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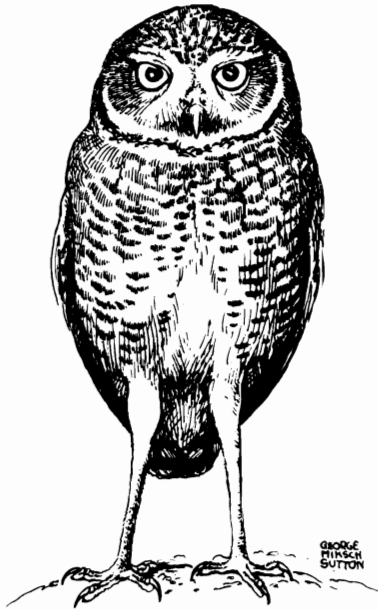
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TABLE OF CONTENTS ON BACK COVER

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1975 TREASURER'S REPORT

		Cash	Invest- ments	Accounts Payable	Current Account	Total Assets
Balance 1 January 1975		1,242.60	2,000.00	301.35		2,941.25
RECEIPTS						
Member- ships	106 Active	\$5.00	530.00			
	28 Family Active	7.00	196.00			
	12 Sustaining	7.00	84.00			
	5 Family Sustaining	9.00	45.00			
	1 Foreign	5.25	5.25			
	2 Student	3.00	6.00			
	2 Prepaid	5.00	10.00			
	1 Prepaid	7.00	7.00		883.25	
Subscrip- tions	6 Direct	5.00	30.00			
	23 Agency	4.50	103.50			
	1 Foreign	4.75	4.75			
	1 Foreign	3.75	3.75			
	1 Prepaid (2 years)	7.50	7.50			
	1 Prepaid (2 years)	9.00	9.00		158.50	
Miscel- laneous	Field Record cards		15.20			
	Check-lists		18.75			
	Review copies		19.75			
	Slides, books, and records		11.20			
	Gifts		11.72			
	Interest earned		140.00		216.62	
	Total receipts	1,258.37			1,258.37	
EXPENSES						
Review	Printing	909.06		303.40		
	Postage (including Newsletter)	90.00			1,302.46	
Officers' expen- ditures	R. G. Cortelyou	41.62				
	Mrs. Johnson (stamps)	6.80				
	(Newsletter)	95.26				
	John Ott (stamps)	9.00			152.68	
Miscel- laneous	Address stencils	16.00				
	Fidelity bond	10.00				
	"Save The Platte"	20.00				
	Bank service charge	10.46				
	Corporation fee (state)	10.00			66.46	
	Total expenses	1,218.20		303.40	1,521.60	
	Loss for year					(263.23)
	1974 Accounts payable paid	(301.35)		(301.35)		
Total 31 December 1975		981.42	2,000.00	303.40		2,678.02

GYRFALCON TAKEN IN NEBRASKA

An immature male Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*) was trapped by me 7 miles west of Minden on 15 December 1974. It was a gray phase (actually brown in coloration). There had been reports among falconers of Gyrfalcon sightings in Nebraska earlier in 1974, but the reports couldn't be substantiated. I was actually trapping for Prairie Falcons, using a pigeon in a leather harness covered with fish-line nooses. The harness was attached to a weight by a cord about 5 feet long. This is a common way of catching hawks and falcons. When a bird is seen on a perch near a road the lure is tossed out of the car. As the hungry bird strikes the lure its talons become entangled in the nooses. To catch a Gyrfalcon was an unexpected case of luck, for the Gyrfalcon is one of the best birds for falconry - the fastest in level flight - but it requires very good care. The bird was lost 15 November 1975 while being flown at Pheasants. It was "waiting on" (circling overhead) while I tried to flush a Pheasant in the middle of a cornfield in the northern part of Sarpy County. My noise, intended for the Pheasant, apparently disturbed a Great Horned Owl in a nearby clump of trees. At any rate, the Owl flew, and since the two are bitter enemies, the Gyrfalcon immediately took after the Owl. I tried to follow and to call the falcon back. I found the Owl, but not the Gyrfalcon, and had to give up the search because dusk was approaching. The jesses used in modern falconry are designed to cause an escaped bird little or no trouble in the wild, and it is presumed that this bird did return to the wild successfully.

— Ben G. Ohlander, *La Vista*

It should be pointed out that Mr. Ohlander is a licensed falconer, and that without that license it is illegal to take or to keep falcons and hawks. The *Revised Check-list of Nebraska Birds*. (p. 7) reports a Gyrfalcon taken in Johnson County in 1885. This was reported in *NBR* 1:12 and in his comments the editor, Myron H. Swenk, mentioned a sight record from West Point by Prof. Lawrence Bruner "in winter" in the 1880's, which Prof. Swenk accepts as "probably being a correct identification", and one from Norfolk which "was simply reported to Bruner, and is very doubtful". The present report seems to be the first since these early reports. —Ed.

1975 CHRISTMAS COUNT

Eighty-seven species (two more than last year) were reported in the 1975 Christmas Count, and four other species were reported as present during the count period but not recorded on the count itself (this is two more than last year, or possibly just one if any of last year's "Meadowlark sp." were Eastern Meadowlarks). Six localities reported this year, one less than last year. Greeley and Peru reported last year but not this year, and Grand Island reported this year but not last year. The total number of individuals reported this year, 252,423, is much greater than the 95,003 reported last year. Omaha reported 105,750 Snow Geese compared to 40,036 last year (in both cases most of the count was on the Plattsmouth Refuge), Lincoln reported 101,384 Starlings compared to 1,059 last year (most of this year's count in a roost in Pioneers Park), and Scottsbluff reported only 5,120 Mallards compared to 25,678 last year. Downy Woodpeckers were down, but Flickers and Red-headed Woodpeckers were more common this year; Horned Larks were up about 4,000 mostly at Hastings with most other localities reporting fewer than last year; Robins were more numerous in the east and

	Scotts- bluff	Kear- ney	Grand Island	Hast- ings	Lincoln	Omaha	Total
Great Blue Heron	H	-	-	-	1	-	1
Canada Goose	530	20	-	-	2	21	573
Snow Goose	-	-	-	-	-	105,750	105,750
Mallard	5,120	80	-	-	250	500	5,950
Pintail	-	-	-	-	1	2	3
Green-winged Teal	10	-	-	-	-	-	10
American Wigeon	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Wood Duck	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Canvasback	-	-	-	-	-	8	8
Common Goldeneye	35	-	-	-	-	13	48
Duck sp.	-	-	-	-	-	1,515	1,515
Common Merganser	20	4	-	-	-	1	25
Goshawk	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Cooper's Hawk	-	3	-	-	-	-	3
Red-tailed Hawk	4	-	-	5	17	24	50
Swainson's Hawk	-	-	-	-	H	-	H
Rough-legged Hawk	3	1	-	1	-	-	5
Golden Eagle	H	-	-	-	-	-	H
Bald Eagle	4	7	1	-	-	2	14
Marsh Hawk	H	-	-	-	1	1	2
Prairie Falcon	H	-	-	-	-	-	H
Merlin	1	-	-	-	1	-	2
American Kestrel	6	5	-	-	6	20	37
Bobwhite	-	-	-	11	1	9	21
Ring-necked Pheasant	14	3	-	2	26	4	49
Sandhill Crane	-	H	-	-	-	-	H
American Coot	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Common Snipe	-	3	-	-	1	-	4
Franklin's Gull	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Rock Dove	80	25	-	131	63	178	477
Mourning Dove	-	-	-	52	47	45	144
Screech Owl	-	-	-	H	21	2	23
Great Horned Owl	2	1	2	2	7	6	20
Barred Owl	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Long-eared Owl	-	-	-	-	7	-	7
Belted Kingfisher	3	6	1	4	7	4	25
Common Flicker	34	12	10	12	32	158	258
Red-bellied Woodpecker	-	1	2	5	19	32	59
Red-headed Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	1	88	89
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Hairy Woodpecker	1	1	2	11	9	12	36
Downy Woodpecker	8	7	5	14	38	73	145

	Scotts- bluff	Kear- ney	Grand Island	Hast- ings	Lincoln	Omaha	Total
Horned Lark	72	-	H	4,810	-	3	4,885
Blue Jay	20	5	3	12	108	102	250
Black-billed Magpie	53	10	12	2	-	-	77
Common Crow	11	13	18	125	97	138	402
Pinon Jay	16	-	-	-	-	-	16
Black-capped Chickadee	68	9	32	58	135	225	527
Tufted Titmouse	-	-	-	-	-	13	13
White-breasted Nuthatch	-	1	H	13	21	71	106
Red-breasted Nuthatch	-	3	-	1	4	-	8
Brown Creeper	H	-	H	5	4	6	15
Brown Thrasher	-	-	-	H	-	1	1
American Robin	40	62	500	150	433	266	1,451
Eastern Bluebird	-	-	50	-	1	14	65
Townsend's Solitaire	8	4	1	-	2	-	15
Golden-crowned Kinglet	3	1	-	7	10	11	32
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Bohemian Waxwing	79	-	-	-	-	-	79
Cedar Waxwing	75	6	-	12	-	75	168
Northern Shrike	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Loggerhead Shrike	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Starling	947	51	1,500	1,235	101,384	5,781	110,898
House Sparrow	907	100	150	976	1,794	945	4,872
Eastern Meadowlark	-	-	-	68	2	-	70
Meadowlark sp.	-	-	-	-	173	46	219
Western Meadowlark	223	15	1	-	6	-	245
Red-winged Blackbird	2,103	-	-	3	890	2	2,998
Rusty Blackbird	-	-	-	-	14	101	115
Brewer's Blackbird	1	-	-	-	1	6	8
Blackbird sp.	-	-	-	-	500	-	500
Common Grackle	H	5	-	2	186	2	195
Brown-headed Cowbird	-	-	-	-	2,232	7	2,239
Cardinal	-	6	5	24	107	122	264
Evening Grosbeak	H	H	-	-	3	4	7
Purple Finch	-	10	9	-	33	9	61
House Finch	93	-	-	-	-	-	93
Common Redpoll	-	-	-	-	12	1	13
Pine Siskin	55	35	-	7	52	54	203
American Goldfinch	42	8	50	113	152	94	459
Rufous-sided Towhee	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Dark-eyed Junco	130	45	20	52	473	594	1,314
Tree Sparrow	199	15	H	49	1,761	322	2,346
Chipping Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	8	8

	Scotts- bluff	Kear- ney	Grand Island	Hast- ings	Lincoln	Omaha	Total
Field Sparrow	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Harris' Sparrow	3	36	5	97	391	117	649
White-crowned Sparrow	10	-	-	-	-	1	11
White-throated Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Fox Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Lincoln's Sparrow	-	1	-	-	-	1	2
Swamp Sparrow	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Song Sparrow	2	3	-	8	32	18	63
Lapland Longspur	-	-	-	1,082	-	-	1,082
Species Reported	43	40	22	36	60	60	87
Present but not seen	7	2	4	2	1	-	4
Total individuals	11,039	624	2,379	9,161	111,585	117,635	252,423

slightly fewer in the west, House Sparrows were down about 5,000 with the decrease distributed rather generally except that Kearney reported 100 both years; Red-winged Blackbirds were up about 2,500 mostly at Scottsbluff but some at Lincoln; Common Grackles were up about 150 and Cowbirds about 2,000, with the increases primarily at Lincoln; Pine Siskins were up about 150, generally distributed; Tree Sparrows were up about 700, more than that at Lincoln with a drop at Omaha; and Lapland Longspurs were up about 1,000, all at Hastings. Other changes were less noticeable, either absolutely or relatively.

The columns are arranged in an approximate west (left) to east (right) order. The symbol "H" is used to indicate a species present during the count period but not observed on the count day.

Grand Island, 20 December. Due to the lack of birds in town, except for the many Starlings, Sparrows, and Robins, they went to Fosters Island to continue the count. Fosters Island is 3 miles long and 1 mile wide. It is located 5 miles south of Grand Island, between the middle and south channels of the Platte River. There is plenty of protection and food for the birds. 26° to 36°, wind northerly 20 to 25 mph. Spotted patches of snow on the ground, river partly frozen over. Four observers in 1 party. Party hours 10, 8 on foot, 2 by car; party miles 25, 7 on foot, 18 by car. Eastern Bluebirds and Purple Finches were more numerous than usual. Vera Coons, Bill Schleicher (compiler), Tom Schleicher, George Stoppkotte.

Hastings 20 December. A 15, mile diameter circles with the center south of town, 1.5 miles south of Highway 6 and .5 miles east of Highway 281, which includes the city parks, Parkview Cemetery, Crystal Lake Recreation Grounds, fields and pastures, woodlands along the Little Blue River, and lagoons west of Glenvil. Partly cloudy, 20° to 37°, wind NNW 10 to 20 mph, snow cover 0 to 10 inches, fresh water partly open. Ten observers in 7 parties, 8 at feeders. Party hours 17, 5 on foot, 12 by car; party miles 160, 7 on foot, 153 by car. Mrs. A. A. Alberts, Mrs. Floyd Butler, Miss Geraldine Heartwell, Mrs. Wm. Helzer, Mrs. Ray Horrigan, Mrs. Edith Hurlbut, Mr. and Mrs. George Janko, Mrs. Esther Johnson, Mrs. Clifford Kennedy, Mrs. J. T. McLaughlin, Mrs. R. J. Marsh, Burton Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. O.

W. Ritchey, Mrs. David Rose, Miss Bernice Welch (compiler), Mrs. Ronald Whitaker.

Kearney, 29 December. A 15-mile diameter circle, centered at the bridge over the Platte River south of Kearney, including Harmon Park, Kearney Cemetery, Cottonmill Lake, Turkey Creek area, Odessa bridge, Platte River area south of Kearney, Kearney bridge, Lynche's Woods, and connecting streets and roads. Parks and cemetery 25%, river bottomlands 50%, roadsides 25%. 8 AM to noon, 1 to 5 PM. Overcast, light snow early, wind north about to 10 mph, sky clear in afternoon, 32° 34°, ground completely snow covered, river 20% open. Ten observers in 1 party. Party miles 75, 72 by car, 3 on foot. Sandhill Cranes were heard on count day, but couldn't be found. Randy Brown had seen 24 near Fort Kearney State Park on 24 December. John C. W. Bliese, George W. Brown (compiler), Linda Brown, Gail Deyle, Becky Green, Mike Klein, James Sabatier, James VanNorman, Wayne Vian, Jack and Lorraine Unbehaun.

Lincoln, 21 December. A 15-mile diameter circle centered at Codington and West A Street, to include Pioneers Park, about 8 miles of Wilderness Park, Yankee Lake area, Conestoga Lake area, eastern half of Pawnee Lake, Lagoon Park, Wyuka Cemetery. Deciduous woods 42%, harvested corn and milo fields 20%, weedy draws 20%, lakes 10%, coniferous woods 5%, mixed woods and cemeteries 3%. 5 AM to 5 PM. Morning clear, afternoon mostly clear. 13° to 40°, wind 0 to 12 mph SSW. No snow cover, still water frozen, running water mostly open. Wild food crop good. Twenty-six observers in 8 parties, plus 1 at feeder. Party hours 73, 48 by foot, 25 by car; party miles 443.5, 68 by foot, 375.5 by car. Mr. Harrington believes that this is a record high count for the Lincoln Christmas Count, and the largest number of participants they have had. The Robins were nearly as plentiful as one would expect in the spring. Barred Owls apparently have established residency in Wilderness Park, probably because there is no hunting or shooting now that it is a park area. It is unusual that no Red-headed Woodpeckers were seen there this year, compared to 23 last year. (Quite a contrast to their unusual abundance in the Omaha area.) Daryl Giblin attracted Screech Owls by playing tapes of their calls, and he reported that at times they would nearly fly into the car. Most of the Starlings were in an enormous roost in Pioneers Park. Deon Bahr, Cindy and Dave Cochran, Roger and Rosalie Di Silverstro, Shirley Doole, Daryl and Margaret Giblin, Everett and Mildred Gross, Ellen and Ralph Harrington (compiler), Kenny Kirschenmann, Lee Morris, Rosalind Morris, John and Mabel Ott, Elden Pemberton, Ken Reitan, Marcia Rohrer, Ann Ruesch, Hazel Scheiber, Frances Taylor, Cliff Toews, Cedric Ward, Eldean Ward.

Omaha, 20 December. A 15-mile diameter circle, centered at Offutt Base Lake to include Fontenelle Forest, Lake Manawa (Iowa) State Park, Plattsmouth Waterfowl Refuge, and portions of the Platte and Missouri Rivers. Cultivated fields and pastures 60%, woodlands 35%, water 5%. 5:30 AM to 5 PM. Clear to partly cloudy, 25° to 36°, wind north 9 to 31 mph. No snow cover, rivers and streams open, lakes frozen. Forty-four observers in 10 parties; party hours 74.5, 43.5 on foot, 31 by car; party miles 476.5, 58.5 on foot, 418 by car. This is the first time that a Common Redpoll has been reported on a count. One was seen near Glenwood (Iowa) on the count, and a small flock was seen the next day at Lake Manawa. It is estimated that 100,000 geese were on the Plattsmouth Refuge. Tape recorders were used in calling out owls. The large number of Red-headed Woodpeckers

wintering over probably is due to the open winter and to a good crop of acorns. Rose Andersen, Dave Baden, Steve Bellinghiere, Tanya Bray, James Cavanda, Sandy Cavanda, Hal Chase, Marjorie Clayson, Evelyn Conrad, Bob Corcoran, James Delahant, Dorothy Duda, Jim Fischer, Curt Forst, William Fiske, Jim Glathar, Marge Graf, Ruth Green, Janet Greer, Mary Harberg, Carl Heaney, Mike Heaney, Tom Heaney, Ann Hodgson, Thomas Hoffman, Gladys Johnson, Diane Jones, Eunice Kawamoto, Mary Kite, Rosalind Knauer, Marian Meier, Alan Na Pier Cathy Nelson, Pat Nicol, Inez Nuland, Doug Ostrem, Marie Pluta, Tony Salado, Kenneth Seger, Elva Sheard, Bob Starr, Melba Wigg (compiler), Gertrude Wood, Jim Zahller.

Scottsbluff, 20 December. A 15-mile diameter circle, centered on the bridge across the North Platte River at South Broadway, to include Scottsbluff and Gering. 7:30 AM to 4 PM. Mostly clear, no wind, 18° to 40°. Running water open, ponds and lakes frozen, snow cover 2 to 4 inches. Mr. McCole, who is a Game Warden, was surprised that they didn't see Great Blue Herons on the river on count day as he sees them every day. He also said that many ducks had moved east but that even so their count would have been higher if they had been watching just before sundown when large flocks fly to the cornfields to feed during the night. The Prairie Falcon has nested regularly on the Scotts Bluff National Monument for the past 15 years, and remained over this year. The Brewer's Blackbird was checked carefully for the light color of the eyes, the purplish sheen of the head, and the greenish tint of the body feathers. The Franklin's Gull flew very close and so was easily identified. Mrs. Harry Banghart, Lydia Bolz, Mrs. J. J. Brashear, Mrs. David Hughson, Mrs. LeRoy Kenitz, Mrs. Wallace Marking, James F. McCole, Mrs. Luis Nerud, Mrs. Carol Schuman, Mrs. Willard Whitney, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Witschy (compiler).

1975 NEBRASKA NESTING SURVEY

Compiled by Dr. Esther V. Bennett

Data on the 1975 nesting season in Nebraska were received from 15 observers, reporting on 66 species from 17 counties. Counties in the tabulation are listed in a west to east order, with the northernmost of approximately equal locations given first. Numbers represent Nest-Record Cards. Letters are from NOU Nesting Report forms: Y represents young observed; E represents Cowbird eggs found in other nests; F represents carrying food; M represents carrying nesting material; and N represents nests observed for which no Nest-Record Card was submitted. Thirty-five species were reported on 141 North American Nest-Record Cards. The counties with column numbers on the tabulation shown in parentheses and the contributors were: Adams (13) E. M. Helzer, M. Heiss, E. R. Ritchey, Bernice Welch; Banner (3) Ross A. Lock; Cheyenne (7) Ross A. Lock; Clay (14) G. Rader; Dawes (5) Ross A. Lock; Douglas (16) R. G. Cortelyou; Grant (8) G. Nason; Hall (12) C. W. Shafer; Kearney (11) H. J. Turner; Kimball (4) Ross. A. Lock; Lancaster (15) N. G. Johnson; Lincoln (10) Mrs. M. A. Cox; McPherson (9) G. Nason; Morrill (6) L. Ell; Sarpy (17) R. G. Cortelyou; Scotts Bluff (2) Ross A. Lock, Mrs. Roy J. Witschy; Sioux (1) Ross A. Lock.

The following 20 Nebraska species which were reported in 1975 were not reported in the 1974 Nesting Survey (*NBR* 43:13): Blue-winged Teal, Merlin, Mountain Plover, Black-billed Cuckoo, Downy Woodpecker, Great Crested Flycatcher Eastern Phoebe, Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Wood Pewee, Say's Phoebe, Black-capped Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Wood Thrush,

	Sioux	Scotts Bluff	Banner	Kimball	Dawes	Morrill	Cheyenne	Grant	McPherson	Lincoln	Kearney	Hall	Adams	Clay	Lancaster	Douglas	Sarpy	Total	Cards
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		
Barn Swallow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N,Y	-	12	-	1	-	-	-	-	13
Cliff Swallow	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Purple Martin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,N,Y	-	-	-	-	-	6
Blue Jay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	Y	-	-	Y	Y	-	-
Black-billed Magpie	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N,Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Common Crow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Black-capped Chickadee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	Y	-	-	-	-
White-breasted Nuthatch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-	-
Brown Creeper	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
House Wren	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	8,Y	-	4	-	Y	12	12
Mockingbird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Gray Catbird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,Y	-	-	F	-	-	1
Brown Thrasher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N,Y	-	2	-	-	1,Y	M	-	-	3
American Robin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	2	14,Y	-	5	Y	Y	Y	21
Wood Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Eastern Bluebird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N	-	-	1	-	-	1	2
Loggerhead Shrike	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-	-
Starling	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N,Y	-	N	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Warbling Vireo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chestnut-sided Warbler	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ovenbird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-
House Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N,Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Meadowlark sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	F	-	-	3
Red-winged Blackbird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	1,F	F	-	1
Orchard Oriole	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	M	-	1	-	-	1,Y	-	1	3	3
Northern Oriole	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	M	-	1	2,Y	-	2,Y	-	F	5	5
Common Grackle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N	-	2	-	-	1,Y	F,Y	F	3	3
Brown-headed Cowbird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	E,Y	E	-	-	-
Cardinal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	-	F	4	4
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	Y	1	1
Indigo Bunting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N	-	-	-	-
Grasshopper Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N,Y	-	-	-	-

	Sioux	Scotts Bluff	Banner	Kimball	Daves	Morrill	Cheyenne	Grant	McPherson	Lincoln	Kearney	Hall	Adams	Clay	Lancaster	Douglas	Sarpy	Total	Cards
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		
Lark Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	
Field Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N,Y	-	-	-	
Song Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Nest Cards																			
Individuals	3	2	5	-	9	1	2	1	1	-	2	34	43	1	31	1	5	141	
Species	2	2	2	-	4	1	2	1	1	-	2	12	9	1	18	1	5	35	
No Nest Cards	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	26	-	10	6	1	15	13	10	31	
Total Species	2	5	2	1	4	1	2	1	1	26	2	22	15	2	33	14	15	66	

Loggerhead Shrike, Warbling Vireo, Chestnut-sided Warbler Ovenbird, Lark Sparrow, Field Sparrow, and Song Sparrow.

Twenty-seven species reported in the 1974 Survey were not reported in 1975; Black-crowned Night Heron, Pintail, Cinnamon Teal, Swainson's Hawk, Bald Eagle, American Coot, Long-billed Curlew, Willet, American Avocet, Barn Owl, Screech Owl, Burrowing Owl, Poor-will, Chimney Swift, Hairy Woodpecker, Western Flycatcher, Horned Lark, Bell's Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellow-throat, Bobolink, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, American Goldfinch, Rufous-sided Towhee, and Lark Bunting.

Persons contributing over 20 Nest-Record Cards were: C. W. Shafer (33), N. G. Johnson (31), Bernice Welch (28), and Ross A. Lock (22).

C. W. Shafer wrote "The Song Sparrow was observed flying into a heavy clump of rosebushes with a worm in its mouth. Its actions strongly suggested a nest nearby but a nest was not found in a brief search." Mrs. Witschy reported that the Yellow-billed and the Black-billed Cuckoos and the Chestnut-sided Warbler were all seen feeding young during a Nature Club outing on the National Park refuge near the river on 12 July.

Anyone who sees evidence of nesting - young, or adult birds carrying nesting material, food, or fecal sacs - can submit the information without the use of a special form, although it will be appreciated if the information is such form that it can be easily separated by species and county. This information will be included in the Nebraska Nesting Survey by letters rather than by numbers.

Anyone who has found, or expects to find, an active nest is invited to write in for North American Nest-Record Cards to use in reporting on the nest (a separate card for each nest except for colonial nesting species which require a separate card for each visit).

Cards, instruction sheets, and Laboratory of Ornithology Nest Survey Newsletters may be obtained from Dr. Esther Bennett, 1641 Devoe Drive, Lincoln, Nebraska 68520. Completed cards should be returned to Dr. Bennett by 1 October 1976 for the information to be included in the annual report. If persons wish to send information after that date it will be appreciated and sent to Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, but it will not be possible to include it in the state summary.

City Naturalist, Lincoln

VERTEBRATE REMAINS IN GREAT HORNED OWL PELLETS IN NEBRASKA

Analyses of the contents of owl pellets have often been used in natural history studies of various owl species. Since the food of owls consists primarily of animals, these studies can also be of value in determining the mammalian fauna of an area (Fitcher, 1941; Jones, 1952; Choate, 1972). Such studies have not been common in Nebraska. Haecker (1941) noted food remains presented to a pair of nestling young by Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) adults in Douglas County; Fichter (1941) qualitatively examined contents of the pellets cast by these same individual owls. Additionally, Jones (1952) analyzed 23 pellets of the Great Horned Owl from Cherry County. Pellets of Great Horned Owls from one locality in northern Nebraska and six localities in central Nebraska were analyzed in this study in an effort to estimate the vertebrate foods used by this species.

Pellets were examined from the following sites (parenthetical roman numerals coincide with those used in Table 1 to denote localities described here):

(I) .5 mi. SE Farwell, Howard County. Ten pellets were taken from under a juniper tree at a farm in March 1975. A Great Horned Owl had been known to roost in that tree for the past three years.

(II) 7 mi. N Loup City, Sherman County. On 30 March 1975 sixteen pellets were collected from some abandoned farm buildings in hilly, nearly treeless prairie. No owl was seen here, but the large size of the pellets, broken bones of large prey, and general character of the pellets matched those of Great Horned Owls as described by Moon (1940).

(III) Cottonmill Lake, 3.5 mi. W Kearney, Buffalo County. Several intact pellets and some pellet debris (together making up about a liter of material) were found beneath cottonwood and box elder trees on 15 and 16 April 1975. A pair of Great Horned Owls were seen to fly from these trees.

(IV) 9.5 mi. S, .5 mi. E Mason City, Custer County. This locality is in Black Hill Basin, in a large gully known locally as the "Big Ditch". A man-made hole three feet in diameter and eight feet long dug into the west wall of the gully apparently served as a Great Horned Owl nest site. The hole was about fifty feet up from the floor of the dry ravine and ten feet down from the uneroded surface of Black Hill Basin. Surrounding this area was shortgrass prairie, largely cultivated. An adult Owl was seen in the immediate area of the nest hole on 29 April 1975, when the gully was searched for pellets. Inspection of the hole revealed an immature Owl at the back of the excavation where the diameter narrowed to about 1.5 feet. Feathers of prey species which littered the floor of the hole were picked up for later identification to supplement pellet data. Two fragmented pellets were collected beneath a large cottonwood and one beneath a small juniper situated 100 yards south of the nest hole, down the gully. Six additional pellets and a few fragmented pellets and scattered bones were picked up under a dead elm 200 yards up the gully (to the northeast).

(V) Kearney city cemetery, Buffalo County. Five pellets and some pellet debris were found under a juniper tree during an ornithology field trip on 3 May 1975. Dr. John C. W. Bliese, who led the field trip, said he has seen Great Horned Owls within the cemetery for several years.

(VI) 7.75 mi. N, .5 mi. W Axtell, Kearney County. On 4 May 1975 two pellets were found at the base of a small dead willow at the edge of a small flowing drainage ditch. Many cattails, willows, and sedges grew in the wet

immediate area. The surrounding area consisted of low sandhills vegetated by short grasses. Some of the area was cultivated and some grazed by cattle. The landowner said there were two Great Horned Owls in the vicinity.

(VII) 16.5 mi. S, 2 mi. W Nenzel, Cherry County. A locality in the Samuel R. McKelvie National Forest produced pellets on 13 and 14 July 1975. No owls were observed in the area, but these pellets resembled closely those collected at previous localities. Additionally, two contour feathers of the Great Horned Owl were found beneath one of the trees where pellets were collected. These pellets (number of pellets collected here unknown) were found beneath numerous yellow pines in the Steer Creek campground area, which consists of a few acres of forest plantation surrounded on all sides by typical Nebraska Sand Hills prairie. Small mammals were collected from this area by a field crew from Kearney State College; species trapped were compared with those found in pellets.

Crania and mandibular rami of mammals found within the pellets were identified by key (Glass, 1973) and by comparing dentitions to those of skulls of known species from the collection of mammals in the Kearney State College Vertebrate Museum. Birds were identified by feet and feathers in some pellets, but in most cases identification by skeletal elements was not possible.

In forming pellets, Great Horned Owls damaged bony elements of prey species extensively, making estimation of the numbers of prey individuals difficult. Quantification of mammals was accomplished by pairing upper incisors or rostral halves, zygomatic plates with connected maxilla and upper cheek-teeth, and mandibular rami. One symmetrical pair of each of these three parts was lumped and counted as one individual of that particular species. Extra parts were paired as much as possible and counted similarly. An attempt was made to pair parts of the same size and same amount of cheek-tooth wear.

Prey data are given in Table 1. *Peromyscus maniculatus* (Deer Mouse) and *P. leucopus* (White-footed Mouse) possibly both occurred in the pellets but the two species could not be differentiated in pellet remains and so are lumped in the data as *Peromyscus* sp. The same procedure was followed for the two Nebraska species of *Reithrodontomys*, *R. megalotis* (Western Harvest Mouse) and *R. montanus* (Plains Harvest Mouse), and of *Microtus*, *M. ochrogaster* (Prairie Vole) and *M. pennsylvanicus* (Meadow Vole).

Small mammal trapping done in the Samuel R. McKelvie National Forest (in the vicinity of locality VII) produced samples of all kinds (except Cottontails) that occurred in pellets from that locality. These mammals are typical inhabitants of the Sand Hills prairie. No mammal collecting was done at any other site where pellets were found, however numbers and kinds from pellets are probably representative of the faunas of the respective habitats. Mostly nocturnal species were eaten, in keeping with the nocturnal hunting habits of *Bubo* (although these owls will forage in daylight during times of low rodent activity — see Vaughan, 1954).

Pocket mice other than *Perognathus hispidus* in the Cherry County data are given in Table 1 as *P. flavescens* (Plains Pocket Mouse), which was the only species other than *P. hispidus* caught in snap traps in the area. However, *P. flavus* (Silky Pocket Mouse) is also known from Cherry County Sand Hills, but is rare there (Jones, 1964). The Plains Pocket Mouse (*P. flavescens*) was found by Jones (1952) in Great Horned Owl pellets from Valentine National Wildlife Refuge, Cherry County.

Small bird remains were nearly impossible to identify due to fragemen-

TABLE 1

Vertebrate remains in Great Horned Owl pellets from seven localities in Nebraska.

Roman numbers refer to localities described in the text.
Total percentage does not equal 100.0 because of rounding of individual percentages.

Species	Locality:	Number of Individuals							Total	Per cent of Total Number
		I	II	III	IV ^a	V	VI	VII		
<u>Blarina brevicauda</u> (Short-tailed Shrew)		-	-	-	1	-	1	-	2	0.6
<u>Cryptotis parva</u> (Least Shrew)		-	-	6	-	-	-	-	6	1.8
<u>Sylvilagus floridanus</u> (Eastern Cottontail)		1	1	3	1	1	-	1	8	2.4
<u>Geomys bursarius</u> (Plains Pocket Gopher)		-	-	-	-	-	1	7	8	2.4
<u>Dipodomys ordii</u> (Ord's Kangaroo Rat)		-	-	-	-	-	-	17	17	5.1
<u>Perognathus flavescens</u> (Plains Pocket Mouse)		-	-	-	-	-	-	9	9	2.7
<u>Perognathus hispidus</u> (Hispid Pocket Mouse)		-	-	-	2	-	-	1	3	0.9
<u>Reithrodontomys</u> sp. (Harvest Mice)		6	19	18	7	4	-	3	57	17.0
<u>Peromyscus</u> sp. (White-footed Mice)		31	36	60	11	6	-	6	150	44.8
<u>Onychomys leucogaster</u> (Northern Grasshopper Mouse)		3	2	-	1	-	-	3	9	2.7
<u>Microtus</u> sp. (Voles)		1	6	11	2	2	-	7	29	8.7
<u>Rattus norvegicus</u> (Norway Rat)		-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	0.3
<u>Phasianus colchicus</u> (Ring-necked Pheasant)		-	-	-	2 ^b	-	-	-	2	0.6
<u>Colaptes auratus</u> (Common Flicker)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Red-shafted form)		-	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	0.6
(Yellow-shafted form)		-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	0.3
<u>Corvus brachyrhynchos</u> (Common Crow)		-	-	1	1 ^c	1	-	-	3	0.9
Unidentified small birds (sparrow-sized)		1	6	13	-	-	-	4	24	7.2
Unidentified large birds (robin-sized)		1	1	1	-	-	1	-	4	1.2
Total		44	71	116	29	14	3	58	335	100.2

a Includes feathers of prey species from floor of nest hole

b One cock, one hen

c Probably carrion

tation of skulls and bones. Individuals were quantified by pairing carpo-metacarp, the most commonly intact bones. Feathers were usually crushed to a powdery consistency but intact enough to aid in identification of Flickers (*Colaptes auratus*) and Ring-necked Pheasants (*Phasianus colchicus*).

Feathers of Common Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), Ring-necked Pheasant, and Red-shafted Flicker were collected on the floor of the nest hole at locality IV near Mason City. Primary feathers of another small bird were collected there but could not be positively identified. The iridescent feathers of a cock Ring-necked Pheasant were found in one of the pellets while the duller feathers of a hen were found in the nest hole. Two of the pellets from near Mason City contained the remains of a Crow mixed with a considerable amount of gravel. Both of these pellets smelled strongly of decay. Crow remains in pellets from other localities did not have this rotten odor, and it was assumed this Crow had been a roadkill eaten as carrion.

Apparently, Great Horned Owls often take large species as their prey. Cottontail Rabbits (*Sylvilagus*) were taken by owls at six of the seven localities studied. Pocket Gophers and Norway Rats were included in the diet as well as the large birds mentioned above. Jones (1952) found gallinaceous birds (grouse and pheasants), Muskrats, and Pocket Gophers to be eaten by Cherry County owls. These prey species, because of their large size and weight, contribute more to the diet than the percentages in Table 1 indicate.

Remains of *Dipodomys ordii* (Ord's Kangaroo Rat) were tabulated more accurately by counting symmetrical pairs of femurs and tibio-fibulae than by counting skull parts. The actual number of skulls was six, but seventeen pairs of leg bones were removed from the pellets. The same was true of *Geomys* (Pocket Gopher) remains; three skulls were found, but seven pairs of humeri were present. Perhaps the skulls of these animals are not always eaten by owls.

No reptile or amphibian remains were found in any pellets. Insect parts were found in several pellets, but no effort was made to identify them.

The author wishes to thank Robert H. Czaplewski, Roger D. Fattig, Dudley R. Friskopp, and James Gray for help in collecting pellets.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1975 Treasurer's Report	2
Gyrfalcon Taken in Nebraska	3
1975 Christmas Count	3
1975 Nebraska Nesting Survey	8
Vertebrate Remains in Great Horned Owl Pellets in Nebraska	12
Notes	16

VARIED THRUSH. On the morning of 4 December 1975, while I was collecting pine cones in the Gering Cemetery, a bird flew into an elm tree above my head. There was a large flock of Robins in the Cemetery that morning and, at first glance, I assumed that this bird was a Robin. A second glance, however, revealed a black band across the rusty breast. The bird sat in the tree for several minutes so that I could clearly see all the marks of a Varied Thrush — the orange eye-stripe, orange wing-bars, and black breast-band. I was due at work in a few minutes, so I couldn't stay to watch the thrush for very long. However, when I drove around the Cemetery and came back to the area where I had seen it, the thrush was on the ground, acting just like a Robin.

Mrs. Joyce Brasher was able to see the Varied Thrush in the Cemetery later that morning. Other members of our Nature Club were not so fortunate, and repeated visits on other days have failed to produce another sighting.

— Alice Kenitz, Gering

A Varied Thrush was reported from Omaha in November 1972 (*NBR* 41:20) and in December 1935 and January 1936 up to three at a time were seen (in addition to a dead specimen found) at the Experiment Substation in North Platte (*NBR* 4:9). These seem to be the only previous reports of the Varied Thrush in Nebraska. — Ed.