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1977 FALL FIELD DAY

The 1977 Fall Field Day started Saturday night with a get-together at the home of the George W. Browns in Kearney. Sunday, 2 October, started out gray and chilly, but eventually developed into the fine fall day which had been ordered and promised. The trip started at the Newark Township building and went north on Nebraska 10 to the north bank of the Platte River and explored eastward along the river. After that area had been covered the group went to an area northeast of Fort Kearney. After the lunch at the Newark Township building, at which the official tally was compiled, some of the group went to the Funk lagoon for more birding. Thirty-three people were at the lunch (it was easy to count them while they were sitting down) but more than that were involved in the activities at one time or another.

Forty-six species were seen Sunday morning (or forty-seven if any of the silent Meadowlarks were Easterns): Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant; Great Blue and Green Herons; Blue-winged Teal, Turkey Vulture; Red-tailed, Swainson's, and Rough-legged Hawks; American Kestrel, Bobwhite, Killdeer, American Avocet, Ring-billed Gull; Rock and Mourning Doves; Screech Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Common Flicker; Red-bellied, Red-headed, Hairy, and Downy Woodpeckers; Barn Swallow, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Thrasher, American Robin, Eastern Bluebird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Starling; Orange-crowned, Nashville, and Yellow-rumped Warblers; House Sparrow, Meadowlark sp. and Western Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Cardinal, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, Rufous-sided Towhee, Dark-eyed Junco, and Field Sparrow. In addition, an Osprey was seen just south of Kearney the day before, and in the afternoon eighteen new species were added: Western Grebe, Canada Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck; Ferruginous and Marsh Hawks, Sora, American Coot, Franklin's Gull, Burrowing Owl; Tree and Rough-winged Swallows; Yellow-headed Blackbird, and Vesper Sparrow.

The front rank of the morning group saw a mule deer and all saw a beaver which floated in the middle of a sand pit while the group birded all around it. And the afternoon group saw prairie dogs along with the Burrowing Owls.