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Nebraska Ornithologists' Union

7-1946

# *Nebraska Bird Review* (July-December 1946) 14(2), WHOLE ISSUE.

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A Magazine of the Ornithology of the Nebraska Region

Published by the

Nebraska Ornithologists' Union

Founded 1899

A Magazine of the Ornithology of the Nebraska Region

Published semi-annually, in January-June and July-December, by the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union, as its official journal.

Sent free as issued to all members of the N. O. U. who are not in arrears for dues. Subscriptions taken from non-members, libraries, and institutions at one dollar a year in the United States, and one dollar and twenty-five cents a year in all other countries, payable in advance. Single numbers fifty cents each. All dues should be re-mitted to the Treasurer and all subscriptions to the Editor.

Edited by Edson Fichter, University of Nebraska State Museum, Lincoln, Nebraska.

The current issue of The Nebraska Bird Review is printed by The Enterprise Publishing Company, Blair, Nebraska.

# OFFICERS OF THE NEBRASKA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

	n Moser, R F D. No. 1,
	Station, Omaha 4, Nebr.
Vice-Fresident	llinco, 411 Moorhead St., Chadron, Nebr.
Corresponding Secretary Mrs. Jane B. Sv	
	Lincoln 3, Nebr.
Recording Secretary	Chapman, Aurora, Nebr.
TreasurerMrs. A. M. Jones,	, 1015 No. St. Joe, Ave.,
	Hastings, Nebr.
EditorEdson Fichter, University of	
	Lincoln, Nebr.
Associate EditorF. W. Haecker, Box 1	91, Kemmerer, Wyoming

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Actual Date of Publication, February 15, 1947	

A Magazine of the Ornithology of the Nebraska Region Published by the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union

VOLUME XIV JULY-DECEMBER, 1946 NUMBER 2

# NOTES ON THE BREEDING AND NESTING OF THE LONG-BILLED CURLEW

# By LEVI L. MOHLER

Field studies of the native grouse in Nebraska, chiefly in Keith and nearby counties, in 1942 and 1943 took me into areas where the Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*) was a common spring and summer resident, and my field notes contain a number of items about this species. Breeding pairs often put on a splendid aerial show as they noisily escort a passing vehicle through the vicinity of their territory, and a ride through curlew country offers the observer many a thrill as the sicklebills circle and swoop.

#### **Nest Observations**

A curlew nest, which I found on May 6, 1942, was so placed that further observation was convenient and several visits were made there during the next few weeks. The nest, located in the northwest part of section 16 nearly two miles west of Whitetail Creek, Keith County, was discovered when I was driving through a small sandhill valley or hollow away from the trail. A female curlew flushed directly in front of, and very near the vehicle at ten A. M. She went to the right or southwest, hovering and fluttering with a wonderful "broken wing" display and much plaintive calling.

I stopped immediately, walked back, and found the nest, unharmed and directly between the wheel tracks. The nest contained three eggs, dark greenish brown, with many dark brownish, irregular markings.

The female which appeared larger and more gray than the male, joined the male not over 100 yards from the nest. The male fluttered near the female, caressed her back with his beak, followed her for several steps, and at one time flew over her hovering and remained only a foot or less above her for a few seconds.



After photographing the nest I moved away about 150 yards and watched the birds with binoculars. Both birds walked back towards the nest, with many stops for loafing, preening, and sunning. The day was quite breezy and the temperature 50 degrees F. By 10:20 both birds were about 45 yards from the nest. They halfcircled the nest, travelling in a wandering walk, and eventually reached a point about 40 yards east of the nest. They remained 20 yards or more apart during the entire walk following the courting procedure.

At about 10:40, the female walked in a direct line back to the nest and immediately settled down upon the eggs. She looked exactly like an old cowchip in the short grass. The male continued to feed on the slope northeast of the nest.

On May 9 the nest contained three eggs and the female flushed from the nest twelve feet from me. The three eggs were still in the nest on May 18 and the female flushed only when closely approached. Her injury feigning was splendid and she appeared very large as she hovered her wings and moved along the ground. She uttered no notes until she was about 50 feet from the nest. When I moved away the female took wing, flew over the nest, doing much screaming, plus a twittering note.

On May 20 the three eggs were still in the nest. The male was not seen when I visited the area on May 18 and 20.

The three eggs were still intact at 3 P. M., May 25. The male showed himself again on this date, coming from two or three hundred yards south after the female began to call.

On May 27 I stopped the car about 100 yards from the nest,

# BREEDING AND NESTING OF THE CURLEW 33

and noted one adult, apparently the male, running about, also flying some, and giving the alarm note. This was different behavior than I had seen on previous visits to the nest; on other visits no alarm was given until after the female flushed from the nest. I hurried to the nest and saw that three eggs were still there, and a huge bullsnake was crawling not over two feet from the eggs. I attempted to photograph the snake and nest but the snake crawled away before this could be done. The snake, a five-foot specimen, was subsequently dispatched.

Egg shells, apparently from a successful hatch, remained in the nest when it was next visited on June 3. Since the female was probably incubating the eggs when I first saw the nest on May 6 the eggs were probably incubated at least 21 days, and less than 28 days.

Young curlews probably less than two weeks old were seen at another location in Keith county on June 15, 1942, and others of about the same age were seen in northern Garden county during the first week of June, 1943.

#### Courtship and Breeding

Courtship behavior, very similar to that already mentioned for May 6, but followed by actual mating, was observed in a meadow pasture about two miles northwest of Keystone, May 12, 1942. In this latter instance the male stood behind the female, caressing her with his beak, laying the beak lightly on her back, first from the right, then from the left.

After repeating this performance several times the male fluttered above the female and settled on her back. The female stood upright during the entire courting and mating. The male, slowly fluttering his wings, remained on the female's back slightly more than one and one-half minutes although copulation used only a few seconds. He used his slowly moving wings to maintain perfect balance even though the wind blew rather strongly during the performance. Both birds fed in the meadow afterwards, the female preening a minute or two before feeding.

## Curlew and Prairie Falcon

During early June, 1943, in southern Sheridan county and in company with Thomas A. Schrader, I watched an adult curlew chase a Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*). The curlew climbed to a considerable height above the falcon, then plummetted down with great speed, nearly, but never actually, striking the falcon. This diving performance was repeated several times and the curlew seemed to be thoroughly aggressive during the whole scene.—Game, Forestation and Parks Commission, Lincoln, Nebraska.

# SEASONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF BOBWHITE QUAIL TO WOODY VEGETATION IN NEBRASKA

# By DAVID DAMON

Investigations on the Bobwhite Quail (Colinus virginianus) by biologists of the Nebraska Game, Forestation and Parks Commission were begun in Nebraska in 1941 as a part of the activity under Pittman-Robertson Project 4-R, the upland game bird survey. At the outset of the studies it was evident that the greatest quail populations were in the southeast portion of the state. A good density of quail was only half of the picture; there was also a good distribution of quail. A system of refuges had already been established in four of the counties by the Game Commission in cooperation with the Soil Conservation Service. Certain portions of the refuges had been fenced against grazing and planted with shrubs for the benefit of quail. Later these refuges were stocked with pen-reared quail.

It is well known that the bobwhite requires more or less woody vegetation in its range. Southeast Nebraska is generally quite hilly and there are many of the once numerous hedges of osage orange (Maclura pomifera) still remaining. Thickets of wild plum (Prunus americana) are less extensive, but widely distributed along fences and in the numerous draws.

The quail investigation seeks to determine the essential requirements of good quail range in Nebraska and the feasibility of improving quail range in areas of the southeast where huntable surpluses have not yet been realized. One phase in the investigation has been the keeping of a detailed record on quail flushes. Included on a form prepared for recording the flushes are the items "distance from hedge" and "distance from woods". It is unfortunate that there has been a gap of 3 1-2 years in the flush records, but as a result of over 150 such records I feel that some conclusions can be drawn on the relative importance of osage orange and woodlots to quail in southeast Nebraska.

Records show that quail occur in nearly every Nebraska county. The species probably occurs in all counties. All flush records used for this discussion were made in southeast Nebraska and all but 6 per cent are from Pawnee County wherein a quail study area is established.

Table 1 gives the average distance of quail flushes (to nearest ten yards) to hedge and woods by seasons. The winter season was considered to be December, January and February; spring season March, April, May and so on.

Table 1. Average Distance of Quail Flushes from Hedge and Woods by Seasons.

	Distance T	o (Yards)
Season	Woods	Hedge
Spring (29)*	550	150
Summer (16)	390	100
Fall (64)	400	190
Winter (48)	370	230

\*Number of flushes

#### THE BOBWHITE QUAIL

It is obvious that in all seasons, the average flush-distance from hedge is less than from woods. One reason for this is that hedge rows are more widely distributed; more important is the fact that because of the hedges quail are not limited in distribution to timbered streams and other wooded areas as is the case in the remainder of the state. Most of southeast Nebraska timber is well grazed and often quite damp, consequently is not used much by quail as are the hedge rows.

The average distance from woods that quail flushed was greatest during the spring. At this season one may often flush a single bird or a pair in the most unexpected places. It is not uncommon then to find quail in the middle of some large pasture where the nearest escape cover may be nothing more than clumps of buckbrush (Symphoricarpos orbiculatus). Furthermore, at this season and during the summer many hedgerows adjacent to pasture, hayfields or some other non-cultivated fields are frequented by quail; such hedgerows are rarely used during the winter. The birds appear to move closer to both hedge and woods during the summer, but the number of summer flushes probably is too few to be significant.

In the fall there is a definite movement of quail to weedy areas, particularly to areas which provide edible seeds such as ragweed (*Ambrosia* sp.) and foxtail grass (*Setaria* sp.). Such places provide satisfactory concealment cover and reasonably good escape cover. It is a common autumn experience for flushed birds to alight in herbaceous cover.

As winter approaches there is a tendency for quail to move closer to wooded areas. Most of the timber is along streams. Here also, on the flood plains, are corn and sorghum fields adjacent to numerous thickets in waste corners and draws, not to mention the usual hedgerows. Winter observations disclosed that on the leeward side of a piece of timber, quail would occupy rather open types of cover such as sumac, coarse grasses and similar vegetation. This is thought to be due to the windbreak effect of the timber. The winter flush records for 1941-42 (a mild winter) show that 53 per cent of the flushes were from woody vegetation and the remainder from herbaceous species. Seventy per cent of the flushes from herbaceous vegetation were in weedy areas, usually associated with a cultivated crop. The average distance of all winter flushes was 41 yards from corn, sorghum or beans.

One fourth of the winter flushes were more than a quarter of a mile from timber, but these flushes averaged only 82 yards from hedgerows. In other words, while the valleys are an asset to win-

tering quail populations in Nebraska, upland farms having good woody field borders, properly located in relation to corn, sorghum, beans or other suitable food can successfully carry quail through the winter.

The chief missing item in otherwise good quail range in Nebraska is apparently suitable woody field borders. Osage orange, while an excellent species for quail range is unpopular with most land owners. Other woody species will need to be used if we are to succeed in quail range improvement.

Our goal in quail management is to enlarge the area over which a huntable surplus of quail can be produced. This we know is practical within limits dictated by climate, soil and agricultural practices. A good quail management program requires close coordination with proper land use if its objective, quail production, is to be another feature in land use, not merely an unconscious by-product.—Game, Forestation and Parks Commission, Lincoln, Nebraska.

#### N. O. U. COOPERATIVE BIRD MIGRATION AND OCCURRENCE LIST FOR FIRST HALF OF 1946

This cooperative migration and occurrence list has been compiled by members of the N.O.U. and is published here for the twenty-second consecutive year. The date of first noted occurrence or arrival is given for each species for each locality together with symbols denoting the observer. In accordance with the established policy, subspecific designations are not made. Where the observations could possibly include more than one race of a species, the vernacular specific name is given if there is one, followed by (subsp.). In those cases where no specific vernacular name has been designated by the A.O.U. Committee on Nomenclature, no attempt has been made to invent one. Instead the vernacular name of the race most likely to occur is given, followed by (subsp.).

Thereby reports of Hoyt's, Saskatchewan, and Prairie Horned Lark are here recorded under Horned Lark (subsp.), Nevada Cowbird under Eastern Cowbird (subsp.), Gambel's Sparrow under White-crowned Sparrow (subsp.), Sennett's Nighthawk under Nighthawk (subsp.), Dakota Song Sparrow under Song Sparrow (subsp.), Krider's Hawk under Red-tailed Hawk (subsp.), and Montana and Pink-sided Junco under Oregon Junco (subsp.).

Symbols denoting the observers are as follows: B—Brooking Bird Club; Ba—Mrs. Garland Baker; Be—Mr. Harold Benckeser; Bk—Mrs. A. M. Brooking; Br—Mr. William Brabham; C—Misses Agness and Susie Callaway; Ca—Mrs. C. B. Callaway, D—Mrs. J. M. Davis; F—Fairbury Nature Union; G—Mr. Earl W. Glandon; Ga—Mr. Merwyn Glandon; Gl—Mrs. Rose Glandon; H—Miss G. Heartwell; Ho—Mr. Glen Hoge; J—Mrs. A. H. Jones; Jo—Mrs. A. M. Jones; L—Mr. Melvin Lambert; M—Mrs. Mahoney; Ma— Mrs. Jesse Marian; Mr—Miss Vera Maunder; R.—Mr. C. D. Ricker; Ri—Mrs. C. D. Ricker; Ru—Mrs. Ruch; S—Mrs. Paul Sala; T— Mr. Harold Turner; W—Mrs. Jennie Woodworth; and Y—Mrs. F. L. Youngblood.

# BIRD MIGRATION AND OCCURRENCE 37

Grebe, Eared Grebe, Pied-billed	Stapleton 5-7 G 3-24 G	Hastings 6-9 J	Fairbury 5-5 C 4-16 C	Bladen
Pelican, White		4-27 Y		
Cormorant, Double-				
crested			4-15 H	
Heron, Great Blue				
(subsp.)	3-24 Be		5-14 C	
Heron, Little Blue		5-18 B		
Heron, Eastern Green		5-18 B	4-28 C	
Heron, Black-crowned	_			
Night	5-14 Be	4-27 J		<b>x</b> 4 0 <b>x</b>
Bittern, American	4-22 Be	4-28 J	4-2 C	5-10 T
Goose, Canada (subsp.)	2-25 L		3-16 C	
Goose, White-fronted	0 1 7 D	0 0 1 T	3-30 C	
Goose, Lesser Snow	3-15 Be	3-31 J	3-19 Ca	
Goose, Blue	1 1 2 Da		3-19 Ca	
Mallard, Common Gadwall	1-13 Be 3-20 Be	2-23 Jo,D 5-18 B	3124 C	
Baldpate	3-20 Be 3-40 Be		4-2 C	
Pintail, American	2.22 Be		2.11 C	
Teal, Green-winged	3-4 Be	2°23 J0,L	2.11 0	
Teal, Blue-winged	5 i De	2-23 Jo,D	3-24 C	
Shoveller	2-22 G	4-9 J	4-2 C	
Redhead	3-15 Be	5		
Duck, Ring-necked	3-17 G			
Canvas-back	3-4 Be		4-27 C	
Duck, Greater Scaup			4-25 F	
Duck, Lesser Scaup	3-16 Be	2-23 Jo,D	)	
Bufflehead	3-17 G			
Duck, Ruddy	4-14 Be			
Merganser, American		3-31 J		
Vulture, Western				
Turkey	5-23 Be		3-20 C	
Hawk, Sharp-shinned	5-3 Be		5-8 C	<b>.</b>
Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed	1-18 Be		2-10 C	1-23 T
	2 11 D-	•	2 22 C	
(subsp.)	3-11 Be		3-22 C	2 01 T
Hawk, Harlan's Hawk, Swainson's	4-13 G			3-21 T 4-15 T
Hawk, American Rough				415 1
legged	1-1 G			2-12 T
Rough-leg, Ferruginous				1-16 T
Eagle, Golden	1-1 Ga			1.16 T
Eagle, Bald	6-13 Be			1-20 T
Hawk, Marsh	1.1 G	2-10 J	1-1 C	1-1 T
Osprey	5-15 G			
Falcon, Prairie	1-2 G			2-2 T
Hawk, Duck	5-4 Be			

Hawk, Pigeon (subsp.) Hawk, Eastern Sparrow	1-10		2-17	T	1.0	C	2-15	т
Chicken, Greater Prairie	>1.3	Be	2117	J	1.7	U	2-15	T
Bob-white, Eastern Pheasant, Ring-necked	2-1 1-1	Be Ga	4-14 2-24		1-12 1-1	Ca C		
Crane, Sandhill (subsp.)	2-25	Br	3-31	Ĵ				
Rail, Virginia	6-25			-		~		
Coot, American	3-24	G	4-26	Jo	4-4	C		
Plover, Semipalmated Killdeer	3-12	<b>B</b> o	3-24	T	<b>4</b> -7 2-25	C	3-7	т
Plover, Black-bellied	5-23		3-24	J	2-2)	U	Ş~1	T
Snipe, Wilson's	3-31		4-7	I	4-7	С		
Curlew, Long-billed				0				
(subsp.)	4-5	G				_		
Plover, Upland	6-29		4-27		4-20		4-29	Т
Sandpiper, Spotted	5-5	G	5-8	J	4-26	C		
Sandpiper, Solitary (subsp.)	4-27	Ba	5-6	1 Io	4-7	С		
Willet, Western	4-28		5.6		5-12			
Yellowlegs, Greater	4.14	-	50	J,JO	512	Ŭ		
Yellow-legs, Lesser	3-17		4-14	J	4-2	$\mathbf{C}^{-1}$		
Sandpiper, Pectoral	4-28	Be	4-23	J,Jo	4-13	С		
Sandpiper, White-								
rumped			5-6	J,Jo		~		
Sandpiper, Baird's	3-21		4-14	Ĵ.	4.2	C		
Sandpiper, Least	5-5	G	4-17	J,Jo	4-14	C		
Dowitcher (subsp.) Sandpiper, Semipelmated	4-28	Ģ	5-6 5-6	5,5-	4 1 4	C		
Sanderling	1		1.0	J,Jo	4-14 4-29			
Avocet	5-5	G			747	0		
Phalarope, Wilson's	4-28		5-4	Jo	5-4	С		
Phalarope, Northern	5-19	Be		Ū				
Gull, Herring					5-23	С		
Gull, Ring-billed	3-14		3-14			â	4.0.5	m
Gull, Franklin's	5-5	G	3-26	J	4-12		4-25	T
Tern, Forster's					5-12 5-26			
Tern, Least Tern, Black	5-12	G	5.25	J,Jo				
Dove, Western	J•12	0	5.2)	J,J0	ч· 2 J	T.		
Mourning	1-5	Be	3-22	J	1-1	С	3-27	Т
Cuckoo, Yellow-billed	5-26		5-15		6-5	Č		
Cuckoo, Black-billed	6-25	Be			6-15	С		
Owl, Barn	4-7	G			1-15	-		
Owl, Screech (subsp.)	1-3	G	3-5	Jo	1-20			_
Owl, Horned (subsp.)	1-4	G	4-9	J,Jo	1-8	$\mathbf{C}$	1-14	
Owl, Snowy							2-20	1
Owl, Western Burrowing	4.12	G	3-31	т	6-6	С		
Durtowing	7.12	U	5.51	J	0.0	U ·		

# BIRD MIGRATION AND OCCURRENCE 39

Owl, Long-eared Owl, Short-eared Nighthawk (subsp.)	1-27 Be 3-8 G 5-22 Be	5-18 B	1-6 C 5-20 C	1-14 T 6-8 T
Swift, Chimney Hummingbird, Ruby-		4-28 Bk	4-10 C	
throated			6-6 C	
Kingfisher, Eastern Belted	3-31 Be	2-17 J	4-16 C	
Flicker, Northern (subsp.)	3-8 Be	1-5 J	1-1 C	3-12 T
Flicker, Red-shafted	1-1 G	3-29 J	1-21 Č	
Woodpecker, Western				
Red-bellied Woodnocker Red			1-5 Ca	
Woodpecker, Red- headed (subsp.)	4-27 Be	5-2 J	4-25 F	4-30 T
Woodpecker, Hairy		Ū.		
(subsp.)	1-1 G	1·16 J	1-1 C	
Woodpecker, Downy	11 0	12 T	11 0	
(subsp.)	1-1 G 5-8 Be	1-3 J 5-5 M	1-1 C 4-30 C	4-30 T
Kingbird, Eastern	5-8 Be 4-30 G	5.5 M	4-28 Ca	5-4 T
Kingbird, Arkansas Flycatcher, Northern	4/30 G	J*J 11	4·20 Ca	
Crested	5-26 G	5-7 Io	4-25 F	
Phoebe, Eastern	3-31 G	3-26 J	3-24 C	
Phoebe, Say's	3-31 G	3-31 Y	3210	
Flycatcher, Alder	5 51 0	001 1		
(subsp.)	5-12 G	5-15 I		
Flycatcher, Least	5-12 Be	5-10 Y	5-12 C	
Pewee, Eastern Wood			4-30 C	
Flycatcher, Olive-sided	4-14 Gl			
Lark, Horned (subsp.)	1-3 G	2-14 Jo	1-1 C	
Swallow, Tree	4-26 Be	-		
Swallow, Bank	5-12 G	5-18 B	4-18 C	
Swallow, Rough-				
winged			5-1 C	
Swallow, Barn	4-28 Be	5-4 Y	4-4 C	4-22 T
Swallow, Northern				
Cliff	5-26 Be			
Martin, Purple		4-2 S	4-1 C	
Jay, Blue (subsp.)	1-2 G	4-22 J	3-24 C	4-22 T
Magpie, American	1-1 G	2-24 J	11.0	1-14 T
Crow, Eastern	1/1 G	1-1 J	1-1 C	1-1 T
Jay, Pinyon Chickadee, Long-	5-8 G			
tailed (subsp.)	1-1 G	1-1 J	1-1 C	
Titmouse, Tufted	1/1 0	171 J	2-24 C	
Nuthatch, White-			2°24 U	
breasted (subsp.)		3-16 D	4-25 F	
Transfer (capebi)		* * * *	· ~ ~ *	

Nuthatch, Red-						
breasted		3-6	Io			
Creeper (subsp.)	2-24 Be	1-1		1-1	C	
Wren, Western House	4-21Be	4-15		3-15		
Mockingbird (subsp.)	4-28 G		Ma			4-15 T
Catbird	5-19 Gl	5-12		5-13		5-18 T
Thrasher, Brown	5-19 01	)*12	JO	).13	U	5.10 1
(subsp.)	4-24 Be	4-20	Io	4-17	C	4-22 T
Robin, Eastern (subsp.)	2·12 G	1-1	J	1.1	č	3-10 T
	4-28 Be			5-7	č	5/10 1
Thrush, Olive-backed	4-28 Be 4-30 Be	5-1 5-6	J,J0 J,J0	5.0	č	
Thrush, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Willow	4-30 De	<i>)</i> /0	J,J0	5-9	C	
	5-13 Be					
(subsp.) Plushind Festern		3-1	J	2-5	С	
Bluebird, Eastern	2-24 G	3-1	J	2-)	U	
Bluebird, Mountain	4-26 Be	1 1	T			
Solitaire, Townsend's		1-1	J	4-25	Б	
Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray				4-23	Г	
Kinglet, Eastern		1 1	r	1 2	0	
Golden-crowned		1-1	J	1-6	С	
Kinglet, Eastern		5 /	тт	1.00	0	
Ruby-crowned		5-6	J,Jo	4-22	C	4 17 T
Pipit, American	( D	2 2 4	14	1 00	0	4-17 T
Waxwing, Cedar	4-21 Be	3-31	м	1-22	Ç	
Shrike, Northern	1 0 D					
(subsp.)	1-8 Be					
Shrike, Migrant		-0.15	n	2 2 2	~	2 27 7
(subsp.)	3-26 G	2-17		3-22		3-27 <b>T</b>
Starling	1-1 G	1-1		1-1	C	
Vireo, Bell's	5-26 G	5-14	J,Jo	5-7	C	
Vireo, Red-eyed	5-18 G	5-14	Ŷ	4-20	С	
Vireo, Warbling					~	
(subsp.)	5-14 G	4-23	J,Jo	4-30	С	
Warbler, Black and			-			
White	4-21 G	4-16		<b>.</b> .	~	
Warbler, Tennessee	5-9 Be	5-19	КĿ	5-1	$\mathbf{C}$	
Warbler, Orange-		5.17	DI	• •		
				01		
crowned	4-21 G	4-25				÷
Warbler, Nashville	4-21 G 4-20 G					
Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern		4-25	J			
Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula						
Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler, Yellow	4-20 G	4-25 5-9	J JJo,	Y		
Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler, Yellow (subsp.)	4-20 G 5-14 Be	4-25 5-9 5-1	J JJo, Mr		С	
Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler, Yellow (subsp.) Warbler, Myrtle	4-20 G 5-14 Be 4-15 G	4-25 5-9	J JJo, Mr	Y	С	
Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler, Yellow (subsp.) Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Audubon's	4-20 G 5-14 Be 4-15 G 4-26 Be	4-25 5-9 5-1 4-20	J JJo, Mr W	Y	С	-
Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler, Yellow (subsp.) Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Audubon's Warbler, Black-poll	4-20 G 5-14 Be 4-15 G 4-26 Be 5-12 G	4-25 5-9 5-1 4-20 5-6	J JJo, Mr	Y	С	
Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler, Yellow (subsp.) Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Audubon's Warbler, Black-poll Oven-bird	4-20 G 5-14 Be 4-15 G 4-26 Be	4-25 5-9 5-1 4-20	J JJo, Mr W	Y	С	•
Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern 'Parula Warbler, Yellow (subsp.) Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Audubon's Warbler, Black-poll Oven-bird Water-Thrush,	4-20 G 5-14 Be 4-15 G 4-26 Be 5-12 G	4-25 5-9 5-1 4-20 5-6 5-9	J JJo, Mr W J,Jo Jo	Y 5-5		
Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler, Yellow (subsp.) Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Audubon's Warbler, Black-poll Oven-bird	4-20 G 5-14 Be 4-15 G 4-26 Be 5-12 G	4-25 5-9 5-1 4-20 5-6	J JJo, Mr W J,Jo Jo	Y		

# BIRD MIGRATION AND OCCURRENCE 41

Water-Thrush,			~ /	тт				
Louisiana Yellow-throat,			2-0	J,Jo				
Northern (subsp.)	4-28	Ba	5-5	М	5-8	С		
Chat (subsp.)	5-19		5-6			-		
Redstart, American	5-13				5-26			
Sparrow, English	1-1	Ğ	5.14	J,J0	1-1	č		
Bobolink	5-6	Be	5-18	В	1 1	U		
Meadowlark, Eastern	3-17		, 10	D	3-23	С		
Meadowlark, Western	1.1	Ğ	2-1	Ţ	1-1			
Blackbird, Yellow-heade	d4-7	Be	2.24		4-24	Ca		
Red-wing, Eastern								
(subsp.)	1-1	G	2-24	J	1-3	С	3-16	Т
Oriole, Orchard	5-17	Gl	5-14	Jo	5-6	$\mathbf{C}$		
Oriole, Baltimore	5-11	G	5-6	Ĵ,Jo	5-5	С	5-11	Т
Blackbird, Rusty					1-30	$\mathbf{C}$		
Blackbird, Brewer's	1-11							_
Grackle, Bronzed	3-21	G	3-13	Mr	2-20	С	3-12	Т
Cowbird, Eastern		~				~		
(subsp.)	4-28		4-20		2-20			
Cardinal, Eastern	1-13	GI	1-1	J	1-1	С		
Grosbeak, Rose-			~			C		
breasted			5-12	Jo	4-30	C		
Grosbeak, Rocky Mountain	5-8	Gl	5 15	La	4-30	C		
Grosbeak, Western	510	01	5-15	JO	4130	U		
Blue	5-21	G	5-26	То	5-15	Ca		
Bunting, Indigo	5.21	0	5-12		6-20			
Bunting, Lazuli	5-22	Gl	5-18		0 20	U		
Dickcissel	5.26		5-16		5-7	С	5-25	Т
Redpoll, Common	1-27		0 20	5		-		
Siskin, Northern Pine	1-25		1-1	I	3-9	С		
Goldfinch, Eastern				5				
(subsp.)	1-5	Gl	1-1	J	1-16	С		
Towhee, Red-eyed			5-16	Ĵ	5-7	$\mathbf{C}$		
Towhee, Arctic								
(subsp.)	4-13		4-23		4-30	С		
Bunting, Lark	5-6	G	5-2	Η				
Sparrow, Savannah								
(subsp.)	4-19	Be	4-20	Μ				
Sparrow, Western	5.0	0		<b>T</b> T	4 00	0		
Grasshopper	5-9	G Be	5-6	J,Jo	4-29	U,		
Sparrow, Leconte's	5-8	ре						
Sparrow, Vesper	3-31	Ba	4-14	Ia	3-20	C		
(subsp.) Sparrow, Lark (subsp.)		Be	4-14		4-16	-		
Junco, Slate-colored	1-25		1.1	J	1.1	č		
Junes, orace colored	1.70)	50		J	T.T	0		

Junco, Oregon				
(subsp.)	1-1 G			
Sparrow, Tree (subsp.)	1-1 Ga	2-24 J	1-6 C	
Sparrow, Chipping				
(subsp.)	4-27 Gl	4-29 J,Jo	5-5 C	
Sparrow, Clay-		0.0		
colored	4-28 G	4-29 Bk	4-2 C	
Sparrow, Field	120 0	. 25 254		
(subsp.)	4.15 GI	4-21 Jo	6.6 C	
Sparrow, Harris's	4-26 Gl		1-1 C	
	4-20 GI	1×1 J	MU	
Sparrow, White-	( 15 C	4 1 4 T		
crowned (subsp.)	4-15 G	4-14 J	5-5 C	
Sparrow, White-				
throated		4-23 J,Jo		
Sparrow, Lincoln's	4-21 Be	4-29 Jo	5-1 C	
Sparrow, Western				
Swamp	4-28 Be			
Sparrow, Song (subsp.)	1-13 Be	1-5 J	1-6 Ca	
Longspur, Lapland				
(subsp.)	1-1 G			
Longspur, Chestnut-	11 0			
collared	4-1 G			
Totals 203	164	134	136	37
Totals 203	104	137	150	57

## GENERAL NOTES

#### GENERAL NOTES

Notes on the Feeding and Nesting Habits of Swainson's Hawk in Jefferson County.—During the past several years Swainson's Hawk has been a prominent *Buteo* observed on my farm located on Little Sandy Creek in northwest Jefferson County. The particular pair observed this year arrived on April 4, 1946. From then on, there was scarcely a day that one or both were not following my own or the neighbor's tractor through the fields. The tillage and harvesting operations make life easy for these birds, as rodents are continually being driven into the open.

During the cool morning hours of April, this pair would sit on fence posts and watch. As soon as the air began to warm up they would take off and start circling the tractor at about 100 feet. After it appeared that their first hunger was satisfied they would go up higher to 200 or 300 feet and start to play, making dives of as much as 100 feet at each other.

On some days they would each select a tall tree at the edge of the field. They apparently could see anything that moved in a 6 or 7 acre area. The prey was then picked up in a long lateral glide. They seemed to have better luck by this method than by any other. They also obtained their prey by hovering and dropping straight down, wings partly spread and slanted. In cases where the food was sighted from a high point at an angle from them, they combined a steep fall (wings clapped tight against the body, head down) changing to a drop (tail forward, legs outstretched) as soon as they were within a few feet of their prey. Rarely did they miss. If they did, they would light right there and appear to contemplate their mistake.

In the latter part of June, while the oats were being shocked, one of the pair gave away the approximate location of the nest by screaming and diving straight at me. She would scream again while circling to gain altitude. Then she would close her wings, face the wind and come down. She would pull out of her dive 3 to 5 feet above my head. The air rushing through her trailing wing feathers made a loud "woosh" as she pulled up. She would always scream then and start to climb for the next run.

On July 2 the nest was discovered. It was in an ash tree about 35 feet from the ground. It consisted of a pile of sticks wedged between the crotches of several small branches. It was hollowed slightly at the top. There were three vicious, open-mouthed birds in it. Their wing feathers were fully developed but their bodies were still covered with white downy chick fuzz through which the pin feathers were showing.

Swainson's Hawks leave this vicinity in October. The birds will form groups of 6 or more and start spiralling upward, sometimes reaching the point of invisibility. Sometimes several groups can be seen at the same time. This usually occurs immediately before or with a wind change to the northwest.—WALLACE NEWELL, *Powell, Nebraska*.

Possible Sight Record of Eastern Glossy Ibis in Nebraska. -On the afternoon of May 16, 1946, Robert Bastron of Minatare and I visited his wildlife area in Scottsbluff County (T22N-R52W, Sec. 19) and the three small lakes therein. As we walked along the margin of the smallest and shallowest of these lakes we flushed a curlew-size, curlew-like, blackish bird from among cattails. Its cry, uttered as it rose from the vegetation, can best be described as "oink", the word used to imitate a pig, but bird-like and not unpleasing. After wheeling and circling for some minutes it alighted on an open mud flat, but flushed again when we moved a few yards. Once more it came down to stand on the mud flat. Mr. Bastron and I watched the bird through our glasses (6x and 8x) all of the time, seeing it from all angles in the air, and while it was on the ground, from both sides and from directly anteriorly, standing, walking, feeding (apparently), preening, in full view, in full sunlight and in cloud shadow, all at less than 100 yards. We could readily discern a brownish hue of the back and an olive sheen on the wings. Earlier in the afternoon Mr. Bastron had told me of seeing "two black, long-billed and long-legged, curlew-like birds" at the same place on May 12. As the bird flushed he immediately exclaimed that this was the same kind as he had seen before. In a letter dated October 23, 1946, Mr. Bastron reports that he again saw both of the birds and that "they hung around our place for some time."

The bird seen on May 16 was an ibis of the genus Plegadis. It was without white markings of any kind. We especially noticed and scrutinized the face because of its bare condition. It is not possible, however, to state that it was P. falcinellus falcinellus, the Eastern Glossy Ibis, at present not considered a member of the state's avifauna, rather than P. guarauna, the White-faced Glossy Ibis which is reported in the 1945 Check-list of the Birds of Nebraska by Haecker, Moser, and Swenk, as "a rather rare migrant throughout the state" that "has been known to breed in Clay County."

In The Wilson Bulletin for December 1918 (p. 113) Swenk stated that Bruner's list of Nebraska birds, published in 1896, includes the Glossy Ibis, but that the species was being dropped from the list because the specimens upon which the inclusion had been based had subsequently been found to be immature. Oberholser had informed Swenk that he and Ridgway were unable to discover any characters by which immature birds of *falcinellus* and *guarauna* could be distinguished.

To conclude the specific identity of the bird reported it would be necessary to know whether a specimen of this genus, if a bird of the previous breeding season and thereby about one year old, found in Nebraska in May has acquired mature plumage. Information is not available to permit this conclusion.—EDSON FICHTER, *Lincoln*, Nebraska.

## GENERAL NOTES

Notes on Grosbeaks and Bohemian Waxwings at Chadron, Dawes County.—We had an interesting time last winter with a flock of Western Evening Grosbeaks that came on November 13, 1945 and spent the winter. They came to the large pan of warm water which we supply each morning during cold weather. There were about 50 birds in the flock and sometimes they all seemed to come together, sometimes only a few at a time. However, we saw some almost every day. At times they would feed under the cherry and hackberry trees. On November 13, 1946, about noon, we saw 7 of the Western Evening Grosbeaks at the water again.

Early in February of 1946 a flock of 25 to 30 Bohemian Waxwings appeared at the same time that the Grosbeaks were at the water and they shared it in the most comradely manner. The Waxwings, too, stayed about a month and visited our yard about the same time each morning, 8 A. M. or soon afterward. The trees would look quite festive with the handsome Waxwings and Grosbeaks well mixed.

The Western Evening and Black-headed Grosbeaks both have nested here in town. The Rose-breasted Grosbeak has occasionally been reported.—MRS. GEORGE BLINCO, *Chadron, Nebraska*.



Western Grebes Nesting at George Lake, Grant County.— Forty-four Western Grebes were seen at George Lake, a few miles southwest of Hyannis in Grant County, on May 20, 1946. Six of the birds appeared to be on nests or hummocks at the northwest corner of the lake. On May 21 the nesting area was visited and 3 eggs were collected from one nest. At least 12 nests were seen. There were 3 eggs in each of 7 nests. Pictures were taken. Forty birds were seen on this date.—JOHN WAMPOLE, Grant, Nebraska, and EDSON FICHTER, Lincoln, Nebraska.

**Snowy Owl in Southern Nebraska.**—A Snowy Owl was brought to the Hastings Museum in February by Mr. Harold Turner of Bladen. He had found it dead in a pasture where it had been apparently killed by hunters during a coyote drive on February 18, 1946, between Holstein, Adams County, and Campbell, Franklin County.—MRS. A. H. JONES, *Hastings*, *Nebraska*.

The Parula Warbler at Hastings, Adams County.—A warbler believed to be the Northern Parula Warbler was seen at Hastings on May 9, 1946, by Mrs. A. M. Jones, Mrs. F. L. Youngblood and myself. The three of us were attracted by the song which we heard repeatedly, then found the bird in the treetops. We are sure of the identification and I believe it is the first occurrence of this bird to be reported from Hastings.—MRS. A. H. JONES, Hastings, Nebraska.

Whooping Cranes in Hall and Buffalo Counties.—About October 25, 1946 a flock of 17 Whooping Cranes was reported by a Mr. Baash who lives 6 miles southwest of Grand Island, Nebraska. They were flying fairly high, going due south and calling plainly and were seen from the above location. Mr. Baash told this to Mr. Gus Fonner, O. K. Farm, Grand Island, and Mr. Fonner told me on November 2. Mr. Fonner has lived on his farm for many years and is well acquainted with Mr. Baash and could vouch for him in that he would be able to properly identify "whoopers", having observed them over a period of many years where he has lived near the Platte River.

A Mr. Mortimer came to our museum on May 27, 1946 and told me about seeing a single Whooping Crane in with a large flock of Sandhill Cranes feeding in a field about 3 miles south and 1 1-2 miles west of Shelton, Nebraska. Several other people beside Mr. Mortimer and his wife saw this crane more than once as it remained in the same vicinity for several days.—MRS. A. M. BROOKING, Hastings, Nebraska.

Whooping Cranes in Buffalo County.—Mr. L. M. Snodgrass of the Nebraska Game, Forestation and Parks Commission reports that on November 27, 1946, he and Mr. George Markhofer, Superintendent of Stolley State Park, saw 50 Whooping Cranes in the air 4 miles south and about 1 1-2 miles west of Ravenna, Buffalo County. The birds were heard before they were sighted, were quite high and moving southward.—EDSON FICHTER, *Lincoln*, *Nebraska*.

# GENERAL NOTES

Albino Cliff Swallow and English Sparrow.—My bird records for 1942 include observations of two albinos. At sunrise on July 22 I stopped my car on the North Platte river bridge just south of Broadwater to watch several thousand Cliff Swallows which were "swarming" over the river in the vicinity of the bridge. Leaving the car, I stood on the bridge to better watch the show. Thinking that additional swallows might be under the bridge, I stamped my foot, and hundreds of birds instantly appeared from under the bridge. In the flock, and directly below where I stood, was an albino Cliff Swallow which flew westward and soon disappeared. It seemed to fly with less speed and maneuver with less precision than its normal-colored associates.

The second albino was an English Sparrow observed in a farmyard about three miles northeast of Ogallala on September 17.–-LEVI L. MOHLER, *Lincoln*, *Nebraska*.

**A** Northern Record of the Road-Runner.—On July 15, 1946 Mrs. A. H. Jones of Hastings reported seeing a Road-runner run across the road in front of her car which was traveling south between Lorenzo, Nebraska and Peetz, Colorado. This occurred in Logan County, Colorado about two miles south of the Nebraska-Colorado line.

So far as I can determine this establishes a northern sight record for the species. Bent, in Bulletin 176 gives Navarro River, Owens River and Death Valley, California; Meeker, Canyon City, Las Animas and Marshall Pass, Colorado; and probably Caldwell and Arkansas City, Kansas as northern records for this species. This Logan County, Colorado record is farther north than any point mentioned by Bent, and is in fact only two miles south of the northern boundry of the state. There is no Nebraska record for the Road-runner that I know of and this record only two miles from the Nebraska line is most interesting.—F. W. HAECKER, Kemmerer, Wyoming.

Song Sparrow Winters in Logan County.—Observations over a period of time indicate that the Song Sparrow (subsp.), probably the Dakota Song Sparrow, winters in the Stapleton area. This species can be found in any month from September to May in a wooded tract north of Stapleton where there are also many weeds containing seeds.—EARL W. GLANDON, Stapleton, Nebraska.

#### NEWS AND COMMENT

The twenty-eighth annual meeting of the Wilson Ornithological Club held in Omaha on November 28 to 30, 1946 brought to Nebraska the most important ornithological event in our state's history. The Nebraska Ornithologists' Union was host to the Wilson Ornithological Club for this occasion and the attendance was most gratifying. Wilson members from New York, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, Kentucky, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado. Calfornia, and Wyoming were there. Dr. Nikolaas Tinbergen of the University of Leyden, Netherlands, also attended.

We of Nebraska were especially pleased to see that the attendance from our state was also large. All of our N. O. U. officers were present and 8 Nebraskans took part in the program. The Members of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, all of whom received special invitations, were there in good numbers.

This event gave N. O. U. members a chance to meet and talk with many top-ranking ornithologists without journeying far. The general interest as well as the technical importance of the papers presented was high and the quality of the color motion pictures was excellent. The magnificent facilities of the Joslyn Memorial were made available to this meeting which contributed greatly to its success.

The most outstanding feature of the occasion was the display of bird paintings, drawings, and photographs, which were so excellently arranged. No one, we believe, not even the exhibitors themselves, had any idea that they were going to see such a large and beautiful collection of art of this kind.

We talked with many members who took no part in the program but who travelled long distances to be there. The most significant note of success was the spirit and camaraderie of the occasion, the meeting of like minds and kindred interests. It is this thought that will urge all of us who attended this Nebraska gathering to make the trip to Columbus, Ohio for next year's meeting of the Wilson Ornithological Club.—F. W. HAECKER.

News releases from the Jack Miner Foundation of Kingsville, Ontario, Canada, report that the famous bird bander's sons are carrying on their father's banding activities. It is of interest to note that last spring they caught and rebanded several geese which their father had banded some 20 years before at the Jack Miner Sanctuary.

The releases state that during the last five years of Jack Miner's life he pioneered the idea in Canada of trying to increase the wood duck population, which was and has been on the decrease. He built

## NEWS AND COMMENT

50 houses made of ten-inch tile and erected them on posts around the banks of his pond, with the result that last fall there were over 500 young wood ducks raised, which migrated south. This spring many returned during the spring migration flight and 30 of the 50 houses were occupied at once. In some of these tile nests as many as three broods were raised.

Important to ornithologists, whether hobbyists or professionals, is the recent re-publication of Arthur Cleveland Bent's DIVING BIRDS, the first and very rare volume in his remarkable series published by Smithsonian. According to R. T. Bond, Secretary of Dodd, Mead, and Company, publication of this volume is, in a sense, ex-perimental, and the publishers "hope that it will succeed suf-ficiently so that we may be enabled to publish the entire series." This new edition is cloth bound and contains all of the printed matter in the original edition and a collection of half-tone plates. The price is \$5.00 a copy.

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Peters, Mrs. Blanche L., 837 7th Street, Albion, Nebr	
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Illinois Natural History Survey, Library, Natural Resources Bldg, Urbana, Ill., various publications.

Illinois, Univ. of, Library, Exchange Division, Urbana, Ill., various publications.

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