldwater Lake, and Lake Hargis; additional reports are scattered throughout the state (Thompson et al. 2011). There are a number of records of Black Rails from across Oklahoma (Beck and Patten 2007). The species regularly occurs in habitats

associated with John Martin Reservoir in southeastern Colorado (eBird 2016). Harvard WPA is located approximately 280 km (175 miles) north of Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira. We think it is likely the Black Rail observed at Harvard WPA originated from a site to the south, but this cannot be known with certainty.

It is possible Black Rails regularly breed in Nebraska, including in the Rainwater Basin, but evidence is lacking simply because the species is so difficult to detect. However, call broadcast surveys were conducted at wetlands across the state, including sites (e.g., Crescent Lake NWR, Garden County, and Chet and Jane Fleisbach Wildlife Management Area, Morrill County) where Black Rails have been previously reported; additional call-broadcast surveys were conducted in the Eastern Saline Wetlands, Lancaster County, Nebraska in 2013 (Dinan and Jorgensen 2014). None of these surveys yielded additional evidence that Black Rails regularly occur in Nebraska. Additional observations of Black Rails in Nebraska supported by documentation would be extremely valuable in determining this species' status in the state. We encourage observers to listen for the characteristic Black Rail *kickee-do/kic-kic-keer* vocalization when in appropriate habitats, but not to call them using recordings. If Black Rails are establishing local populations or are breeding in localized populations in Nebraska, we believe it is best not to interfere with them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the Nebraska State Wildlife Grant Program and Rainwater Basin Joint Venture for financial support. We thank the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Rainwater Basin Wetland Management District staff and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission Wildlife Division staff for allowing access to Rainwater Basin wetlands. E. J. Raynor prepared the spectrogram. For helpful comments on the manuscript, we thank Jeff Drahota and Ross Silcock.

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2015 (27th) REPORT OF THE NOU RECORDS COMMITTEE

Mark A. Brogie - NOU Records Committee Chairperson
508 Seeley Street
Creighton, Nebraska 68729

The functions and methods of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (NOURC) are described in its bylaws (NOURC 2010). The committee's purpose is to provide a procedure for documenting unusual bird sightings and to establish a list of all documented birds for Nebraska. Accidental and casual species for which the NOURC seeks documentation (NOURC Review List) can be found at the NOU website (www.NOUBirds.org).

All records mentioned here are available to interested persons at the NOU archives at the University of Nebraska State Museum (UNSM), Lincoln NE. Interested parties should contact the current NOU Librarian, whose address can be found in the latest issue of *The Nebraska Bird Review* (NBR).

State List:

The "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska" was first published in 1988 (NOU 1988) and has been updated three times (NOURC 1997, 2004, 2009). The "Official List" has been appended twenty-five times: (Mollhoff 1989; Grenon 1990, 1991; Gubanyi 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Brogie 1997, 1998, 1999, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015; Jorgensen 2001, 2002, 2003).

The American Ornithologists' Union Checklist of North American Birds, Seventh Edition (1998) and its following supplements (AOU: 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015) contain many taxonomic changes affecting North American birds.

The following summarizes all revisions made by the AOU in 2015 including scientific name changes and taxonomic realignment that affect the current published "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska: 2009" (NOURC 2009, www.NOUBirds.org). This report includes all accounts submitted during the 2015 calendar year covering 81 records with accession numbers 1691 – 1771.

Criteria for Accepted Records:

In order for a record to be accepted, a minimum of six votes in favor is required with no more than one dissenting vote (NOURC 2010). Records in the following categories are classified as accepted:

- I-S - a diagnostic, labeled specimen exists
- I-P - diagnostic, labeled photographic evidence exists
- I-R - a diagnostic, labeled recording exists
- II - three or more independently written diagnostic documentations of the same bird exist
- III - one or two independently written diagnostic documentations of the same bird exist

Each account of an accepted record includes a brief statement noting the species, class, date, location, and initial(s) of observers. This report summarizes all records accessioned in 2015, discusses any new additions to the state list, and reports any changes in firmness of data (i.e. placement in the above acceptance categories) of Nebraska birds. Additionally, the list reflects changes in frequency of occurrence, as determined by the NOU Records Committee, which reviewed records of bird occurrences in Nebraska for 2006-2015. Frequency of occurrence is indicated by the following terms (NOURC 2009):

Regular - acceptably reported in 9-10 of the past 10 years.

Casual - acceptably reported in 4-7 of the past 10 years.

Accidental - acceptably reported in 0-2 of the past 10 years.

Extirpated - not acceptably reported in the past 50 years.

Extinct - no longer found alive anywhere in the world.

The frequency of occurrence for any species that is acceptably reported in 3 or 8 of the last 10 years is discussed by the committee and placed in a category felt most appropriate by the committee.

With this report, the following changes are made to the “Official List of the Birds of Nebraska: 2009” (NOURC 2009).

2015 Additions to the “Official List of the Birds of Nebraska”:

There were no new species added to the Nebraska “Official List” in 2015.

The “Official List of the Birds of Nebraska” stands at **461** species.

Changes Involving Nebraska Species Due to Taxonomic Revisions (AOU 2015):

The Fifty-sixth supplement to the American Ornithologists’ Union Check-list of North American Birds (AOU 2015) has effected the following changes to the “Official List of the Birds of Nebraska” (www.noubirds.org).

1. American Tree Sparrow (*Spizella arborea*) becomes (*Spizelloides arborea*).

The genus of this sparrow has changed, as genetic data show it to be not at all closely related to *Spizella* sparrows. Instead, it is related to a group containing Fox Sparrow, *Zonotrichia* sparrows, and juncos.

2. New Sequence of the Nebraska Buteonine Hawks:

Harris’s Hawk
 Red-shouldered Hawk
 Broad-winged Hawk
 Swainson’s Hawk
 Zone-tailed Hawk
 Red-tailed Hawk
 Rough-legged Hawk
 Ferruginous Hawk

2015 Changes in Firmness of Data:

1. Virginia's Warbler (*Oreothlypis virginiae*) changed to Class I-P.

2015 Changes in Frequency of Occurrence:

1. Calliope Hummingbird (*Saitula calliope*) changed to Regular.
2. Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*) changed to Regular.
3. Dusky Flycatcher (*Empidonax oberholseri*) changed to Regular.
4. Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*) changed to Regular.
5. Cassin's Finch (*Haemorhous cassinii*) changed to Regular.
6. Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*) changed to Regular.

The NOURC no longer seeks documentation on the above "Regular" species.

2015 Accepted Records:**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*)**

1. A group of 16 birds was photographed (Class I-P, via JGJ) on a barn south of Holdrege, Phelps Co., 06 May 2015. Accession # 1712.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)

1. A photograph (Class I-P, KS) was received of a male bird at Harlan County Reservoir, Harlan Co., 01 April 2015. Accession # 1706.

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*)

The bird found in December 2014 at the Sutherland Reservoir Cooling Basin, Lincoln Co., continued to be documented into May 2015.

1. A photograph (Class I-P, JR) of the single bird observed 02 January 2015. Accession # 1692.
2. A photograph (Class I-P, JGJ) of the bird taken 10 January 2015. Accession # 1693.
3. A photograph (Class I-P, RS) of the bird taken 22 January 2015. Accession # 1696.
4. A photograph (Class I-P, MAB) of the bird taken 15 March 2015. Accession # 1702.
5. A photograph (Class I-P, BP) of the bird taken 30 January 2015. Accession # 1722.
6. A photograph (Class I-P, SM) of the bird taken 02 January 2015. Accession # 1734.

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*)

1. A description (Class III, WRS) was received of a bird observed at Peru Bottoms WMA, Nemaha Co., 27 September 2015. Accession # 1745.

Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*)

An adult nonbreeding bird first found (NA) at Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 11 November 2015, was extensively documented.

1. Photographs (Class I-P, NA) 11 November 2015. Accession # 1748.
2. Video (Class I-P, JGJ) 12 November 2015. Accession # 1749.
3. Photographs (Class I-P, MW) 11 & 14 November 2015. Accession # 1750.
4. Photograph (Class I-P, EMB) 14 November 2015. Accession # 1751.
5. Photograph (Class I-P, MAB) 14 November 2015. Accession # 1752.

Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*)

1. A photograph (Class I-P, MW) was received of a single bird at Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 21 August 2015. Accession # 1738.

Mew Gull (*Larus canus*)

1. Photographs (Class I-P, JGJ) were received of an adult bird at the Alma Sewage Lagoon, Harlan Co., 15 February 2015. Accession # 1698.

Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucooides*)

1. Photographs (Class I-P, KS) were received of a 1st winter bird at Harlan County Reservoir, Harlan Co., 09 February 2015. Accession # 1697.
2. A photograph (Class I-P, NA) was received of a 1st winter bird at Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 01 March 2015. Accession # 1700.
3. Photographs (Class I-P, NA) were received of an adult bird at Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 18 March 2015. Accession # 1704.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)

1. Photographs (Class I-P, JGJ) were received of a single bird at Marsh Duck WMA, York Co., 31 May 2015. Accession # 1724.

American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*)

1. A video with audio received of birds observed in East Ash Canyon, Dawes Co., 03 July 2015, was very suggestive but lacked quality for photographic approval; however, the record was approved (Class I-R, KDy) based on the audio - "drumming". Accession # 1728.

Gyr Falcon (*Falco rusticolus*)

1. A description (Class III, MAB) was received of an immature gray morph female observed in Boyd Co., 03 April 2015. Accession # 1708.

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, MW) at Gotte Park in Kimball, Kimball Co., 07 September 2015. Accession # 1742.

Dusky Flycatcher (*Empidonax oberholseri*)

1. Photographs (Class I-P, JL) were received of a bird netted/banded at Wildcat Hills SRA, Scotts Bluff Co., 04 September 2015. Accession # 1743.

Mountain Chickadee (*Poecile gambeli*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, SM) in Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff Co., 14 February 2015. Accession # 1736.

Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*)

1. A single bird, within a small group, was photographed (Class I-P, TJ via JGJ) at Father Hupp WMA, Thayer Co., 27 November 2015. Accession # 1753.

Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora cyanoptera*)

1. A description (Class III, KG) was received of an adult male observed in Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co., NE, 12 May 2015. Accession # 1715.

Virginia's Warbler (*Oreothlypis virginiae*)

1. A set of photographs (Class I-P, PD) received of a single bird at Oliver Reservoir, Kimball Co., 17 May 2015, represents the first photographic record of this species in Nebraska. Accession # 1718.

Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*)

1. A recording (Class I-R, JR) was received of a calling bird found in Douglas Co., 21 May 2015. Accession # 1719.

Black-throated Sparrow (*Amphispiza bilineata*)

An adult bird found 05 December 2015 in the yard of the initial observer (MAB), Creighton, Knox County, was extensively documented.

1. Photographs (Class I-P, MAB) 05 December 2015. Accession # 1756.
2. Photographs (Class I-P, PR) 05 December 2015. Accession # 1757.
3. Photographs (Class I-P, SM) 06 December 2015. Accession # 1758.
4. Photographs (Class I-P, EMB) 06 December 2015. Accession # 1759.
5. Photographs (Class I-P, RD) 08 December 2015. Accession # 1760.
6. Photographs (Class I-P, WF) 09 December 2015. Accession # 1761.
7. Video (Class I-P, JR) 10 December 2015. Accession # 1762.
8. Photographs (Class I-P, BP) 12 December 2015. Accession # 1763.
9. Photograph (Class I-P, SN) 21 December 2015. Accession # 1766.

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)

The well-documented Lincoln Co. bird discovered in December 2014 continued into January.

1. The female bird was last photographed (Class I-P, SM) at a feeder southeast of North Platte, Lincoln Co., 02 January 2015. Accession # 1691.

Black Rosy-Finch (*Leucosticte atrata*)

1. A female bird was photographed (Class I-P, NA) at Scotts Bluff National Monument, Scotts Bluff Co., 19 January 2015. Accession # 1695.

Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*)

A female bird initially found (BH via MW) at Forest Lawn Cemetery, Douglas Co., 19 December was well documented.

1. Photograph and video (Class I-P, JR) 20 December 2015. Accession # 1764.
2. A photograph and description (Class I-P, BP) 20 December 2015. Accession # 1765.
3. A series of photographs (Class I-P, MW) 24 December 2015. Accession # 1768.

Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*)

1. Photographs (I-P, MW) were received of several birds found at the Lake Ogallala North Campground area, Keith Co., 30 April 2015. Accession # 1710.
2. Photographs (I-P, GB & JB) were received of a single female bird coming to a feeder on the south side of Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 05 April 2015. Accession # 1711.
3. Photographs (Class I-P, SM) were received of multiple birds at a feeder in Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff Co., 14 February 2015. Accession # 1735.

Unaccepted Records:

Records in the following categories are considered unaccepted (NOURC 2010):

IV - probably correct, but not beyond reasonable doubt.

V - a record with insufficient evidence to support the identification claimed.

VI - a probable released or escaped bird or mistaken identification.

Each account of an unaccepted record includes a brief statement noting the species, class, date, location, and reasons for the committee's non-acceptance of the record.

Unaccepted Records (Received in 2015):**Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*)**

1. An adult Mute Swan was photographed at Carter Lake, Douglas Co., 19 December 2015. Several committee members questioned the provenance of this bird due to the urban setting in which it was found. Class VI - Accession # 1769.

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*)

1. A photograph was received of a carcass found in mid-town Omaha, Douglas Co., 12 October 2015. The condition of the bird left some question as to species identity. Class IV - Accession # 1746.

Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*)

1. A written description was received of a bird observed at Pioneers Park, Lancaster Co., 11 May 2015. Although very suggestive, the description lacked details to convince several committee members. Class IV – Accession # 1714.
2. Documentation was received of a bird heard at Peru Bottoms WMA, Nemaha Co., 27 September 2015. Most committee members felt that heard only birds do not represent a Class III “diagnostic documentation” rating. Class IV - Accession # 1744.

Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucooides*)

1. Photographs were received of a Kumlien’s-type bird at Lake Ogallala, Keith Co., 10 January 2015. Although very suggestive of the species, several committee members and outside experts believed the photographs provided were lacking in detail to rule out Thayer’s Gull (*Larus thayeri*). Class IV - Accession # 1694.
2. A 2nd-cycle bird was photographed at Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 17 March 2015. Although very suggestive for Iceland Gull (Kumlien’s), several committee members believed the photographs provided were lacking in detail to rule out Thayer’s Gull. Class IV - Accession # 1703.
3. Another 2nd-cycle bird was photographed at Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 19 March 2015. Although very suggestive for Iceland Gull, several committee members believed the two photographs provided were lacking in detail for stand-alone evidence; ruling out Thayer’s Gull. Class IV - Accession # 1705.

Glaucous-winged Gull (*Larus glaucescens*)

1. A written description was received of a bird observed at Sherman Reservoir, Sherman Co., 08 March 2015. Although suggestive, the description was lacking for approval. Class IV - Accession # 1701.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)

1. Photographs received of a single bird at Marsh Duck WMA, York Co., 31 May 2015, were lacking in detail for approval. Class IV – Accession # 1725.

Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*)

1. A written description was received of a bird observed at Lake Ogallala, Keith Co., 19 July 2015. Although suggestive, the description also included aspects of behavior: the bird was observed plunge-diving. Black Skimmers are not known to plunge-dive. Class VI - Accession # 1732.

Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*)

1. Photographs and video of bird at a feeder in Omaha, Douglas Co., 21 August 2015, were sent to an expert in hummingbird identification. Although very suggestive, the expert could not definitively confirm to species. Class V - Accession # 1737.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*)

1. Photographs were received of a bird observed at Walnut Grove Park, Omaha, Douglas Co., 22 May 2015. The photographs associated with this bird were not sufficient as stand alone evidence. Class IV - Accession # 1720.
2. Photographs were received of a bird at Walnut Grove Park, Omaha, Douglas Co., 23 May 2015. Although very suggestive of the species, several committee members believed the photographs submitted were lacking in detail for stand-alone approval. Class IV - Accession # 1721.
3. A bird photographed, videotaped, and described was found in mid-town Omaha, Douglas Co., 22 October 2015. Although most likely correct, photographic evidence lacked in quality and the written description was not conclusive. Class IV - Accession # 1747.

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*)

1. A photograph was received of a single bird observed in Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co., 06 September 2015. Several committee members believed the photographs submitted were lacking in detail. Class V - Accession # 1741.

Couch's Kingbird (*Tyrannus couchii*)

1. Three separate written descriptions were received of a single calling bird observed at Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co., 15 May 2015. Although extremely suggestive of the species, the documentation provided lacked substantive evidence for a first state record of Couch's Kingbird for Nebraska. Class VI - Accession #'s 1713, 1716, 1723.
2. A photograph of a bird observed in Douglas Co., 25 July 2015, lacked details for approval. Class VI - Accession # 1733.

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*)

1. A description was received of a bird observed in North Platte, Lincoln Co., 22 December 2015 was suggestive of a raven species; however, vocalization was not noted. Class VI - Accession # 1770.
2. An additional description of a bird in North Platte, Lincoln Co., 23 December 2015, lacked sufficient details for approval. Class VI - Accession # 1771.

Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*)

1. A description was received of a bird observed at Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 25 August 2015. Although suggestive, the description was lacking in details for approval. Class IV - Accession # 1739.

Blue Bunting (*Cyanocampus parellina*)

1. A description was received of a bird observed in Nebraska City, Otoe Co., 22 January 2015. The documentation provided lacked substantive evidence for a first state record of Blue Bunting for Nebraska. Class VI - Accession # 1699.

Non-Review List Records Submitted in 2015, Filed Without Votes:

The following records are those of species not on the NOURC Review List but which have been accessioned due to other circumstances (out-of range, non-normal date of occurrence, unusual nesting record, etc.). These records have been filed without NOURC votes.

Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*)

1. A video (JGJ) of an eastward female bird at Olive Creek Reservoir, Lancaster Co., 29 November 2015 was filed. Accession # 1754.

Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)

1. The first nesting record for this species in the Rainwater Basin of Nebraska was photographically documented (JGJ) in Clay Co., 18 July 2015. Accession # 1731.

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

1. The first nesting record for this species in Nebraska was photographically documented (JGJ) in Clay Co., 07 July 2015. Accession # 1730.

Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*)

1. A series of photographs (TL) of a single bird observed at Conestoga Lake SRA, Lancaster Co., 19 December 2015, was filed. Accession # 1767.

Calliope Hummingbird (*Stellula calliope*)

1. Photos (CT via MAB) of an individual taken 18 May, 2015 in Knox Co., Creighton, NE were filed. This is not only a very eastern location for the species, but one of only four records for spring (WRS). Accession # 1740.

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*)

1. Photographs (JGJ) were received of an extremely late young male visiting a feeder in Lushion, York Co., 02 December 2015. The bird was last observed 10 December. Accession # 1755.

Lewis's Woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*)

1. A photograph (BJ via TJW) of a single adult bird two miles west of Prairie Trace Rd on the north side of the North Platte River, Lincoln Co., 26 May 2015 was filed. Accession # 1726.

Violet-green Swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina*)

1. Photographs (MAB) of an eastward bird found during the spring NOU meeting in Valentine, Cherry Co., 17 May 2015, were filed. Accession # 1717.

Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*)

1. A recording (TJW) of a singing male at Halsey National Forest, Thomas Co., 16 June 2015, was filed. Accession # 1727.
2. A photograph (TH) of the above bird 04 July 2015 was filed. Accession # 1729.

Cassin's Finch (*Haemorhous cassinii*)

1. A photograph (GB & JB) of an adult male at a feeder on the south side of Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 05 April 2015 was filed. Accession # 1709.

Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*)

1. A photograph (GB & JB) of a single male bird on the south side of Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 01 April 2015, was filed. Accession # 1707.

Corrections to the 2014 (26th) report of the NOU Records Committee. NBR 83(3):125-138.

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) - Accession # 1668.

1. Photographs (JTr) of a bird at Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., were taken 31 August 2014 (not as cited: 04 September 2014).

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*) - Accession # 1684.

1. A female bird was initially observed and photographed (LD) southeast of North Platte, Lincoln Co., 14 December 2014 (not as cited: 14 February 2014).

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2015 NOURC Members:

Mark A. Brogie (chair), Tim Hajda, Joel Jorgensen, Loren Padelford, Justin Rink, W. Ross Silcock, Kent Skaggs, and T.J. Walker

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President and Newsletter Editor: Daniel Leger, 6255 S. 82nd St, Lincoln, NE 68516; danlegernou@gmail.com

Vice-President: Robin Harding, 2028 34th Road, Minden, NE 68959; snowbunting@rcm-ne.com

Secretary: Ruth Stearns, 3200 Laredo Drive, Lincoln, NE 68516; ruthie.stearns@gmail.com

Treasurer: Betty Grenon, 1409 Childs Road East, Bellevue, NE 68005; grenon925@aol.com

Librarian: Anita Breckbill, 3237 R Street, Lincoln, NE 68503; abreckbill1@unl.edu

Directors:

William Flack, 415 W 24th St #2, Kearney NE 68845; sparvophile@yahoo.com (2017)

Don Paseka, 1585 Co. Rd. 14 Blvd., Ames NE 68621; paseka76@gmail.com (2018)

Jan Johnson, 86252-581 Ave., Wakefield NE 68784; janbirder@gmail.com (2019)

Records Committee Chairman: Mark Brogie, 508 Seeley, Creighton, NE 68729; mabrogie@gmail.com

Editor of *The Nebraska Bird Review*: Janis Paseka, 1585 Co. Rd. 14 Blvd., Ames NE 68621; paseka76@gmail.com

Occurrence Report Compiler: Ross Silcock, P.O. Box 57, Tabor, IA 51653; silcock@rosssilcock.com

Breeding Bird Atlas Project Coordinator: Wayne Mollhoff, 2354 Euclid St., Ashland NE 68003; wmolhoff@netscape.net

NOU Website: noubirds.org

Nebraska Ornithologists' Union, Inc.
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Wakefield, NE 68784

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