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Summer Field Report, June-July 2009

W. Ross Silcock
silcock@rosssilcock.com

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SUMMER FIELD REPORT, June-July 2009

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

INTRODUCTION

This was an interesting summer, with range expansions of multiple species continuing in all directions, but predominantly northward. Exceptions to the northward trend were Trumpeter Swan, which bred south of its usual western Sandhills range, and Sedge Wren, which may be occurring in June in northeast Nebraska in greater numbers. Moving eastward are Western Wood-Pewee, which now overlaps with westward-moving Eastern Wood-Pewee in Lincoln Co, Cordilleran Flycatcher in the Pine Ridge, and Lesser Goldfinch in the west. Song Sparrow is also expanding south and west. No fewer than 16 species are moving north and/or northwestward. Several species were seen more westerly including Broad-winged Hawk, nesting again in North Platte, Yellow-throated Vireo in the Niobrara River Valley, and Carolina Wren across a broad front. Species expanding in a northward direction include Acadian and Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, Summer Tanager in the east, Ash-throated Flycatcher in the west, and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Northern Mockingbird statewide. Species moving north primarily in the Missouri River Valley include Fish Crow, Prothonotary Warbler, and Louisiana Waterthrush. Red-shouldered Hawk bred at its new location in Lancaster Co.

Black-billed Cuckoos were found in greater numbers than in recent years. Puzzling is the increase in fall records of White-rumped Sandpipers in recent years; have they started to migrate inland in fall? For rarity buffs, White-tailed Kite, Inca Dove, and Fish Crow provided some hot weather excitement.

Finally, interesting data regarding movement of Long-billed Curlews Bailey and Sandy in the Sandhills and far beyond was obtained using transmitters; check the fascinating website at www.BirdsNebraska.org.

ABBREVIATIONS

ADF: Arbor Day Farm, Nebraska City
BBS: Breeding Bird Survey
BOL: Branched Oak L., Lancaster Co
Cem: cemetery
CLNWR: Crescent L NWR, Garden Co
FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co
HCR: Harlan Co Res, Harlan Co
ICSP: Indian Cave SP, Nemaha/Richardson Cos
LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co
LO: L Ogallala, Keith Co
m.ob.: many observers
NC: Nature Center
NLB: North Lake Basin WMA, Seward Co
PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co

Res: Reservoir
RV: River Valley
RWB: Rainwater Basin, southcentral and southeast Nebraska
SCP: (Audubon) Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co
SHP: State Historical Park
SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)
SP: State Park
SRA: State Recreation Area
WMA: (State) Wildlife Management Area
WPA: (Federal) Waterfowl Production Area
WSR: Wind Springs Ranch, Sioux Co

GAZETTEER

Chadron SP: Dawes Co
Harvard Marsh WPA: Clay Co
Sandhills: large sandhill prairie region n.-cen. Nebraska

OBSERVERS

AK: Alice Kenitz, Gering
ARy: Al Reyer, Bellevue
B&DW: Bruce and Donna Walgren, Casper, WY
BW: Ben Wheeler, Ord
CC: Courtney Corker, Lincoln
CG: Cory Gregory, Ames, IA
CL: Chuck Lesiak, Lincoln
CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, Bellevue
CT: Chris Thody, Martell
D&JP: Don & Jan Paseka, Ames
DH: Dave Heidt, Norfolk
DJ: Dee Jordan, Danbury
DL: Dan Leger, Lincoln
G&WH: Glen & Wanda Hoge, Alma
HKH: Helen Hughson, Mitchell
JC: John Carlini, Lincoln
JED: James E. Ducey, Lincoln
JG: Joe Gubanyi, Seward
JGa: John Garrett, Pasadena, CA
JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Lincoln
JJ: Jan Johnson, Wakefield
JLL: Jeanine L. Lackey, Ceresco
JR: Justin Rink, Omaha
JRi: Juanita Rice, Fairmont
JRo: Jim Roworth, Stockton, CA
JT: Jerry Toll, Omaha
JW: Jake Walker, Lincoln
KC: Ken Carnes, Lincoln

KD: Kathy DeLara, Mitchell
KN: Kay Niyo, Denver, CO
KP: Kevin Poague, Lincoln
KS: Kent Skaggs, Kearney
L&BP: Loren and Babs Padelford, Bellevue
LB: Laurel Badura, Kearney
LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln
LF: Larry Falk, Nebraska City
LR: Lanny Randolph, Minden
MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton
MBB: Mary Bomberger Brown, Lincoln
ME: Mike Ellis, Omaha
MM: Marty Mathieson, Shelton;
MR: Mike Resch, Pepperell, PA
MS: Matt Stephenson, Ames, IA
MSa: Melissa Santiago, Lincoln
MSt: Matt Steffl, Kearney
MUs: Moni Usasz, Lincoln
PD: Paul Dunbar, Hastings
PR: Paul Roisen, Sioux City
PS: Phil Swanson, Omaha
RE: Rick Eades, Lincoln
RH: Robin Harding, Minden
RM: Rich Moran, South Sioux City
SL: Scott Luedtke, Lincoln
SQ: Susan Quinn, Nebraska City
SS: Shari Schwartz, Lincoln
TEL: Tom E. Labedz, Lincoln
TH: Tim Hajda, Broken Bow
TJW: T.J. Walker, Brady
TS: Tim Smith, Benkelman
WF: William Flack, Kearney
WM: Wayne Mollhoff, Ashland
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Greater White-fronted Goose: None were reported; usually a few summer.

Snow Goose: The usual summer stragglers were reported, with, as usual, the best tally from the e. RWB, 50 on 20 Jun (JGJ), but the 13 at HCR during the period was unusual (G&WH).

Canada Goose: Routine reports.

Trumpeter Swan: A breeding range expansion southward was noted at a rather small pond in Buffalo Co; a pair of adults with two flightless young were photographed there 29 Jul (Evan Shike, fide MSt). Also unexpected were 3 on the lower Platte River between Leshara and Two Rivers SRA, Douglas Co 6 Jun (JGJ, JLL).

Wood Duck: Routine reports.

Gadwall: Routine reports.

American Wigeon: One in Antelope Co 2 Jul (MB) was east of the usual breeding range.

Mallard: Routine reports.

Blue-winged Teal: Routine reports.

Cinnamon Teal: One in Seward Co 20 Jun (JG) was easterly.

Northern Shoveler: Routine reports.

Northern Pintail: Routine reports.

Green-winged Teal: Although summer sightings are not unusual, especially in late Jul and Aug, breeding is inconsistent and occurs mostly in the w. Sandhills. Jun sightings, however are suggestive of breeding; single males, perhaps mated with incubating hens, were in Hamilton Co 11 Jun and Garfield Co 13 Jun (DH).

Canvasback: Routine reports.

Redhead: Routine reports.

Ring-necked Duck: Routine reports.

Lesser Scaup: Somewhat similar in summer distribution to Green-winged Teal, this species occurs in small numbers in mid-summer, but breeding is rarely reported. Southerly were 2 at Alma SL 13 Jun (G&WH); a male was in Brown Co 14 Jun (DH), 2 males and 2 females were in Cherry Co 30 Jun (DH), and a single was in Antelope Co 9 Jun-2 Jul (MB).

Hooded Merganser: Routine reports.

Common Merganser: The usual small summering group at LO comprised 6 birds 25 Jul (TJW). HCR may be another summer site; a female 4 and 13 Jun and a male 23 Jul (G&WH) were suggestive, along with sightings there of 1-2 birds in summers back to 1998 (G&WH). One was at South Sioux City 22 Jun (RM).

Ruddy Duck: This species is not known to breed at HCR, and so 7 there 13 Jun (G&WH) were rather late; none were seen from then until a male arrived there 30 Jul (G&WH), likely a molt migrant.

Gray Partridge: Locally-distributed and hard to find in its ne. Nebraska range, 1-2 in Knox Co through the period were the observer's first there in 3 years (MB); another was in n. Antelope Co 21 Jul (MB).

Ring-necked Pheasant: Routine reports.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Survey routes in n.-cen. Dawson Co located 2 leks 2006-2008 (TJW); these are the southernmost known in sw. Nebraska.

Greater Prairie-Chicken: Surveys in 2006-2008 show leks in the lower two rows of counties, e. to Red Willow and Frontier Cos, as well as Perkins, Lincoln, and Dawson Cos (TJW); south of the Platte River and east of these counties in s.-cen. Nebraska distribution is limited by available habitat, but in se. Nebraska the population appears to be doing well. In the ne., 1-3 were on lek at the e. edge of the summer range in Platte Co 4 and 11 Jun (DH).

Wild Turkey: Routine reports.

Northern Bobwhite: Mild winters have helped populations (TJW) in n. and w.-cen. areas; reports included Lincoln Co (TJW), Loup Co 25 Jun (MB), 3 birds in Blaine Co 10 Jul (RE), singles at Valentine NWR, Cherry Co 9 and 26 Jul (MS), and a pair in McPherson Co 5 Jul (LR, RH).

Common Loon: Late dates in the east have been at the end of May, and so unprecedented were a single immature at Cunningham L, Douglas Co (JT), 2 immatures at Capitol Beach L, Lancaster Co (LE), and 2 more immatures at Whitehead Marsh, Lancaster Co (LE); surprisingly, these birds all occurred 12

- Jun. Two un-aged birds were in Rock Co 6 Jul (RE). Late migrants are usually immatures, but previously have been found only in the west.
- Pied-billed Grebe:** Routine reports.
- Eared Grebe:** Southerly stragglers were 3 in Phelps Co 12 Jun (JGJ) and one at Alma SL 13 Jun (G&WH).
- Western Grebe:** Easterly, where rare, and rather late in spring were singles at BOL 10 Jun (LE) and in Phelps Co 12 Jun (JGJ).
- Clark's Grebe:** The only reports were of 1-2 at LM 30-31 Jul (JJ) and one at Swanson Res, Hitchcock Co, 11 Jun (LF).
- American White Pelican:** A few non-breeders summer, usually in the north and west, and so the 100+ as late as 21 Jun at HCR and the 30 through the period there (G&WH) and the 6 on the lower Platte River in Saunders and Douglas Cos 25 Jun (JGJ) were unusual. A few others were scattered about the state mid-Jun through mid-Jul (LE, JGJ, MB, RE).
- Double-crested Cormorant:** Around 100 were in trees at LO 14 Jun where nesting has occurred recently, but no nests were visible (WRS, KN). Similarly, 75 were at the w. end of HCR, but no breeding activity was noted (G&WH).
- American Bittern:** Routine reports.
- Least Bittern:** This species continues to be reported in increasing numbers over a wider part of the state, as defined by a single at Valentine NWR, Cherry Co, 25 Jun (MS), a juvenile at CLNWR 18 Jul (LR, RH), and a single w. of North Platte along the North Platte River 20 Jul (TJW). Others were a female in Platte Co 4 Jun (DH) and singles at different locations in Seward Co 18 Jul (JGJ) and 19 Jul (DL).
- Great Blue Heron:** Routine reports.
- Great Egret:** Few were reported; the best count was only 13, at HCR 30 Jul (G&WH). Rare westward, one was in Scotts Bluff Co 21 Jun (KD).
- Snowy Egret:** The only reports were of singles near Brady 6 Jun (TJW), in Seward Co 20 Jun (JGJ), and near Louisville 23 Jul (JGJ, MBB).
- Little Blue Heron:** The only report was unexpected; an adult at Kiowa WMA, Scotts Bluff Co, 21 Jun (KD) is the first Panhandle record for summer and only the 3rd there overall.
- Cattle Egret:** Surprisingly few were reported, as with Great Egret; one was in the e. RWB 29 Jun (JGJ) and one in McPherson Co the same day (JT). For the 3rd year, a colony was active at Smith L, CLNWR, where 30 nests were estimated present (WM).
- Green Heron:** Northwestern-most were singles in Sherman Co 14 Jun (WF) and Blaine Co 10 Jul (RE).
- Black-crowned Night-Heron:** Routine reports.
- Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:** There were 2 reports, typical for a summer; a juvenile was at NLB 14 Jul (JC, SS), and an immature was at Jack Sinn WMA, Saunders/Lancaster Co, 24 Jul (LE).
- White-faced Ibis:** Nesting, now routine in the state, was noted at CLNWR, where about 40 nests were estimated 25 Jun (WM), and was suspected due to the behavior of the 14 birds at Sacramento-Wilcox WMA, Phelps Co, 12 Jun (JGJ).
- Turkey Vulture:** Routine reports.
- Osprey:** The pair that attempted nesting near Winters Creek L, Scotts Bluff Co, in 2008 returned and built a nest, but as of 9 Jul there was no sign of eggs or chicks (KD). Scattered summer reports are increasing; notable was a banded

bird hacked on the South Dakota side of Lewis & Clark L, Knox Co, (fide JGJ) and seen near Linoma Beach, Sarpy Co, 22-28 Jul (MBB, MS, CC, CNK). Others included singles in Keith Co 11 Jun (MB) and 25 Jul (TJW), and at mile marker 11 on the lower Platte River 23 Jun (JGJ).

White-tailed Kite: One returned to the same site where one was seen in 2008 in the cedar canyons of se. Lincoln Co, where it was seen 22 Jun-2 Jul (TJW, PD photo, MB, CNK). Only one bird appeared to be present, and no evidence of nesting was found.

Mississippi Kite: The expected summer sightings were received from Ogallala (MB, JJ), but somewhat surprising were the 5-9 birds at Ogallala Strip WMA, 4 miles west of Ogallala 10 Jul (JGa).

Bald Eagle: Routine reports.

Northern Harrier: Routine reports.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Reports in summer should have accompanying identification details, as male Cooper's Hawks, breeding commonly statewide in recent years, can easily be confused at least with females of this species. A male was reported in Platte Co 5 Jul (DH) and one without age or gender details was in Hitchcock Co 11 Jun (LF).

Cooper's Hawk: Routine reports.

Red-shouldered Hawk: The 3 birds and nest found at PL 25 Jun (LE) bodes well for

continued presence at this location; a single bird was also seen 20 miles to the north near Ceresco (LE). Exciting was the presence of a juvenile possibly accompanied by an adult at ICSP 29 Jul (L&BP); breeding has not been documented at this seemingly-suitable location.

Broad-winged Hawk: Two birds returned to the site of successful breeding in 2008 in North Platte, summered, and built a nest (TJW), but no further information on success was received. This species probably summers most years in the Missouri Valley; singles were seen in the Bellevue area 29 Jun (ARy) and 5 Jul (CNK).

Swainson's Hawk: Routine reports.

Red-tailed Hawk: Routine reports.



This White-tailed Kite was photographed by Paul Dunbar 29 Jun 2009 in southeast Lincoln Co; it was Nebraska's 6th record and likely the same bird as the 5th record seen there in 2008.

Ferruginous Hawk: Routine reports.

Golden Eagle: Routine reports.

American Kestrel: Fall movement had started by 22 Jul, when 16 were using a newly-mowed oat field in Knox Co (MB). Second broods are rare in Nebraska; the pair using the nest box on the Game and Parks building in Lincoln hatched their second brood 27 Jul (JGJ).

Prairie Falcon: One as far east as Greeley Co 8 Jul (RE) was a surprise; there is only a handful of summer reports away from the breeding range, likely immatures or non-breeders.

Peregrine Falcon: The Omaha pair, 10-year residents Zeus and Hera, fledged 4 chicks, as did the Lincoln pair, which has been present since 2005.

Virginia Rail: Routine reports.

Sora: Routine reports.

Common Moorhen: Exciting was breeding by this species at NLB, only the 8th report for Nebraska since the 1950s. One bird was noted 24 Jun (CL, fide JGJ) and 2 adults with 8 chicks were present 28 Jul (CL,SL, fide JGJ).

American Coot: Routine reports.

Sandhill Crane: One was at the regular Morrill Co breeding site 27 Jun (AK); this pair had chicks by late May. Continuing a trend of recent years, pairs are popping up in n. and w. parts of the state. This summer, 2 were unusually far eastward in Antelope Co 4 Jun (MB), 2 were at Kiowa WMA, Scotts Bluff Co, through 18 Jun (AK), 2 were a surprise in sw. Scotts Bluff Co 18 Jun (AK), and a single was near Ord 23 Jun (BW).

Black-bellied Plover: None were reported; a few occur in early Jun.

Snowy Plover: With much less habitat at LM, reports are few. The only one was of a single between mile markers 89 and 102 on the lower Platte River 3 Jun (JGJ, MBB), likely a late spring overshoot.

Semipalmated Plover: Last for spring was on 6 Jun near Two Rivers SRA, Douglas Co (JGJ, JLL). First for fall were 2 at Harvard Marsh 21 Jul (PD) and one on the lower Platte River the same day (JGJ). These dates are typical, if not routine.

Piping Plover: Nesting continued at regular sites like LM (WRS, KN) and along the lower Platte River, where 23 were counted 21 Jul between mile markers 21 and 40 (JGJ). Of interest was breeding at two sites somewhat peripheral to the main breeding areas: a pair was nesting in Knox Co nw. of Verdigre 3 Jul (MB, DH) and a nest with 4 eggs was at a private sandpit east of North Platte 7 and 14 Jul (TJW). A single at Harvard Marsh 21 Jul (PD) was probably heading south.

Killdeer: Routine reports.

Mountain Plover: The only report was from a regular location in sw. Kimball Co 13 Jun (WRS).

Black-necked Stilt: The 6 birds near Lakeside 9 Jun (PR) were at a regular summer location. None appeared at Harvard Marsh this spring, but 2 had arrived by 11 Jun (JGJ). Encouraging from a mitigation standpoint was the presence of at least one nesting pair at cattle feedlot waste-control ponds near Darr 2 and 5 Jul (CNK, WRS).

American Avocet: The feedlot near Darr also hosted 2-3 nesting pairs of this species 2 and 5 Jul (CNK, WRS).

Spotted Sandpiper: Although a regular breeder in the state, nesting reports are few; 2 broods were at a sandpit e. of North Platte 7 Jul (TJW).

Solitary Sandpiper: Routine reports.

Greater Yellowlegs: Earliest were about on time: one was in Antelope Co 26 Jun (MB) and another in Colfax Co 28 Jun (D&JP).

Willet: Uncommon in spring eastward, one in Otoe Co 1 Jun (SQ) was unexpected and rather late away from the breeding range.

Lesser Yellowlegs: Rather late spring migrants were 2 in Antelope Co 4 Jun (MB) and one in Burt Co the same day (WF).

Upland Sandpiper: Groups begin to form in early Jul; 36 were at Fort Niobrara NWR, Cherry Co, 7 Jul (RE) and 23 were in a mowed hayfield in Clay Co 21 Jul (PD).

Long-billed Curlew: This species usually begins to form flocks and start migration by late Jun, but fascinating insights were gained through radio transmitters attached to two females that nested in Garden Co (CG, JGJ); both nests were predated, and the first female left Garden Co on the very early date 19 Jun, arriving on wintering grounds in ne. Mexico 29 Jun, while the second departed on 29 Jun (fide JGJ). Reports are scarce after mid-Aug; last dates from WSR were 22 Jul this year and 31 Jul in 2008 (HKH).

Marbled Godwit: Adding to scattered summer reports in n. Nebraska recently was one in Cherry Co 30 Jun (DH); at this date this may have been a migrant, as this species also departs very early in fall.

Sanderling: Routine reports.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Routine reports.

Western Sandpiper: None were reported; arrival is in Jul.

Least Sandpiper: Two in Dawson Co 18 Jun (CNK) and 2 in Lancaster Co the same day (LE) defy directional determination; there is however an 8-day gap in records between the spring series of dates ending 10 Jun and fall dates beginning 18 Jun, suggesting these were early fall migrants.

White-rumped Sandpiper: One on the lower Platte River between Fremont and Two Rivers SRA, Douglas Co, 25 Jun (JGJ) was the 3rd latest spring date on record. Since the first fall record, as recently as 2001, there are now 8 documented fall records for this species, which normally does not return south in the interior. This year, 10 "obvious White-rumped Sandpipers" were in s. Webster Co 21 Jul (TJW), and one with an injured wing was at Harvard Marsh 25 Jul (PD).

Baird's Sandpiper: Two in Dawson Co 18 Jun (CNK) were rather late; as with least Sandpiper, there is a narrow mid-summer window with no records, but for Baird's the window is 24 Jun-4 Jul, suggesting that Baird's sighted 18 Jun are spring migrants while the Least's on the same day discussed above were fall migrants. (I have a bridge for sale, too.)

Pectoral Sandpiper: Routine reports.

Dunlin: Last-reported for this late spring migrant was one in Antelope Co 8 Jun (MB), a typical last spring date.

Stilt Sandpiper: Routine reports.

Short-billed Dowitcher: None were reported; adults move through in Jul, ahead of juveniles.

Long-billed Dowitcher: Rather early were 8 at Harvard Marsh 21 Jul (PD).

Wilson's Snipe: Migrants appear at the end of Jul away from breeding areas; 3 were in Lancaster Co 30 Jul (LE).

American Woodcock: None were reported; migration probably begins in late Jul but there is little documentation.

Wilson's Phalarope: Routine reports.

Red-necked Phalarope: None were reported; migration timing barely includes late Jul.

Bonaparte's Gull: Only the 4th record for Jul was one with "white wing flashes" at Sutherland Res, Lincoln Co, 27 Jul (TJW).

Franklin's Gull: Sightings are fewest in early to mid-Jul; a "messy-looking" single in Logan Co 5 Jul (LR, RH) was the only report between 18 Jun and 23 Jul.

Ring-billed Gull: Routine reports.

California Gull: The usual small numbers were at LM; the 7 present 14 Jun included 5 adults, and one each 1st summer and 2nd summer (WRS, KN).

Herring Gull: None were reported; summer records are few, almost all immatures.

Least Tern: Routine reports.

Caspian Tern: Numbers were higher than usual for this species in the period 11 Jun-17 Jul, when there are only about 30 reports. At least 9 were reported statewide: 4 were at LM 14 Jun (WRS, KN), one was near Plattsmouth 26 Jun (JGJ), and 2-4 were at HCR 6-9 Jul (KS, G&WH). In addition, 4 were at LM 25 Jul (TJW) and 2 were at BOL 30 Jul (LE).

Black Tern: Routine reports.

Common Tern: The only report was of one between mile markers 89 and 102 on the lower Platte River 3 Jun (JGJ, MBB). This is an uncommon migrant.

Forster's Tern: Reports are fewest away from breeding areas mid- to late Jun, most from the north and west; 2 were in sw. Scotts Bluff Co 18 Jun (AK).

Rock Pigeon: Routine reports.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: Putative hybrids between this species and Mourning Dove have been reported, but seem to be rare. Two candidate birds at Bushnell 2 Jul were the size of Mourning Doves, but were pale and lacked a nape mark (MR).

White-winged Dove: This species is now a regular summer visitor in low numbers; reports of breeding are expected to increase as pairs are being reported more frequently. There were 4 reports of 6 birds, including pairs in Funk 17 Jun (WF) and Arapahoe 25 Jun-1 Jul (fide TJW, fide JGJ), and singles in Hastings 21-23 Jun (PD) and Fairmont 20-22 Jul (JRI).

Mourning Dove: Routine reports.

Inca Dove: The 8th documented record was one present at a farmyard with House Sparrows and photographed in Dundy Co 8 Jun (TS); this is the only spring record, the others are from 11 Sep into winter.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: One was carrying nest material in a Bellevue yard 3 Jul (ARy).

Black-billed Cuckoo: The increased number of summer reports for this species continues, with this the best year for some time. There were about 15 reports of about 18 birds; one photographed in a Bellevue yard was the "first there for several years" (L&BP), Lancaster Co, had "the most sightings for several years" (LE), and the species "seems to be doing OK" in the lower Big Blue and Republican River systems (WM). The cedar canyons in se. Lincoln Co had 3-4 on 22 Jul (TJW).

Barn Owl: Reports were from known summer locations in the sw. and at CLNWR (TJW, PR, AK).

Eastern Screech-Owl: Routine reports.

Great Horned Owl: Routine reports.

Burrowing Owl: Family groups begin to move around in late Jul; likely candidates were the 3 birds in Knox Co 29 Jul as no obvious breeding sites were in the area (MB, D&JP).

Barred Owl: Towards the w. edge of the range was one at Homestead NM, Gage Co, 10 Jun (JW).

Long-eared Owl: None were reported; this species should be looked for during the summer as breeding does occur in Nebraska and little is known about this species.

Short-eared Owl: There are regular but rare summer sightings in the Panhandle; 2 were at Courthouse Rock, Morrill Co, 11 Jun (KC).

Common Nighthawk: One in s. Dixon Co 1 Jun was a surprise to the observer; it was the first there for 4 years (JJ).

Common Poorwill: There is a population in the cedar canyons of se. Lincoln Co; a representative was detected 8 Jul (TJW).

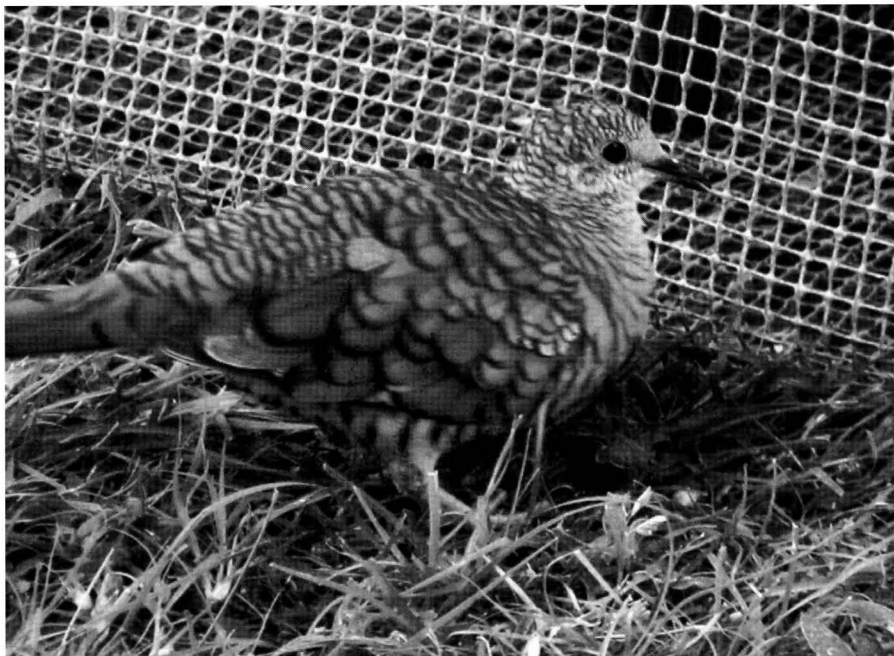
Chuck-will's-widow: The birds reported in spring at Bohemia Prairie WMA, Knox Co, continued, with singles heard through 28 Jul (MB, D&JP).

Whip-poor-will: "Many" were at Bohemia Prairie 30 Jun-28 Jul (MB).

Chimney Swift: Routine reports.

White-throated Swift: Routine reports.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: One was at WSR 22 Jul (HKH); this species has been reported (and photographed) at least 7 times in fall in the Panhandle. Although Black-chinned is a possibility, it appears to be regular in fall on the Great Plains only south of Nebraska. Ruby-throats breed in the Missouri Valley; a pair was in the observer's Bellevue yard during the summer, and 3 female/immature types appeared there 31 Jul (ARy).



Nebraska's 8th, and first for summer, this Inca Dove was photographed (it was outside the cage!) by Tim Smith near Benkelman 8 Jun 2009.

Calliope Hummingbird: None were reported; this species is regular in low numbers in fall in the Panhandle.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird: None were reported; this species is also regular in low numbers in fall in the Panhandle.

Rufous Hummingbird: A male in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 12 Jul (KD) was the first arrival, a typical first arrival date.

Belted Kingfisher: Observers at HCR thought this species was scarce the past 2 years (G&WH).

Red-headed Woodpecker: Routine reports.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: An adult was feeding a young bird 25 Jul in Platte Co (DH), apparently a typical date to see fledglings.

Downy Woodpecker: Routine reports.

Hairy Woodpecker: Routine reports.

Northern Flicker: Routine reports.

Pileated Woodpecker: Best count was 3 at FF 12 Jul (TJW).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Last for spring were singles in Dodge Co 3 Jun (LE) and Thurston Co 4 Jun (WF).

Western Wood-Pewee: The eastward extent of the summer range in the North Platte Valley, as discussed here in 2008, has shifted east to Lincoln Co (TJW); one in se. Lincoln Co 6 Jul marked the current limit (TJW). Previously the edge of the breeding area was the LM area, where it was found in cottonwood savannah. Further indication of increasing numbers east of there were 5 singing in the same habitat nw. of Paxton 10 Jul (TJW).

Eastern Wood-Pewee: A new area of overlap with Western Wood-Pewee (see above) is occurring in se. Lincoln Co, where one was present 7 Jul (TJW). Also 3 were at Chester Island WMA, Lincoln Co, 7 Jun (TJW). The only other area of overlap of these species is along the Niobrara River in ne. Cherry Co. This species breeds throughout the Republican RV drainage, although numbers are lower westward; one was at Medicine Creek Res, Frontier Co, 10 Jun (TJW).

Acadian Flycatcher: This species is another that may be pushing northward, with more reports north of ICSP; one was at FF 30 Jun-2 Jul (L&BP, PS photo), 1-2 were at PRSP 20-28 Jun (JC, SS, LE), and one was singing at Wilderness Park, Lincoln, 28 May-12 Jul (LE). By far most adventurous was the one singing on Schindler Creek, Knox Co, 10-22 Jul, first for the county (MB).

Alder Flycatcher: Last one through was in Madison Co 9 Jun (WF), 2nd latest on record by one day.

Willow Flycatcher: Routine reports.

Least Flycatcher: None were reported; although there are a few summer records in northern Nebraska, late dates for migrants are unclear.

Cordilleran Flycatcher: Perhaps a reflection of the eastward movement of the summer range on the Pine Ridge in recent years was a "loner" at the Gordon Cem 7 Jun (CNK). Continuing at the only known nest site away from the Pine Ridge was one at the Wildcat Hills NC, Scotts Bluff Co, 10 Jun (PR).

Eastern Phoebe: Generally considered a rare, or at least low density, breeder in the northwest, of interest was the presence of several birds in 3 Breeding Bird Atlas blocks in Dawes Co 13 Jun, including a nesting pair (KD).

Say's Phoebe: Good numbers were found in Kimball Co 13 Jun, a total of 5 (WRS); perhaps related (increase in numbers and range?) was the presence of one in Antelope Co 28 Jul (MB). It has been many years since this species occurred in the northeast.

Ash-throated Flycatcher: After the first breeding record in 2007 and an apparent absence in 2008, at least one bird was present at the same 2007 location in Kimball Co this year; it was seen 22 Jun-5 Jul (WM, TH photo, WRS). Indicative of a surge into Nebraska was one in a yard near Morrill, Scotts Bluff Co, 12 Jul (KD details); this is the 2nd report in the last 3 summers away from the Kimball Co location. There is a single record prior to 2007 and 2 additional reports in 2000.

Great Crested Flycatcher: This species now occurs statewide; recent years have seen many more reports from the northwest. This year was no exception, with reports from extreme w. Scotts Bluff Co 5 Jun (KD), a pair in Dawes Co 13 Jun (KD), and 2 along the White River 4 Jul (B&DW). One in Morrill Co 27 Jun was "a surprise" (AK), and one was in Valentine 7 Jul (RE).

Cassin's Kingbird: An excellent tally of 19 was made in canyons n. of Potter 13 Jun 9 (WRS, KN). This species is quite common in pine savannah in the Panhandle.

Western Kingbird: An excellent count was the 86 in Cherry Co 28 Jul (JJ). Westerns outnumbered Easterns by 12:1 in Kimball Co 10 Jul (JRo). Recent years have seen this species in cities and towns, most notably in the east; 3 pairs were found along 40th St in Omaha 29 Jul (JR).

Eastern Kingbird: Routine reports.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: Summer reports are now routine in the southeast, albeit of low numbers (3 birds this year, CT, LE, KP); one in se. Lincoln Co 29 Jul (TJW) was unexpected, however.

Loggerhead Shrike: Good numbers were reported in Dodge Co 1 Jul, when there were 10 birds in 3 family groups in about 5 miles (D&JP).

White-eyed Vireo: A major surprise was a first Knox Co record; one was along Schindler Creek 28-29 Jul (MB, D&JP).

Bell's Vireo: Not numerous in the Panhandle, one in Dawes Co 13 Jun was considered unusual (KD).

Yellow-throated Vireo: As in 2008, at least one was found near the w. edge of the apparently-expanding range along the Niobrara; this year's bird was along Schindler Creek in Knox Co 22 Jul (MB).

Plumbeous Vireo: None were reported; this is a regular breeder on the Pine Ridge.

Warbling Vireo: Routine reports.

Red-eyed Vireo: Common in Missouri Valley forests in summer, 15 were at PRSP 20 Jun (JR, JC, SS).

Blue Jay: Routine reports.



This Ash-throated Flycatcher was present this summer at a 2007 breeding site in Kimball Co. Photo by Tim Hajda 23 Jun 2009.

Pinyon Jay: None were reported; this species can be hard to find in summer, with breeding rarely reported.

Black-billed Magpie: Routine reports.

American Crow: Routine reports.

Fish Crow: Apparently the same bird seen along the Platte River just above the Missouri this spring was seen there again 24 Jun (JGJ); it was molting its primaries, possibly a difference in molt timing allowing separation from juvenile American Crow (JGJ).

Horned Lark: Routine reports.

Purple Martin: The huge roost which formed in the area of 42nd St and Dodge St in Omaha in late summer 2008 reformed much earlier this year; "hundreds" were there by 29 Jun (JED), with 7000-8000 by the end of the period (JR). The total peaked at 35,000 on 2 Sep 2008. The 9 birds in Dawes Co 29 Jul 2009 (JJ) provided only the 2nd fall report (presumed migrants) from the Panhandle. Breeding occurs each year west as far as Ogallala in the North Platte Valley and Ainsworth (possibly Valentine) in the Niobrara Valley.

Tree Swallow: Routine reports.

Violet-green Swallow: Routine reports.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Routine reports.

Bank Swallow: Routine reports.

Cliff Swallow: Routine reports.

Barn Swallow: Routine reports.

Black-capped Chickadee: Routine reports.

Tufted Titmouse: Routine reports.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Almost a repeat of last summer, 3 were at Forest Lawn Cem, Omaha, 27 Jun (JR). There were also several Lincoln sightings: at least one was in an observer's yard throughout the period (RE), 3 were at Pioneers Park 21 Jun (RE), and another was in a Lincoln yard 31 Jul (MUs), and might have been a very early fall arrival, although such birds are not usually seen until mid-Aug.

White-breasted Nuthatch: Reports from a part of the state where this species has been scarce as a summer resident until the last couple of decades or so included singles in Chase Co 13 Jun (MB), Hayes Co 14 Jun (MB), and Frontier Co 2 Jul (ME).

Pygmy Nuthatch: Routine reports.

Brown Creeper: None were reported; this species should be looked for during the summer as breeding has occurred in Nebraska.

Rock Wren: Good numbers continue in the cedar canyons of se. Lincoln Co, where 10-12 were found 14 Jul (TJW).

Carolina Wren: Reports from the edge of the slowly-expanding range included Dodge Co 27 Jul (D&JP), Fillmore Co 1-14 Jul (JRi), Buffalo Co 23 Jul (LB), and Franklin Co (2) 25 Jul (LR, RH).

House Wren: The 44 at WP 8 Jul (LE) was an excellent count.

Sedge Wren: As was the case last summer, significant numbers were again reported from ne. Nebraska during Jun, with some 12 reports, mostly of singles 2-18 Jun (WF, MB, DH, D&JP), although birds in Antelope and Pierce Cos persisted through 6 and 11 Jul respectively (MB, DH), and 5+ were calling in Platte Co 4 Jun (DH). Unexpected in the southeast were 3 pairs at Shoemaker Marsh, Lancaster Co, 29-30 Jun (KC, LE) and one at Jack Sinn WMA, Saunders/Lancaster Co, 30 Jun (LE).

Marsh Wren: Western song type birds were in Loup and Wheeler Cos 2 and 14 Jun (WF).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: This species can now be found, albeit still in low numbers in some areas of s.-cen. Nebraska, throughout most of the state except the n.-cen., primarily the Sandhills. One was at Schindler Creek, Knox Co, 2-22 Jul (MB), the westernmost of the eastern reports, and singles were in Morrill Co 27 Jun (AK) and nw. Sioux Co 20 Jun (AK). A pair was carrying food in Frontier Co 10 Jun (TJW).

Eastern Bluebird: Nest boxes at ADF fledged 92 birds Jun-Jul (LF).

Mountain Bluebird: This species breeds se. in pine canyons to extreme se. Banner Co, where 4 were seen 13 Jun (WRS, KN).

Townsend's Solitaire: This species occurs on rare occasions in summer in pines in the w. Pine Ridge, and has bred; one at Chadron SP 13 Jun (WM) was only the 5th breeding season report for Dawes Co.

Swainson's Thrush: None were reported; last spring dates are usually in early Jun in the northwest.

Wood Thrush: Two were westerly along Schindler Creek, Knox Co 2-29 Jul, as last year (MB). Reports from the Republican RV are very few, and so significant was one at Inavale 7 Jun (LR, RH). Although this was probably a westerly migrant, there are no summer records west of Webster Co along the Republican RV. One in Gosper Co 2 Jul (CNK) was also out of range; there are very few Platte RV reports that far west.

American Robin: Routine reports.

Gray Catbird: Routine reports.

Northern Mockingbird: Reports from the north, where still uncommon, included singles in Sheridan Co 6 Jun (PR), in Cherry Co 10 Jul (RE), and in Knox Co 28-30 Jul (MB, D&JP). This species is now fairly common across the southern half of Nebraska.

Sage Thrasher: Apparently the first confirmation of breeding in Nebraska, although the 6th record for Jun, was one carrying food in sw. Kimball Co 18 Jun (CNK), and seen again there 2 Jul (MR).

Brown Thrasher: Routine reports.

European Starling: Routine reports.

Cedar Waxwing: A pair with 2 juveniles was at LO 25 Jul (TJW).

Northern Parula: Routine reports.

Yellow Warbler: Routine reports.

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler: Routine reports.

Yellow-throated Warbler: Routine reports.

Cerulean Warbler: None were reported; this despite the 2-3 reported in spring.

Black-and-white Warbler: This species is most common in summer in the e. Niobrara RV; reports were from Keya Paha and Brown Cos 13 Jun (WF) and Knox Co 28-29 Jul (MB, D&JP).

American Redstart: Reports were from known breeding locations in Knox Co (MB), Cherry Co (RE), and Dawes Co (KD). Distribution is spotty west of Knox Co, however, except for the Pine Ridge.

Prothonotary Warbler: Following several spring reports at FF, the only one reported for Jun-Jul was there 9 Jun (L&BP). As with Cerulean Warbler, summer follow-ups would be of interest.

Ovenbird: Reports outside the usual eastern and northern Nebraska summer range were of one at Chester Island WMA, Lincoln Co, 7 Jun (TJW), likely a late migrant, and one in Pierce Co 17 Jul, the observer's first in this county (DH).

Louisiana Waterthrush: There were numerous reports, through 27 Jul at FF (PS), including 4-5 birds and a pair carrying food 20 Jun at PRSP (JR, JC, SS, LE). A surprise was one as far nw. as Schindler Creek, Knox Co, 2-22 Jul (MB); this is the first summer record away from the Missouri RV.

Kentucky Warbler: The only reports of this lower Missouri RV summer resident were of singles at PRSP 20 Jun (JR, JC, SS) and 28 Jun (LE). It is most often seen at ICSP.

Mourning Warbler: Last was a window kill in Omaha 1 Jun (JED).

Common Yellowthroat: Adults were feeding a fledgling in Lancaster Co 29 Jun (KC).

Yellow-breasted Chat: The eastern edge of the current range was suggested by sightings in Knox Co 2-29 Jul (MB), Garfield Co 28 Jun (LR, RH), Webster Co 7 Jun (LR, RH) and Harlan Co 6 Jul (KS). The Webster Co sightings were the farthest east in the Republican RV for several years. "Lots" were in se. Lincoln Co canyons 6 Jul (TJW).

Summer Tanager: Now established in the lower Missouri RV, reports were from regular locations at FF (L&BP), PRSP (JR, JC, SS), Otoe Co (LF), and ICSP (L&BP). Unexpected was a first spring male at Schuyler 6 Jun (WF); such out-of-range reports are increasing in recent years as this species increases in numbers in the southeast.

Scarlet Tanager: Keya Paha Co may mark the w. edge of the summer range in the Niobrara RV; one was there 13 Jun (WF). Another was in Knox Co 3-29 Jul (MB).

Western Tanager: Routine reports.

Spotted Towhee: Two in Webster Co 7 Jun (LR, RH) were easterly; most in that area are hybrids. Spotted and hybrids only were noted in Brown and Cherry Cos 6 Jul (RE), as expected.

Eastern Towhee: A belated report was of one at the w. edge of the breeding range in Hall Co 21 Jun 2008 (TEL).

Cassin's Sparrow: Continuing the trend of increased numbers in sw. Nebraska were reports of 7-8 in Chase Co 12-15 Jun (MB, JLL), 1-2 in sw. Kimball Co 13 Jun-19 Jul (WRS, m. ob.), and a belated report of nesting at WSR in 2008 (HKH). The latter is among the most northerly reports for the state.

Chipping Sparrow: Lowest summer numbers are west of Harlan Co in the southwest; one in Frontier Co 10 Jun (TJW) provided what appears to be only the 3rd summer record in the southwest 8 counties.

Brewer's Sparrow: None were reported; this is an uncommon breeder in the w. Panhandle.

Field Sparrow: Routine reports.

Vesper Sparrow: Breeding is uncommon in the cen. and w. Platte Valley southward, and so a report of an adult with a juvenile in Polk Co 25 Jul (DH) was noteworthy.

Lark Sparrow: Routine reports.

Lark Bunting: Routine reports.

Savannah Sparrow: None were reported; this is a localized breeder in the Panhandle.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Routine reports.

Henslow's Sparrow: The only reports were of 2-3 at SCP 7-14 Jun (TEL, KP), a regular location. A belated westerly report was of one in Hall Co 21 Jun 2008 (TEL); Hall Co marks the w. edge of the summer range in Nebraska.

Song Sparrow: Still uncommon in summer but increasing in the Republican RV, one was at Republican City 10 Jun (LF) and 3 were in Franklin Co 25 Jul (LR, RH). One near Oshkosh 19 Jul (LR, RH) appears to be only the 2nd report for the North Platte RV; this species has increased in numbers significantly in recent years in Lincoln Co and more North Platte RV reports can be expected as westward expansion continues.

Swamp Sparrow: There are few summer reports s. of the Platte RV, except for a few RWB locations; one was singing at Harvard Marsh 20-25 Jul (PD).

Harris's Sparrow: Last spring birds were the 1-3 at a Danbury feeder through 9 Jun (DJ). This is the 10th Jun record for the state.

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: Routine reports.

McCown's Longspur: The only report was of 2 in w. Kimball Co 13 Jun (WRS).

Chestnut-collared Longspur: The only reports were from Kimball Co: 3 on 3 Jun (WRS) and 4 on 2 Jul (MR).

Northern Cardinal: Routine reports.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: This species often wanders westward into early Jun; singles were farther west than usual at Chadron SP 13 Jun (KD) and, not as surprising, at Alma 10 Jun (LF).

Black-headed Grosbeak: Routine reports.

Blue Grosbeak: Routine reports.

Lazuli Bunting: One as far east as sw. Dixon Co 1 Jun (JJ) was the last of the several easterly spring migrants. Rare e. of the Panhandle, one was in Cherry Co 28 Jul (JJ), 1-2 were in Chase Co 13-18 Jun (MB, JLL), and one was singing in se. Lincoln Co 8 Jul (TJW).

Indigo Bunting: Westerly was one in Dawes Co 4 Jul (B&DW); non-hybrids this far west are unusual.

Dickcissel: Excellent numbers occurred westward again, including 30+ on a BBS route in Cheyenne Co 4 Jul (KD); most were males, with only one pair seen (KD). It was considered "abundant" in Lincoln Co (WRS), Cherry Co (RE), and Logan Co (LR, RH). Singles were in Kimball Co 10 Jul (JRo), near Chadron SP 13 Jun (KD) and in sw. Scotts Bluff Co 18 Jun (AK).

Bobolink: Molt had begun 25 Jul with several seen in reeds at Harvard Marsh (PD), and likely migrants were the 50 in Holt Co 28 Jul (JJ).

Red-winged Blackbird: Routine reports.

Eastern Meadowlark: Uncommon in se. Lincoln Co canyons, one was found there 6 Jul (TJW). A BBS route in Garden Co 20 Jun found a ratio of 10:1 Western: Eastern Meadowlarks (B&DW).

Western Meadowlark: Routine reports.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Routine reports.

Brewer's Blackbird: An adult was feeding a young bird near Chadron SP 13 Jun (KD); reports of breeding from this area are few.

Common Grackle: Routine reports.

Great-tailed Grackle: Although now found statewide in summer, reports from areas where numbers are still low were of a male near Bassett 14 Jun (WF), a single in Custer Co 11 Jun (MB), and another in Chase Co 12-15 Jun (MB, JLL).

Brown-headed Cowbird: Routine reports.

Orchard Oriole: Routine reports.

Baltimore Oriole: Westerly, but not unexpected, were singles in Scotts Bluff Co 12 Jun (LF) and Morrill Co 27 Jun (AK).

Bullock's Oriole: This species and hybrids predominate in s.-cen. Morrill Co (WRS). Males depart early, essentially performing a molt migration to the sw. United States; interesting observations regarding this were made at a feeding station near Mitchell where 4 families with young were in attendance. The males departed when young were able to feed themselves, while females and juveniles departed together a month later, around mid-Aug (KD).

House Finch: Routine reports.

Red Crossbill: A surprise was a female/immature type at a feeder in Fillmore Co 3 Jun (JRI photo); last dates for winter visitors are in the first few days of Jun . Other reports were as expected from the Pine Ridge and Wildcat Hills.

Pine Siskin: There were scattered reports away from the usual summer range, but no breeding was noted. Singles were in a Dixon Co yard 18 and 23 Jun (JJ), at a Dodge Co feeder 19 Jun (D&JP), at Forest Lawn Cem, Omaha, 27 Jun (JR), and at Shelton 14 Jul (MM).

Lesser Goldfinch: Somewhat surprisingly after the large numbers reported in 2008, albeit most in fall, none were reported.

American Goldfinch: Routine reports.

House Sparrow: Routine reports.