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## The 2007 Nebraska Nest Report

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## THE 2007 NEBRASKA NEST REPORT

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Rains returned to most of the state this breeding season, with the notable exception of almost the entire Panhandle and the western Sandhills, where the 8-year drought continues. In the western Sandhills some early rains began to restore water levels in the potholes and lakes, but levels fell again as the summer wore on. While recovering water levels in much of the Rainwater Basin brought renewed breeding activity by at least some of the marsh and water birds, continued dry conditions in the western Sandhills curtailed breeding by many water bird species there, with reduced or no breeding by grebes and avocets noted at a number of regular breeding locations. The exception to generally poor water conditions in that area was at Crescent Lake NWR where water levels are controlled on some lakes.

## OBSERVERS

Laurel Badura (LBa), Karine Becker (KB), Katherine Becker (KtB), Bart Bly (BB), Mark Brogie (MB), Lawrence Burman (LB), K. Corman (KC), Kathy DeLara (KD), Paul Dunbar (PD), Larry Einemann (LE), Michael Forsberg (MF), Marlin French (MFr), Allisyn Gillet (AG), Joseph Gubanyi (JG), Tyler Hallman (TH), Robin Harding (RH), David Heidt (DH), Helen Hughson (HH), Dennis & Rhalene Katus (D&RK), Alice Kenitz (AK), Daniel Kim (DK), Lanny Kizer (LK), Clem Klaphake (CK), Joan Kohls (JK), Anne & Ron Kruse (A&RK), Jim Luchsinger (JL), Wayne Mollhoff (WM), Jerry Mulliken (JM), Don Paseka (DP), Janis Paseka (JP), Mary Pendley (MP), Doreen Pfof (DPf), Kevin Poague (KP), Janis Poppe (JPo), Leroy Poppe (LPo), Neil Powers (NP), Lanny Randolph (LR), Rebecca Rhodes (RR), Travis Rusch (TR), Cameron Shelton (CS), Ben Skipper (BS), Larry Snyder (LS), David Stage (DS), Martha Tacha (MT), Gordon Warrick (GW), and Jason Aleman-Zometa (JAZ).

## ABBREVIATIONS

NGPC-Nebraska Game and Parks Commission; NWR-National Wildlife Refuge; SP-State Park; SRA-State Recreation Area; WCT (Platte River Whooping Crane Maintenance Trust); WMA-Wildlife Management Area; WPA- Waterfowl Production Area.

A total of 1375 breeding records of 122 species was reviewed for this report. A number of these records were gleaned from Bird Atlas Project reports. No doubt other notable records remain to be found in other Atlas Project reports that have not yet been reviewed.

Species for which breeding activity was reported but that are not included in the species accounts: Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Gadwall, Mallard, Blue-winged

Teal, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Ruddy Duck, Wild Turkey, Pied-billed Grebe, Red-tailed Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, American Coot, Killdeer, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Great Horned Owl, Common Nighthawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Western Kingbird, Eastern Kingbird, Red-eyed Vireo, American Crow, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Red-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Mountain Bluebird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Yellow Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Blue Grosbeak, Red-winged Blackbird, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Common Grackle, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, Bullock's Oriole, and House Sparrow.

**Redhead:** A nest found at Harvard WPA, Clay Co., held 16 eggs on 2 June 2007 (PD). When checked on 5 June 2007, 18 eggs were present (WM).

**Common Merganser:** In only the second reported breeding in the state, 2 broods of flightless young were found on 2 July 2007 in the Niobrara River at the Norden Bridge in Brown/Keya Paha Co. on the Nature Conservancy's Niobrara Valley Preserve. One brood consisted of 4 half-grown untended young; the other brood was of 8 small downy young attended by an adult female (JL, DH).

**Gray Partridge:** A hen with 6 half-grown chicks was seen feeding on the highway shoulder 0.5 mi. east of Royal, Antelope Co., on 9 July 2007 (WM).

**Sharp-tailed Grouse:** A nest with 8 eggs was found on 11 May 2007 at Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co., (MFr).

**Eared Grebe:** Although not found breeding at several of the usual sites in Sheridan Co., presumably due to low water levels, nest-building was noted at Harvard WPA, Clay Co., on 28 May 2007 (PD). A nest with 3 eggs was found at Funk WMA, 2 July 2007 (DPf). These low numbers are in stark contrast to the usual colonies that number in the dozens to hundreds in the western Sandhills when water levels are adequate.

**Double-crested Cormorant:** Birds occupied 11 nests in one dead tree and 5 nests in another snag in the heronry on Gimlet Lake near Crescent Lake NWR headquarters, Garden Co., on 8 May 2007. At Smith Lake on the same refuge, birds moved into goose nest tubs after the Canada Geese hatched and left the tubs. Nests held 1, 1, 2, and 4 eggs on 8 May 2007; and 2, 4, and 4 young on 19 June 2007 (WM).

**American Bittern:** A nest with 6 eggs was reported at Harvard WPA, Clay Co., on 28 May 2007 (PD).

**Great Blue Heron:** Herons occupied 6 nests in the heronry on Gimlet Lake near Crescent Lake NWR headquarters, Garden Co., on 8 May 2007. Four isolated nests with 3, 3, 3, and 3 nearly-grown young were found in dense cattails scattered among the nests of a mixed colony of Cattle Egret, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and White-faced Ibis in Smith Lake on the same refuge on 19 June 2007 (WM).

**Snowy Egret:** A photo was submitted of an unfledged flightless young bird that was photographed near its nest on Smith Lake, Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co. in June 1989. A check of the refuge's annual report for that year also shows a copy of the picture, along with a comment that it was the first nesting recorded for that species on the refuge (GW, NP). This appears to be the most recent report of nesting and may be the only extant documented evidence. The only other recent record of breeding was of a pair of birds seen repeatedly during the early summer of 1985 at the WCT property 5 mi. S of Alda, Hall Co. On 26 June 1985 that pair was seen with a young bird (Bennett 1986, Gary Lingle pers. com., Mollhoff 2001).

**Cattle Egret:** A nest with 3 small young, less than a week old, was found on 19 June 2007 in the mixed-species colony on Smith Lake, Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co., mentioned above (WM).

**Green Heron:** The colony found last year at Two Rivers SRA, Venice, Douglas Co., had nests with 1, 4, 4, 4, and 5 eggs on 14 May 2007 (WM).

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** On 8 May 2007 a check of a small area of the mixed colony on Smith Lake, Crescent Lake NWR found nests with 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 3, 4, and 4 eggs. A revisit on 19 June revealed nests (not the same nests) with 1 & 2 eggs, and 1, 2, 2, and 3 young (WM).

A check of a portion of a mixed colony (that included White-faced Ibis) on Beem Lake, on Avocet WMA, just east of Hyannis, Grant Co., on 23 June 2007 found 6 nests in the dense stands of cattails. Two nests held eggs, three nests held eggs and just-hatched young, and one nest held young birds. Clutch sizes ranged from two to four. The water level at Beem Lake was nearly a half meter higher than at the same date last year, but still lower than more 'normal' levels, due to the extended drought (WM).

**White-faced Ibis:** A colony located in a bulrush stand at Harvard WPA, Clay Co., had nests with 1, 1, 1, 1, 2, and 2 eggs on 2 June 2007, with more nests under construction (PD). When visited on 5 June, nests held 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3, and 4 eggs (WM). The colony was later abandoned, apparently due to disturbance by cattle (PD).

Birds occupying part of the mixed-species colony in dense cattails at Smith Lake, Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co., on 19 June 2007 had nests with 1, 2, 3, 3, 4, and 4 eggs (WM).

A colony in dense cattails on Beem Lake, Avocet WMA, east of Hyannis, Grant Co., had nests with 1, 3, 3, 3, 4, 4, and 4 eggs on 23 June 2007. Two other nests held both eggs and just-hatched young, and two more nests held 3 and 4 young (WM).

**Turkey Vulture:** A nest with 2 eggs was found in an unused barn on an occupied farmstead near Scribner, Dodge Co., on 21 May 2007. Two small young were noted on 15 June and were still in the nest 17 August. The last young fledged on 24 August (JPo,LPo).

A nest northwest of Litchfield, Sherman Co., also in an unused barn, held two well-grown young when photographed on 5 July 2007. The young fledged on 25 August (JK).

**Bald Eagle:** Occupied nests were noted ~15 mi. north of Taylor, Loup Co., on 27 February 2007 (CH); 1.5 mi. west of Greenwood, Lancaster Co., on 27 February 2007 (WM); 1 mi. east, 1 mi. south of Clarks, Merrick Co., on 22 March 2007 (WM); on Hackberry Lake, Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co., on 27 March 2007 (WM); 8 mi. southwest of Wood River, Hall Co., on 28 March 2007, (WM); and 3 mi. southwest of Odessa, Buffalo Co., on 28 March 2007 (WM).

**Northern Harrier:** A nest with 6 eggs was found in dry cattails at Walgren Lake SRA near Hay Springs, Sheridan Co., on 21 May 2007 (WM).

**Cooper's Hawk:** Nest-building was underway in a roadside shelterbelt at Cornhusker Farm WMA west of Grand Island, Hall Co., on 7 May 2007 (MT). The nest held 2 eggs on 12 May but was abandoned by 18 May (WM).

A nest at Hall County Park south of Grand Island held 4 eggs on 18 May 2007 (MT,WM).

A nest in Wilderness Park in southwest Lincoln, Lancaster Co., held 5 eggs on 24 May 2007 (LE,WM).

**Swainson's Hawk:** After a lack of observations last summer that was commented on by several observers, it was heartening to find 7 nests with eggs under incubation on a single day (21 May 2007) in Sheridan Co. Three of the nests were along a 1.5 mile stretch of road that also included a successful Great Horned Owl nest between two of the hawk nests, a density likely found because those were the only trees seen for a number of miles. The nests held 1, 1, 3, 3, 3, and 3 eggs, with the seventh nest proving inaccessible due to the height and a strong wind. Another nest found that day near Ashby, Grant Co., held a surprising clutch of 4 eggs.

A nest being incubated in Garden Co. 16 mi. south of Antioch held 2 eggs on 19 June 2007 (WM).

**Golden Eagle:** A long-established aerie near the Niobrara River southwest of Harrison, Sioux Co., held 2 eggs on 25 March 2007. Two young were noted by 10 May and were still in the nest on 21 June. While the young were under observation on 9 and 21 June, snakes were the only prey item brought to the nest to feed them. When checking the vacated nest on 30 September, prey item remains found below the nest included: jackrabbit (*Lepus* sp.), porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*), a small canid - probably a swift fox (*Vulpes velox*) or a young coyote (*Canis latrans*), and prairie rattlesnake (*Crotalus viridis*) (MF,WM).

**Prairie Falcon:** One young falcon was testing its flight skills near the home butte while two smaller siblings still seemed confined to the nest ledge near the Niobrara River SW of Harrison, Sioux Co., on 20 June 2007 (MF,WM).

**Sandhill Crane:** A pair with 2 chicks was noted at Facus Springs WMA 8 mi. west of Bridgeport, Morrill Co., in early May 2007. One of the young appeared sick on 26 July and was found dead of unknown causes on 28 July. The other chick was first seen in flight on 1 August (D&RK, fide KD).

Other intriguing reports were received of a bird 1 mi. west of Burwell, Garfield Co., on 20 May 2007, and 12 mi. NW of Ericson, also in Garfield Co., on 5 June 2007. Both reports were of single birds seen in wet meadow areas near extensive areas of brushy riverine swamp (MU,LK). Given the proven ability of the

birds to remain undetected during the breeding season and that both sightings were in suitable habitat, it would seem further investigation should be made whenever the species is found in suitable habitat during the April - August breeding season.

**Virginia Rail:** A nest with 7 eggs was found in a wet meadow study plot at the WCT 5 mi. S of Alda, Hall Co., on 23 May 2007 (TH).

**Piping Plover:** Three nests, with 2, 3, and 3 eggs, were found on an artificial island in Goose Lake, Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co., on 8 June 2007. Small young, 2-3 days old, were found in the area on 22 June (MFr). This is a first breeding record for the Refuge and appears to be the first reported nesting in the Sandhills since a nest with eggs was found on the Middle Loup River in Blaine Co. on 28 May 1987 during the first atlas project (Mollhoff 2001).

**Black-necked Stilt:** Five nests were reported at Perrin Lake, Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co. A nest on 23 May 2007 held 4 eggs; by 8 June it held 1 egg plus 3 young. A second nest in the colony held 4 eggs on 23 May and 8 June. A third nest held 3 eggs on 1 & 8 June. A fourth nest held a single egg on 3 & 8 June. A fifth nest held 3 eggs on 8 June (MFr).

A pair of agitated adults was found by a nest with 2 eggs at Funk WPA, Phelps Co., on 5 June 2007 (WM). Another (or possibly the same) nest with 2 eggs was reported there on 7 July 2007, with young being noted on 12 July (DPf).

**American Avocet:** A colony on an artificial island in Goose Lake, Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co., had 20 nests, each with 1-4 eggs, when first checked on 27 May 2007. On 8 June the colony contained 26 nests. On 15 June the colony comprised 33 nests but tracking individual nests became impossible because the birds were removing some of the marker flags (MFr).

A growing colony on Perrin Lake on the same refuge had 18 nests with 1-4 eggs each when visited on 23 May 2007 and grew to 26 nests by 8 June (MFr).

**Willet:** Four nests with eggs were found at Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co. A nest with 4 eggs was found on 18 May 2007; one with 4 eggs was found on 21 May; one with 3 eggs was found on 24 May; and another with 4 eggs was found on 7 June (MFr).

**Upland Sandpiper:** Sixteen nests with eggs were found at Crescent Lake NWR during the period 17 May - 5 June 2007. Eggs were noted in the nests 17 May through 13 June. Young were noted by 27 May (MFr).

Nests were found on 25 May, 5 June, and 29 June 2007 on the WCT 5 mi. S of Alda, Hall Co. The three nests held 3, 4, and 3 eggs, respectively. One of the nests also held 2 Brown-headed Cowbird eggs (TH, KB, DK).

**Long-billed Curlew:** A nest with 4 eggs was found at Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co., on 24 May 2007. The 4 eggs were still under incubation when visited on 4 June (MFr).

**Wilson's Snipe:** A nest with 4 eggs was found at Audubon's Spring Creek Prairie near Denton, Lancaster Co., on 1 May 2007 (KP).

**Wilson's Phalarope:** Two nests, each with 4 eggs, were found at Harvard WPA, 3 mi W of Harvard, Clay Co. on 14 and 28 May 2007 (PB).

Following an experimental regimen whereby cattle were removed after two weeks of intensive grazing, dense new growth that mimicked grassland response to a burn attracted 'swarms' of phalaropes to breed in the lush growth at Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co. Monitoring of two such wet meadow study areas found a total of 48 nests with eggs during the period 11 May through 8 June, with 33 nests holding the usual full clutch of 4 eggs. An exception was one nest with 7 eggs, very likely the result of 'dumping.' Young were noted by 30 May (MFr).

**Black Tern:** Widely-dispersed nests on Beem Lake, Avocet WMA, just east of Hyannis, Grant Co., held 1, 2, 3, 3, 3, and 3 eggs on 23 June 2007. In contrast with the more usual colonial grouping, the nests were scattered among stands of cattails, with each nest separated by 50-100 meters from the next closest nest (WM).

A flightless young bird was found at Funk WPA, Funk, Phelps Co., on 17 July 2007 (DPf).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove:** Even though the species is now found in towns statewide and increasingly reported in rural areas, few detailed reports of nesting have been received. A nest with 2 eggs was found in the top of a ponderosa pine in the exposed northwest corner of a cemetery in Ashland, Saunders Co., on 21 March 2007. On 29 March a single young, less than a week old, was in the nest, but was found dead of exposure on 3 April following several days of strong northwest winds and sub-freezing temperatures (WM).

A nest found at a rural building site at Sacramento-Wilcox WMA on 4 June 2007 held 2 eggs (WM).

**Barn Owl:** Two nest boxes placed on windmills at Crescent Lake NWR held 1 and 6 eggs on 8 May 2007; eggs in both were being incubated when checked (WM).

A nest under a bridge north of Big Springs, Deuel Co., held 3 eggs on 26 May 2007. On 27 June the nest held 7 eggs plus 3 young birds that were just a few days old. Ten young were present on 18 July. Seven young were present on 8 August, with 6 young still remaining on 12 August (WM).

**Eastern Screech-Owl:** A nest cavity in residential Ashland, Saunders Co., still empty on 29 March 2007, held the full clutch of 5 eggs on 16 April, tended by a protective parent. On 24 April the cavity held a single egg, 1 still-wet hatchling, and 3 other small young (plus, of course, the still-irate parent). Prey items noted in and below the nest included American Robin (young), Common Grackle (young), Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, and House Finch. A young bird was noted outside the nest cavity at dawn on 23 May, being mobbed by a mixed flock of Blue Jays, American Robins, Northern Cardinals and Common Grackles (WM).

**Barred Owl:** A pair using a nest box built for them in Elkhorn, Douglas Co., had already laid their two eggs when the box was checked on 12 March 2007. Two small young were noted on 14 April (DS).

**Long-eared Owl:** A nest at Smith Lake WMA south of Rushville, Sheridan Co., held 4 eggs on 12 April 2007. On 9 May it held 2 eggs, 3 small young, and the remains of 2 kangaroo rats. Five young were present on 21 May (WM).

**Common Poorwill:** A brooding adult and 2 small downy young were found in the limber pines area 10 mi. SW of Bushnell, Kimball Co., on 29 June 2007 (WM).

**Chimney Swift:** A nest with 5 eggs was photographed in the crumbling chimney of a long-abandoned farmhouse 15 mi. S of Maxwell, Lincoln Co., 6 June 2007 (WM).

**Western Wood-Pewee:** A nest still under construction on 9 June 2007 at the Gilbert-Baker WMA campground 5 mi. NW of Harrison, Sioux Co., held 3 eggs on 21 June.

A nest in the limber pines 10 mi. SW of Bushnell, Kimball Co. held 3 eggs on 28 June (WM).

**Cordilleran Flycatcher:** A nest in a rotted-out cavity in a pine snag at Gilbert-Baker WMA 5 mi. NW of Harrison, Sioux Co., first discovered in 2005, was being refurbished by a pair on 9 June 2007. On 21 June a bird was incubating 4 eggs (WM).

**Say's Phoebe:** A nest with 3 eggs was found in a hole in the side of a butte southwest of Harrison, Sioux Co., on 10 May 2007. A similar nest nearby that held 2 eggs (and 2 Brown-headed Cowbird eggs) on 20 June might have been a second clutch. A nest in a concrete culvert east of Harrison held 5 eggs on 9 June.

A nest in the ceiling light fixture in the living room of a long-abandoned farmhouse 15 mi. S of Maxwell, Lincoln Co., held 4 eggs and a single just-hatched young on 6 June.

A nest beneath a rural bridge northwest of Kimball, Kimball Co., on 29 June 2007 held a second clutch of 2 eggs. Five recently-fledged young of the first clutch still remained nearby.

A similar nest 9 mi. S of Culbertson, Hitchcock Co., with 3-4 young on 16 July 2007 was probably also a second clutch (WM).

**Ash-throated Flycatcher:** In only the second record of the species reported in Nebraska, a territorial bird found in the limber pines area 10 mi. SW of Bushnell, Kimball Co., on 28 June 2007 led to the first report of breeding in the Panhandle area. A bird was still on territory on 10 July and one of the pair repeatedly fed begging fledged young nearby on 18 July. Also on 18 July, an empty nest consistent with the species was found in the territory occupied by the pair (WM, MB, JG).

**Cassin's Kingbird:** On 29 June 2007, three nests with 2, 3, and 3 young were found in the limber pines area 10 mi. SW of Bushnell, Kimball Co. Also in Kimball Co., a nest with 4 eggs was found the same day 15 mi. NW of Bushnell in ponderosa pine woodland (WM).

**Loggerhead Shrike:** A nest with 5 young less than a week old was found at Walgren Lake SRA southeast of Hay Springs, Sheridan Co., on 31 May 2007.

A nest with 5 young was found 4 mi. SW of Macon, Franklin Co., on 4 June.

On 28 June a nest with 6 well-feathered young was found in the limber pines area 10 mi. southwest of Bushnell, Kimball Co. A mile away was an empty nest with 3 recently-fledged, stub-tailed young still hanging around nearby (WM).



**Bell's Vireo:** A nest with 3 eggs was found on 26 May 2007, 15 mi. N of Johnstown, Brown Co. (GW).

Another nest with a single egg was found on 1 June 2007, 5 mi. S of Norden, Keya Paha Co. (GW).

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** One of the few nests ever reported in detail in Nebraska was found on 13 May 2007 in Wilderness Park on the SW edge of Lincoln, Lancaster Co. A pair was at the nest and it appeared to be still under construction (LE). On 24 May the pair was present and giving vocal notice of their irritation at being disturbed by the two observers holding a mirror over the 36'-high nest to view the 4 eggs (LE,WM).

An adult was noted carrying food 5 mi. S, 2 mi. E of Vesta, Johnson Co., on 3 July 2007 (CK).

**Blue Jay:** Construction was already underway on the earliest nesting activity ever reported in Nebraska when found on 29 March 2007 in Ashland, Saunders Co. Construction was interrupted by days of sub-freezing temperatures and high winds, but by 16 April the nest held a single egg. On 19 April the full clutch of 4 eggs was present (WM).

**Black-billed Magpie:** With the severe decline in numbers in recent years, it was heartening to find a nest with 2 eggs and 5 tiny young two mi. N of Big Springs, Deuel Co., on 26 May 2007 (WM).

A nest discovered in a thicket at the WCT 5 mi. S of Alda, Hall Co., held 5 eggs when found on 26 May 2007. On 30 May the nest held 3 eggs and 1 young bird (DK).

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** A nest found in a dry road cut 12 mi. S of Maxwell, Lincoln Co., held 5 eggs on 6 June 2007 (WM).

**Bank Swallow:** A colony in a dry blowout bank 6 mi. SW of Harrison, Sioux Co., had nests with 2, 4, and 5 eggs on 8 June 2007. When revisited on 20 June, nests held 3, 3, 4, 4, and 5 eggs, while a sixth nest had at least 3 small young (WM).

**Pygmy Nuthatch:** Incubation was apparently not yet underway on a nest near the campground at Gilbert-Baker WMA 5 mi. NW of Harrison, Sioux Co., when found on 11 May 2007, even though it already held 7 eggs (WM). Clutch sizes previously reported in the Pine Ridge area have been of 7-10 eggs (Mollhoff 1997, 1999).

**Marsh Wren:** A nest in a phragmites stand at Ballards Marsh WMA, 19 mi. S of Valentine, Cherry Co., held 5 eggs on 10 June 2007 (WM).

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** A nest in a ponderosa pine in Rocky Hollow, 15 mi. NE of Kimball, Kimball Co., held 3 tiny young on 29 June 2007 (WM).

**Cedar Waxwing:** Of three nests under construction when found on 9 June 2007 at Gilbert-Baker WMA 5 mi. NW of Harrison, Sioux Co., ultimately only one was completed. It held 3 eggs and a newly-hatched chick on 21 June (WM).

**Ovenbird:** A nest with 5 young was found 9 mi. N of Bassett, Rock Co., on 1 June 2007 (GW).

**Common Yellowthroat:** A nest found at the WCT 5 mi. S of Alda, Hall Co. on 31 May 2007 contained 5 eggs. A second nest found there on 25 June also held 5 eggs (JAZ, BS).

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** Two nests were found at Bordeaux Creek WMA, 5 mi. E of Chadron, Dawes Co., on 22 June 2007. One nest held 4 eggs, while the other held 3 eggs plus 2 just-hatched young (WM).

**Field Sparrow:** Two nests found on 24 and 29 May 2007 at the WCT 5 mi. S of Alda, Hall Co., held 5 and 3 eggs respectively (DK).

**Vesper Sparrow:** A nest with 5 eggs was found 6 mi. NW of Ames, Dodge Co., on 15 May 2007. On 22 May five young were present. The nest was empty when checked on 31 May (DP, JP).

A nest found 9 mi. SW of Harrison, Sioux Co., held 4 eggs on 20 June 2007 (WM).

A nest just north of Cedar Bluffs, Saunders Co., held 4 young when discovered on 11 July 2007. The young had fledged and the nest was empty when revisited on 16 July (JM).

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** Dozens of nests were again found by researchers at the WCT 5 mi. S of Alda, Hall Co. Nests with eggs were found from 21 May through 20 August 2007 (KB, KtB, KC, AG, TH, DK, MP, RR, TR, BS, JAZ).

**Henslow's Sparrow:** A nest containing a single egg was found at the WCT 5 mi. S of Alda, Hall Co., on 20 May 2007. A second nest with 4 eggs was found there on 7 June (BS).

**Swamp Sparrow:** A nest with 4 eggs was found at the WCT 5 mi. S of Alda, Hall Co., on 29 May 2007 (DK).

**McCown's Longspur:** A focused nest search on 30 May 2007 turned up 5 nests in a single square mile of Kimball Co. rangeland, 13 mi. S, 3 mi. W of Kimball. The nests contained 1, 2, 3, 3, and 4 young. Another nest with 4 young was found on the same date 2 mi. E of Kimball. On 4 June another Kimball Co. nest with 4 young was found 2 mi. N, 3 mi. W of Bushnell (LS,CS).

**Chestnut-collared Longspur:** A nest with 3 eggs was found in shortgrass prairie in Sioux Co. 16 mi. N of Scottsbluff, on 4 June 2007 (HH).

Two nests, with 1 and 4 young, were found on 30 June 2007 in one of the few sections of native prairie still remaining in the area during the above-mentioned longspur nest search (LS,CS).

**Dickcissel:** A nest with 4 young was reported 27 June 2007 at the Audubon's Spring Creek Prairie, 2 mi. S of Denton, Lancaster Co., (KP).

Dozens of nests were again found by researchers at the WCT 5 mi. S of

Alda, Hall Co. Nests with eggs were found from 19 May through 30 July 2007 (TH, MP, TR, BS, JAZ).

**Bobolink:** Dozens of nests were found by researchers at the WCT 5 mi. S of Alda, Hall Co. Nests with eggs were reported from 21 May through 12 July 2007 (KB, AG, TH, DK, RR, TR, JAZ).

**Western Meadowlark:** Dozens of nests were found by researchers at the WCT 5 mi. S of Alda, Hall Co. Nests with eggs were reported from 11 May through 30 July 2007 (KB, KtB, KC, AG, TH, DK, MP, RR, TR, BS, JAZ).

**Brewer's Blackbird:** Only a single nest with one egg was found at a long-established colony 12 mi. E of Harrison, Sioux Co. when visited early in the season on 11 May 2007.

Most young had already fledged at a colony established in cavities in badland outcrops 10 mi. SW of Harrison, Sioux Co., on 20 June 2007. One nest held at least 3 half-grown young, while 6 more nests were already abandoned by the fledged young (WM).

**Great-tailed Grackle:** Nest-building was just getting underway at the growing colony 4 mi. SW of Waverly, Lancaster Co., on 13 April 2007, with five nests well underway on 20 April. On 25 April, six nests with 1, 1, 1, 2, 3, and 4 eggs were noted. Three nests were still under construction on 4 May, while thirteen more nests with 1, 2, 2, 3, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 5, 5, and 5 eggs were found, and another nest held 2 eggs plus one just-hatched young (WM).

A nest was under construction at Harvard WPA, 3 mi. west of Harvard, Clay Co., on 28 May 2007 (PD).

A nest with 1 egg was found at Walgren Lake SRA, southeast of Hay Springs, Sheridan Co., on 31 May 2007 (WM).

**Brown-headed Cowbird:** Nests parasitized by cowbirds included Upland Sandpiper, Say's Phoebe, Brown Thrasher, Field Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Dickcissel, Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, and Western Meadowlark. Nests with cowbird eggs were noted from 11 May through 30 July 2007.

**House Finch:** In an early nesting attempt during sub-freezing weather on 1 April 2007, a pair repeatedly added material to a site atop a porch light in Ashland, Saunders Co., only to have their work blown away by the wind. Despite persistent attempts, the pair gave up after several days and refocused their efforts in some blue spruce across the street.

While one nest held 4 eggs when found, five more nests were still under construction at Mahoney SP southeast of Ashland, Cass Co., on 26 April 2007 (WM).

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