

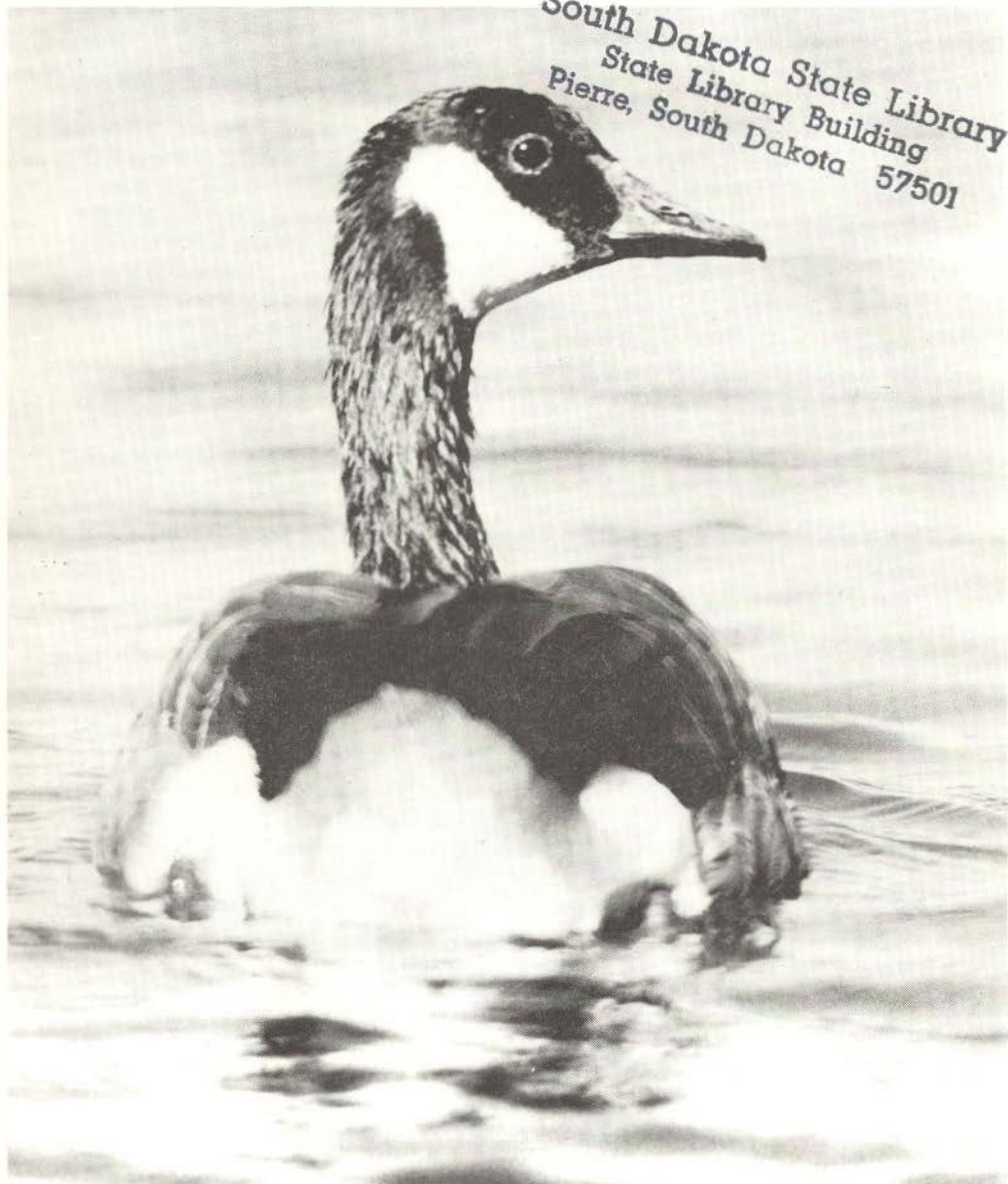
# South Dakota Bird Notes

Vol. 31, No. 4

December 1979

Whole No. 123

South Dakota State Library  
State Library Building  
Pierre, South Dakota 57501



December 1979

Photo: Don Palovich

57

*South Dakota Bird Notes*, the official publication of the South Dakota Ornithologists' Union (organized 1949), is sent to all members whose dues are paid for the current year. Life members \$125; sustaining members \$12.00; regular members \$6.00; family members (husband and wife) with one subscription to *Bird Notes* \$9.00; juniors (10-16) \$3.00; libraries (subscription) \$6.00. Single and back copies: Members \$1.50, Non-members \$2.00. All dues payments, change-of-address notices, and orders for back numbers should be sent to the Treasurer, Nelda Holden, Rt. 4, Box 68, Brookings SD 57006. All manuscripts for publication should be sent to Editor Dan Tallman, NSC Box 740, Aberdeen SD 57401.

Vol. 31, No. 4

December 1979

Whole No. 123

## IN THIS ISSUE . . .

President's Page, Robert Buckman	59
Dynamics of a Backyard Avifauna at Aberdeen, South Dakota, Dan A. Tallman	60
General Notes--Say's Phoebes nesting in Hutchinson County, First winter record for the Field Sparrow in South Dakota, Towhee winters at Burke Lake, Fall migrating Mountain Bluebird near Aberdeen, Spectacular Turkey Vulture flight, Killdeer nest on gravel and tar roof top	64
The 1979 Nesting Season, Bruce Harris	67
Book Review, Dan Tallman	72
Bird Puzzle, Anon	74

## SOUTH DAKOTA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION OFFICERS 1979-1980

President	Robert Buckman, Dakota State College, Madison SD 57042
Vice President	Everett C. Montgomery, 426 S Jackson, Aberdeen SD 57401
Secretary	L.M. Baylor, 1941 Red Dale, Rapid City SD 57701
Treasurer	Nelda Holden, Rt. 4, Box 68, Brookings SD 57006
Editor	Dan Tallman, NSC Box 740, Aberdeen SD 57401
Librarian	Herman P. Chilson, Webster SD 57274

## DIRECTORS

For Term Expiring 1980: Herman P. Chilson, Webster; Bruce Harris, Clear Lake; N.R. Whitney, Jr., Rapid City; L.M. Baylor, Rapid City; E.C. Montgomery, Aberdeen.

For Term Expiring 1981: Byron Harrell, Vermillion; J.W. Johnson, Huron; Kenneth Husmann, Brookings; June Harter, Highmore; Jocelyn Baker, Rapid City.

For Term Expiring 1982: Gil Blankespoor, Sioux Falls; Nelda Holden, Brookings; Esther Edie, Bruce; Galen Steffen, Burke; Robert Buckman, Madison.

# PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Behavior is one of the interesting topics in bird study. Behavioral sciences are still in their infancy. Consequently, little is known about what causes and determines behavior.

One aspect of behavior is instinct, the inherited nature to act a predetermined way in response to certain stimuli. Such behavior is stereotyped and rigid. Birds have their actions regulated much more by instinctive behavior than do mammals. In mammals, learning processes are involved to a certain extent. Learning also occurs in birds, but it does not play as important a role. That most bird activities are innate and instinctive has been illustrated many times by raising young birds in complete isolation. Such birds perform the same typical activities as their parents.

There is no evidence that birds use intelligence in most of their activities. It is difficult to realize that instinctive actions occur with no knowledge of what the outcome of the behavior will be. For example, when building a nest, a bird has no foresight of the purpose or use of that nest.

Instinctive behavior is advantageous as long as an individual is faced with normal problems and situations. An illustration of the inflexibility of instinctive behavior is found in a study of the European Robin (not a close relative of the American Robin). During its breeding season, the male European Robin establishes a territory that he and his mate guard against trespass from all other members of their species. An intruder in the territory is usually repelled by the resident birds' ritualized posturing. This display seems to communicate threats satisfactorily, driving the intruder from the resident birds' territory. When an artificial situation was created by placing a stuffed Robin close to a nest, the breeding pair postured in the usual way. Of course, the stuffed bird did not leave. Consequently, the resident birds violently attacked the stuffed Robin. The shape and color of a strange Robin was evidently sufficient to trigger the instinctive territorial behavior. A particularly aggressive Robin, after beheading the stuffed specimen, continued to attack it violently. This bizarre behavior inspired scientists to devise a series of experiments using only parts of a mounted Robin or an entire specimen painted with abnormal colors. These experiments indicated that breeding Robins tend to attack stuffed specimens (or partial specimens) having at least some red breast feathers. Many Robins will react to a solitary bunch of red breast feathers much more violently than to a Robin specimen with an incorrectly colored breast. A Robin, then, might at first seem intelligent and perceptive in knowing that a stranger should be driven away from food and family but, ultimately, proves to be simply reacting to an unsuspected environmental cue (i.e., red breast feathers).

Robins have efficient sensory perception. A male Robin can easily learn to identify his mate from all other Robins. Birds can even recognize individual humans that are around for extended periods of time. But, the Robin's intelligence is not utilized during territorial behavior. Its nervous mechanisms are not sufficiently flexible for rational thought to be brought into play in such situations. Robins are adapted to react innately, in a stereotyped aggressive manner, to the sight of red feathers in their territories. Only that part of the nervous system containing this behavioral pattern is affected. Thus, it does not matter if the releasing mechanism is inappropriate. The bird does not think--it simply reacts.

Naturally, under normal conditions, this instinctive behavior works efficiently. Learning or thinking is unnecessary to enable the bird to accomplish its purpose. Robins almost never encounter conditions, such as those found in these experiments, that would cause their behavior to go astray.--Robert Buckman, Madison 57042.

## **DYNAMICS OF A BACKYARD AVIFAUNA AT ABERDEEN, SOUTH DAKOTA**

by Dan A. Tallman

Northern State College, Aberdeen 57401

### **Introduction**

This paper is the first of a series of banding reports to be issued semiannually from Aberdeen. I hope to document fluctuations and trends in the avifauna of northeastern South Dakota. This first report contains data from June through December 1979.

### **Methods and Materials**

The study area, my backyard at 1506 SE Third Ave., Aberdeen SD, is in a residential zone about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile W of Moccasin Creek. The yard provides relatively sparse cover and one large Mountain Ash tree.

In one corner of the yard, I placed two 12 m mist nets, one on top of the other, creating a 3 m high plane. The nets were opened about 14 days each month except during December, when netting was hampered by bad weather. Generally, however, the fall and winter of 1979 were snowless with record high temperatures.

I banded almost all the birds caught in the yard. Only a few were kept for museum study skins. No sight records are included in this report. The

House Sparrow is the only species present in the study area which is not included with these data.

### Results

I classified each of the species into one of the following categories: 1) year-round residents; 2) residents only during the breeding season; 3) residents only during winter; 4) species present only in migration. Table 1 is a list of the species included in each category. Figure 1 depicts monthly totals of individuals caught. Species of which I encountered more than 10 individuals are graphed separately. A single curve for all of the remaining birds in each category is labelled "miscellaneous."

Table 1. Birds of the Study Area. The number following each species is the number of individuals caught.

Residents (8 species)		Winter Visitors (6 species)	
Robin	102	Dark-eyed Junco	57
American Goldfinch	67	Cedar Waxwing	39
Common Grackle	23	Black-capped Chickadee	5
Yellow-shafted Flicker	5	Brown Creeper	3
Blue Jay	4	Purple Finch	2
Starling	3	White-breasted Nuthatch	1
Downy Woodpecker	2		
Hairy Woodpecker	1	<b>Breeding Only (11 Species)</b>	
		Yellow Warbler	12
		House Wren	10
<b>Migrants (18 species)</b>		Catbird	6
Orange-crowned Warbler	23	Yellow-headed Blackbird	4
Myrtle Warbler	13	Chipping Sparrow	4
Harris' Sparrow	10	Brown Thrasher	3
White-throated Sparrow	10	Baltimore Oriole	3
Golden-crowned Kinglet	5	Mourning Dove	2
Swainson's Thrush	3	Warbling Vireo	2
Wilson's Warbler	3	Brown-headed Cowbird	2
Lincoln's Sparrow	3	Common Yellowthroat	1
Mourning Warbler	2		
Blackburnian Warbler	2		
Tree Sparrow	2		
Least Flycatcher	1		
Traill's Flycatcher	1		
Hermit Thrush	1		
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1		
Red-eyed Vireo	1		
Nashville Warbler	1		
MacGillivray's Warbler	1		



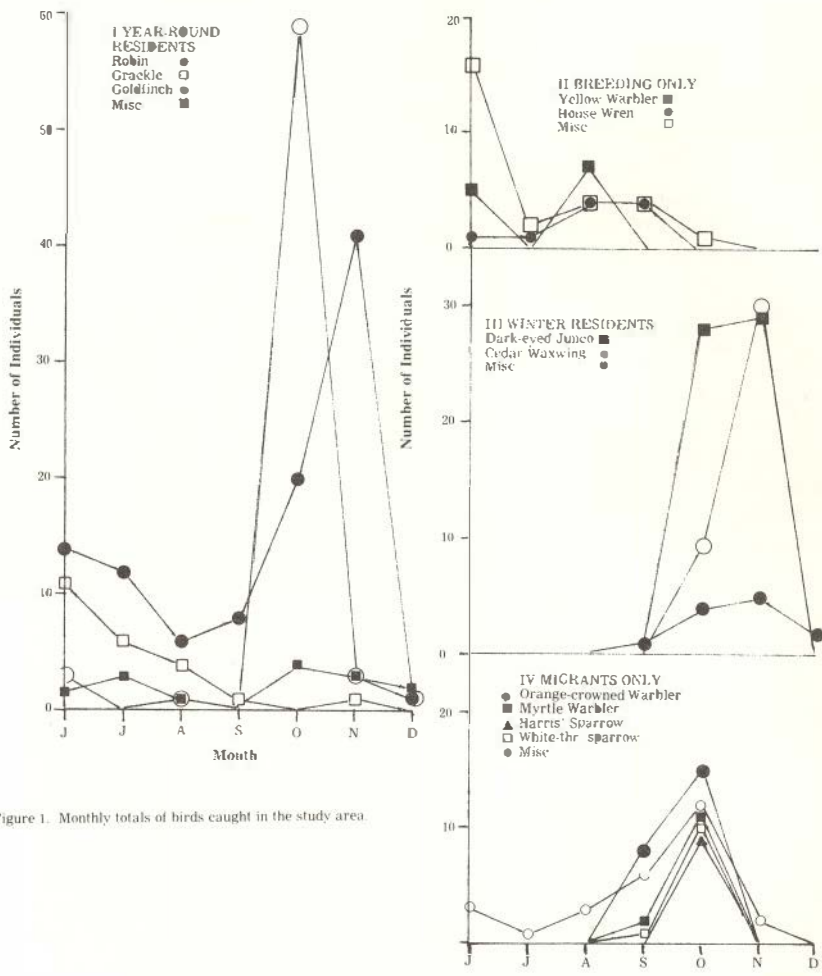


Figure 1. Monthly totals of birds caught in the study area.

### Discussion

At least two notes of caution are necessary before proceeding with the discussion. First, these data apply only to my study area; other yards in Aberdeen have different mixes of bird species depending on available food (my feeder lacked suet) and cover. Nevertheless, I presume the basic pattern shown by each of the bird categories would remain similar regardless of where the data were collected. Second, mist nets tend not to catch all birds. The birds must hit the net and become tangled. Larger species and canopy inhabitants will tend to be missed. However, very few species were observed in the yard that were not eventually caught. Missed birds include the Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Mockingbird and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Because of their infrequent occurrence in the yard, these species would have been included within the "miscellaneous" curves in Figure 1.

Figure 1 shows that the curve for species that only breed in Aberdeen differs from the curves for the other three categories by not peaking during October. One possibility for this difference is that excessive competition from migrants, increased numbers of residents, and the incoming winter visitors has exerted evolutionary pressure for the summer breeders to leave the area before the peak of the fall migration.

As might be expected, the curve for winter visitors is wider than that for species that are only migrants. The bulk of the winter visitors, however, pass through Aberdeen and might therefore be better classified as migrants. Indeed, by the end of December, the backyard avifauna becomes markedly depauperate in Aberdeen. The numbers of individuals of resident species dramatically rise during the migration but also fall during December far below summer levels.

### Summary

From June through December 1979, I banded 43 species (446 individual birds) in my backyard at 1506 SE Third Ave., Aberdeen SD. I compared monthly totals for four categories of birds: year-round residents, winter visitors, birds that only migrate through the area, and birds that only breed in the region. Generally, each species category peaks in numbers of individuals during October and/or November. An exception was the breeding bird group that appeared to leave the area before the onset of the fall migration.



## GENERAL NOTES

**SAY'S PHOEBES NESTING IN HUTCHINSON COUNTY.**—In late May 1977, while tending my garden near Kaylor SD (39 mi S, 7 mi E Mitchell SD, Hutchinson Co.), I heard a resonant, descending whistle ringing from the vicinity of a deserted horse barn. I identified a bird perched on the barn roof as a Say's Phoebe, a species I knew from Baja California.

I checked the barn for nests but found none. For the next several days, the rusty-bottomed bird whistled its plaintive tune and flitted about the place. One morning I flushed it from a Barn Swallow-like nest in the barn. Grass and feathers protruded from the mud basket but I couldn't get up to check for eggs.

Several days later, I photographed this bird in the nest. I still hadn't seen two phoebes at the same time and I doubted there was another. A few days after the photo session, the nest was abandoned. My garden has never echoed the call of the Say's Phoebe since.

My eastern South Dakota Say's Phoebe experience was far from over. On 3 June 1977, I flushed another Say's Phoebe from an abandoned farm building in Oak Hollow Township on the western edge of Hutchinson County. Oak Hollow is a unique ecosystem of oak, elm, ash and hackberry woods bordering an intermittent creek protected by hillsides of native mixed-grass prairie. The hollow winds for three miles before succumbing to low banks and agriculture.

A nest was built in one of the sheds on the 2x4 header upon which the roof rafters rested. Three or four newly hatched nestlings wobbled in the bot-



tom of the flat grass nest. I quickly left the area. On 7 June I returned to find the nestlings dead and no adults in sight.

Fortunately, the day still held a pleasant surprise. That afternoon I sat in a deserted barn less than a mile from my garden near Kaylor. I was trying to photograph a Barn Swallow flying to its nest—did I say Barn Swallow? Oops! That mud basket glued to the rafters was cradling the eggs of another Say's Phoebe! When the adults flew in and out of the building but refused to enter the nest, I left quickly. I watched the birds for the next several days. When they began making frequent "food trips" into the barn, I set up my equipment and took some pictures. Four nestlings fledged out of this, the only successful Say's Phoebe nest of three I found in Hutchinson County in 1977.

In April 1978, I saw a Say's Phoebe in Oak Hollow near an abandoned farm one mile from the 1977 nest site. I had no chance for follow-up research that spring. I saw no birds at either Kaylor site in 1978.

During the 1979 SDOU spring meeting in Pickstown, I traveled to Oak Hollow with Bruce Harris and saw a Say's Phoebe near the farm buildings. I returned on 23 June and photographed two adults feeding three or four young in a Barn Swallow-like nest stuck to the inside concrete wall of an old, above-ground cistern. The nestlings exercised their wings furiously at the edge of the nest. A week later the nest was empty. In at least a few areas in eastern South Dakota, deserted farm buildings are providing favorable nesting conditions for this western phoebe, perhaps one of the few benefits from losing our small family farms.—Ron Spomer, Kaylor 57354.

**FIRST WINTER RECORD FOR THE FIELD SPARROW IN SOUTH DAKOTA.**—Field Sparrows winter north to Kansas and Oklahoma (Bent, *Life Histories of North American Birds*, Smithsonian Institution, 1968). However, on 1 January 1979, I trapped a Field Sparrow in a Potter Trap at my backyard banding station at Pierre, South Dakota. I banded the bird and released it after close examination. On 4 January 1979, I again observed it at my feeding station in the company of Dark-eyed Juncos and Tree Sparrows. A second probable winter record for this species occurred on 17 December 1979 when Dr. Dan Tallman observed a Field Sparrow in a flock of Tree Sparrows during the Aberdeen Christmas Count (Tallman, pers. comm.).—Richard L. Hill, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Pierre 57501.

**TOWHEE WINTERS AT BURKE LAKE.**—From 19 November 1978 until 1 March 1979, a male Rufous-sided Towhee wintered at my banding station at Burke Lake, Gregory Co. It was observed many times feeding on a mixture of milo and millet. A thick stand of cedar trees in the area gave ample protection in severe weather. There are only a couple of other winter records for towhees in southeastern South Dakota and none for as long a duration as this record.—Galen S. Steffen, Burke 57523.

**FALL MIGRATING MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD NEAR ABERDEEN.**—On 9 November 1979, while driving on the county road just south of Richmond

Lake State Park in Brown Co., we observed a female Mountain Bluebird. The grayish bird alternated between perching on fence posts, sallying to the ground, and flying, flashing ultramarine wings and tail, along the fence which paralleled the road. We watched this bird for several minutes before we left the area.

Mountain Bluebirds migrate through the Aberdeen area each spring but we know of no fall records east of the Missouri. West of the Missouri River, the normal fall migration lasts from mid-August until mid-October (Whitney et al., *Birds of South Dakota*).—Everett C. Montgomery and Dan Tallman, Aberdeen 57401.

**SPECTACULAR TURKEY VULTURE FLIGHT.**—During the summer of 1979, along the bluffs of the Missouri River below Pierre, it was not unusual to see 15 to 20 Turkey Vultures a day. They either glided overhead or roosted on the bluffs. In the middle of August, I saw a flock of 50 to 60 individuals slowly heading down river. The weather was unusually cool and there was a brisk NW wind, giving the birds a good tailwind. Even so, 15 or 20 minutes passed before the flock was out of sight because they circled almost constantly.—Doug Backlund, Pierre 57501.

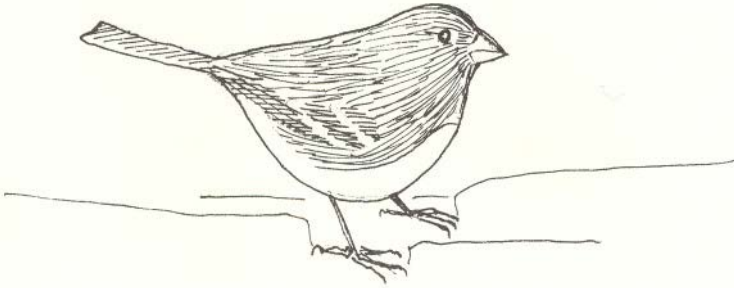
**KILLDEER NEST ON GRAVEL AND TAR ROOF TOP.**—Mary Husby, who works at the Dow Rummel Retirement Village in Sioux Falls SD, reported that, for three consecutive years, a pair of Killdeer nested on the roof of one of the village buildings. Each year the eggs hatched but, when one-third grown, the young died.

This summer (1979) it happened again but the Killdeer renested. Mrs. Husby did not want the same thing to happen twice in one season. I told her the baby Killdeer must have died from starvation because of the limited amount of food on a tar and gravel roof.

I suggested taking the young Killdeer down from the roof and placing them on the lawn. The young birds froze motionless in the grass. The parents remained on the roof, calling. The young would not answer. Mrs. Husby put the young back on the roof and left them chick mash. She never saw them eat the mash. However, the young grew well, eventually feathering out and flying away.

The *Inland Bird Banding Newsletter* (July 1979) mentions several cases of Killdeer nesting on roof tops. It points out that, if a roof has steep walls around its edges, the young will not be able to jump to the ground and will starve. Also cited is a case where one young Killdeer was successfully fledged on a roof. This success suggests that the parents might have fed the young bird.

The questions I would like to ask are: 1) How many people know of Killdeer nesting on roofs? 2) What has been the birds' success rate? 3) Can Killdeer parents feed their precocious young as do robins or pigeons? I have never observed this activity nor can I find evidence to support this kind of behavior on the part of Killdeer. 4) Did the Killdeer chicks observed by Mrs. Husby eat the mash? It would seem likely because other precocial young birds (wild ducks, geese, pheasants and bobwhite) easily learn to eat this kind of food.—John A. Giegling, 600 S Kiwanis No. 119, Sioux Falls SD 57104.



## THE 1979 NESTING SEASON

by Bruce Harris

Box 605

Clear Lake SD 57226

**Common Loon**--2 June, one in breeding plumage, Sorum Dam, Perkins Co., JLB; one adult regularly in Day Co., but no evidence of nesting, KH.

**Red-necked Grebe**--1 June, 2 adults and occupied nest, Waubay NWR, BKH, RLS.

**Horned Grebe**--1 June-31, July, six adults with 13 young, Eagle Butte Ponds, Dewey Co., DLB. A very good record--a range extension of more than 70 miles westward. None in McPherson Co. this year, BKH, KH. 22 June, a pair acting "broody" in the area where a nest was located last year, Drywood Lake, Roberts Co., BKH, KH, JRi.

**Eared Grebe**--31 July, colony of 50 adults, 75 young, Eagle Butte Ponds, Dewey Co., DLB. Nesting also reported in Day, Douglas, McPherson and Brown Co.

**Western Grebe**--nesting reported from Day, Brown, Deuel Co. 13 June, colony of 160 nests near blacktop road at Buffalo Lake, Day Co., BKH, KH.

**White Pelican**--13 June (337 nests) Pyas Lake, Marshall Co. 25 June (120

- large young but some dead) N Drywood Lake, Roberts Co., BKH, JRi; 29 June (about 242 nests, 206 young and 70 eggs) S Waubay Lake, LLW, WJK.
- Double-crested Cormorant--13 June (501 nests) Pyas Lake, Marshall Co.; 25 June (150 young, about 30% dead) N Drywood Lake, Roberts Co. BKH, JRi. 29 June (87 nests with 78 eggs and 85 young) S Waubay Lake, LLW, WJK.
- Great Blue Heron--30 June, colony with 63 young (20 nests?) Farm Island, Pierre, DB. 14 July (40 adults, 35 young out of nest) Spearfish Valley, DLB, GGR.
- Green Heron--reports from Deuel, Hughes, Yankton and Clay Co.
- Little Blue Heron--17 June, two adults, one juvenile white plumage, Sand Lake NWR, TKK. 26 July, one adult, Sand Lake, SJW.
- Snowy Egret--30 July, one at Sand Lake, TKK.
- Black-crowned Night Heron--active colony, Peever Slough, Roberts Co., not checked, BKH.
- White-faced Ibis--4 June, ten adults and two nests, but nests not relocated in July. Sand Lake NWR. SJW.
- Green-winged Teal--reported from Harding, Butte and Pennington Co., JLB.
- Cinnamon Teal--16 June, Sand Lake NWR, SJW.
- Wood Duck--10 June, brood of three, Butte Co., JLB.
- Ring-necked Duck--14 June, female on pond, McPherson Co., BKH, KH. Brood of three in Deuel Co, 30 July, BKH.
- Lesser Scaup--14 June (20) Rau Lake, McPherson Co., BKH, KH (non-breeders?).
- Ruddy Duck--7 July, brood of 9 young, Yankton Co. (range extension) WH.
- Hooded Merganser--22 June, pair near Hurrigan Lake. Roberts Co.. BKH, KH. 14 July, one female near Pierre, KH. ECM.
- Sharp-shinned Hawk--14 July, adult Spearfish Valley, DLB, GGR.
- Ferruginous Hawk--nesting in Jackson Co.. DLB. Reports also from Butte and McPherson Co.
- Swainson Hawk--est. five pair Deuel Co. during period (spot-mapped); one nest Deuel Co., BKH. Nesting also Lyman Co.. WCT.
- Red-tailed Hawk--est. 12 pair minimum Deuel Co., during period. BKH. 14 young in 10 nests Waubay NWR, LLW.

- Marsh Hawk--est. 9 pair Deuel Co. during period, BKH. Spot-mapping indicates 31 pair hawks in Deuel Co. (minimum est.) during summer 1979.
- Prairie Falcon--nesting in Custer Co. and three nests, 10 young, Harding Co., RLS.
- Peregrine Falcon--two out of three young fledged out from Prairie Falcon nest under cross-fostering program in Black Hills by Peregrine Foundation and USFW, USFS and SDGF&P.
- King Rail--24 July, Sand Lake NWR (details submitted by WAS emphasize size).
- Virginia Rail--10 June, two calling Butte Co., JLB. Young in Clark Co., LLW.
- Piping Plover--3 July (11 adults, 4 downy young; 8 eggs in 2 nests) Clay Co., WH, JEW. 27 July, three at Bitterlakes, Day Co., BKH, KH.
- Common Snipe--winnowing males Deuel, Roberts, Day, McPherson and Gregory Co., BKH.
- Long-billed Curlew--1 June, nest with 3 young and 1 egg; 1 July, nesting pair, Meade Co., EEM. 24 June, eleven, including 5 ½-grown young, Cedar Pass, NRW. Also reported from Perkins, Pennington and Custer Co.
- Marbled Godwit--15 June (66) in 4 groups, Day Co., BKH, KH.
- Hudsonian Godwit--11 June, one, appearing healthy, Douglas Co., WH.
- American Avocet--23 June (50 adults and young) Jackson Co., DLB. 29 June, seven, Meade Co., EEM.
- California Gull--15 June, two adults with Ring-bills Day Co. (noted bill marking, darker mantle, with scope at 250 yards) BKH, KH. 25 June, two in colony of Ring-bills and terns Waubay Lake (noted bill spots at 25 yards) BKH, JRi, LLW.
- Ring-billed Gull--25 June (316 nests, most with 3 eggs) Waubay Lake, Day Co., BKH, JRi, LLW. None at N Drywood Lake in Roberts Co., BKH. 29 June (64 nests, 25 eggs, 106 young) on island Waubay Lake, Day Co., LLW, WJK.
- Franklin Gull--active colony Peever Slough, Roberts Co., not checked, this colony apparently present every year.
- Forster Tern--spot-mapped in 9 locations Deuel Co. during June, BKH.
- Common Tern--none nested Drywood Lake, Roberts Co. 25 June (23 nests, most with 2 eggs) Waubay Lake, Day Co., BKH, JRi, LLW.
- Least Tern--3 July (8 adults, 3 young, 2 eggs in 1 nest) Clay Co., JEW, WH.



- Reported also from Bon Homme and Yankton Co.
- Black Tern--reported from Gregory, Perkins, Deuel, Douglas, Bon Homme and Brown Co.
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo--reports from Gregory, Butte, Yankton, Pennington, Hutchinson, Hughes and Brown Co. More than usual.
- Burrowing Owl--22 June, pair with at least 2 young in Day Co., BKH, KH, JRI. reports also from Spink, McPherson, Douglas, Fall River, Dewey, Gregory, Meade and Brown Co.
- Short-eared Owl--13 June (6) Brown and McPherson Co., BKH, KH. Unsuccessful nest in Deuel Co. (nest destroyed), BKH. Reports also from Roberts, Meade and Butte Co. Back to normal in NE after unprecedented nesting in 1978 (article forthcoming in *Bird Notes*).
- White-throated Swift--29 June (5 nests) Custer Co., DLB.
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird--observed in Lincoln Co. during period, RAP.
- Lewis Woodpecker--13 July, two pair nesting Lawrence Co., DLB.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker--reports from Lincoln and Brookings Co.
- Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker--18 July, female or immature. Pennington Co., NRW.
- Northern Three-toed Woodpecker--1 June, building nest hole Custer Co., NJH.
- Say Phoebe--3 June, nest with 3 young, Hutchinson Co., but young dead on 7 June; 23 June, adult and 2 nestlings in same area, RLS.
- Least Flycatcher--2 June, Harding Co. (calling male) JLB.
- Purple Martin--31 July, six pair with young, Spearfish, Lawrence Co., DLB.
- Dipper--14 June, nest with 4 eggs, Spearfish Canyon, DLB.
- Winter Wren--4 June, singing male, Black Fox C.G., Pennington Co., NJH (breeding?).
- Catbird--21 July, nest with 3 eggs, Yankton Co. WH (late date for nest).
- Swainson Thrush--2 June, Harding Co. JLB (probably late migrant).
- Veery--1 June, male singing, Siche Hollow, Roberts Co., RLS, BKH (only one heard).
- Eastern Bludbird--regularly. Yankton Co., WH, JEW. Nesting Hutchinson Co., RLS.
- Sprague Pipit--8 June (3) Hughes Co., RLS.
- Golden-crowned Kinglet--9 June, pair building nest, Custer Co.; 14 June, three pair, Lawrence Co., DLB. 20 June, Cathedral Spires Trail, NRW.
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet--20-22 June, ten males singing; 27 June, Custer Rt., NRW.

- Loggerhead Shrike--nesting in Yankton Co., WH. Birds in 3 areas Deuel Co., (increase), BKH.
- Bell's Vireo--8 July, nest with 2 eggs, 2 nestlings (1 cowbird), WH.
- Yellow-throated Vireo--reports from Marshall and Roberts Co.
- Black-and-White Warbler--21 June, Farm Island, Hughes Co., DB. Obs. regularly 17-26 July, Rapid City, GRB. We need to pin down nesting for this species--no question that it nests in 5-6 areas of South Dakota.
- Ovenbird--1 June. singing male. Siche Hollow, Roberts Co., BKH, RLS.
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak--Black Hills records for Butte, Meade and Pennington Co.
- Blue Grosbeak--records from Yankton, Gregory, Pennington and Hutchinson Co.
- Indigo Bunting--records from Pennington Co., NRW, and Buffalo Co., JHH.
- Cassin Finch--18 July, Pennington Co., NRW.
- Red Crossbill--counts of 105 and 214 in Black Hills, NRW.
- Baird Sparrow--only 1 heard in two days in McPherson Co., BKH, KH.
- Lark Sparrow--22 July, (6) Yankton Co., WH. We need more data on this species in the East River area.
- Harris Sparrow--13 July, rare nonbreeder at Oahe Dam, DB.

#### OBSERVERS

DB	Doug Backlund	EEM	Ernest Miller
GRB	Gertrude Backmann	ECM	Everett C. Montgomery
JLB	Jocie Baker	RAP	Richard A. Peterson
DLB	Dan L. Bjerke	JRi	Jim Riis
	(West River compiler)	GGR	George G. Ross
WH	Willis Hall	WAS	William Schultze
BKH	Bruce K. Harris	RLS	Ron L. Spomer
JHH	June H. Harter	WCT	Walt C. Thietje
KH	Kenneth Husmann	SJW	Sam Waldstem
NJH	Nelda Holden	LLW	Linda L. Watters
TKK	Tim Kessler	JEW	Juli E. Wilcox
WJK	William Kurtenback		

**BOOK REVIEW:** *Birds of the Great Plains: Breeding Species and their Distributions.* By Paul A. Johnsgard. 1979. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln.

Dan Tallman

Northern State College, Aberdeen 57401

A good review gives both good and bad aspects of a book. The reviewer should stalk shortcomings in a text, but readers should not be discouraged from buying a deserving product. Despite quite a number of minor criticisms, I think this book is well worth a place on the bookshelves of South Dakota bird watchers.

The range maps accompanying the text make this book worth buying. The Black-capped Chickadee map, for example, shows this species is not to be found in open prairie, a fact that could be missed from written or pictorial range accounts given in other references. Upon finding strange birds in South Dakota, we often wonder where they ought to be encountered. This book answers that question. Take the Louisiana Waterthrush--can you tell me the northern limits of its breeding range? Finding that it occurs only as far north as Oklahoma, perhaps we should look twice the next time we see one migrating through our backyard!

There are many small errors in the South Dakota bird ranges reported in this book. Red-necked Grebes nest at Waubay but are lacking from the South Dakota map. Yellow-billed Cuckoos are not shown breeding far enough north. The Cassin's Finch may nest in the Black Hills but this possibility is not mentioned. The uncertain status of the Cardinal in northeastern South Dakota is omitted. I found about a dozen such small complaints. The author cites the SDOU's *The Birds of South Dakota* but evidently he did not refer to it carefully. The birder in South Dakota would be wise to supplement this text with the SDOU publication!

Another reason why this book does not overlap with our SDOU text is that the *Birds of the Great Plains* covers only breeding birds; South Dakota migrants and winter visitors are not mentioned. Even such subjects as food and habits of breeding birds are lacking. The text, which does not seem to be particularly well annotated, deals with breeding status, habitat, nest location, clutch sizes, incubation and breeding times. These subjects are followed by a discussion of breeding biology and a few suggested readings. I found no spelling errors in the text but did notice the Brown Thrasher was omitted from the index.

At \$25.00, *Birds of the Great Plains* is very attractive. It will grace almost any coffee table or den. There is a section of 28 color photographs. The reproduction of the color is about the best I have seen. Many people will consider their money well spent for the photos alone, despite a slightly out-of-focus meadowlark and a relatively distant Western Tanager. But since I look upon the value of the book as being primarily that of a

reference and, with inflation being what it is these days, I would have preferred a couple of changes.

First, the margins are huge, resulting in much wasted space. A two-inch margin and empty pages before and after most family accounts may provide note-writing space but I would rather have seen a smaller and less expensive volume.

Second, at the beginning of each family there is a drawing of one of the birds in the family. This picture takes a whole page (exclusive of the blank pages mentioned above). These black-and-white, pen-and-ink drawings are nice to look at but they are not exceptional. They neither add to our knowledge of avian anatomy nor aid in identification. Again, I prefer a less expensive book and could have done without the drawings.

The book concludes with two interesting sections on where to find birds in the plains and how abundant birds are in selected parks and refuges. These sections could greatly aid those bird watchers planning trips through the region. However, he who depends too heavily on these sections could be misled because of some omissions. For example, the ecologically important Ordway Memorial Prairie maintained by the Nature Conservancy near Leola, South Dakota, is not mentioned. One is forced to suspect that similar locations in other states have also been overlooked.

BIRD PUZZLE: anonymous (solution in next issue)

DOWN

1. a lesser duck
7. ornithologist
8. birds with variously colored eyes
24. bird introduced to South Dakota
36. fish hawk
37. waterbird with lobed toes
44. male duck
57. sacred bird
67. bird of the plains
75. shorebird
81. water ouzel
86. corn-eater
89. bird class
90. what a cardinal is
105. hawk or "society"
108. Brown-throated
111. part of a bird song
116. black-bellied shorebird
121. archaic name for Harris' Sparrow
131. stubby-billed shorebird
155. Lawrence or Brewster's
166. Mississippi hawk
187. one of the "Birds"
193. tail-jerking fly-catcher
195. shrike family
198. large accipiter
201. not an eared one
204. species having variable bill size
205. crossbill
207. a tree-creeper
247. small alcid
257. largest warblers

ACROSS

2. part of a bird leg
8. evening sparrow
14. warbler with chestnut cheeks
21. any small difficult-to-identify shorebird
28. marsh hawk
41. many-colored
45. bird whose color changes as feathers wear out
53. swift family
69. Dunlin
88. inhabitant of meadows
100. eastern thrush
105. a humbling cuisine
114. Dan Tallman (ab.)
118. sparrow with breast spot
122. finch
132. a timely bird
149. as skinny as a
155. a long-necked wader
161. a diving gull
168. arctic falcon
175. a family of repeaters
182. speculum color
186. Is the house sparrow closely related to our other sparrows?
195. opposite of northern
206. preposition
208. impales prey on barbed wire for safe keeping
219. has eclipse plumage
225. warbler or tree
231. found on some bird wings
235. wings with blue or green
247. southern cuckoo
254. has an upward curving bill
262. water bird that will use a nest box
278. national symbol
283. a sibling fly-catcher
288. a hung-over vireo
300. only tiny tuftless owl likely to be seen in SD
307. bird society



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13									
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25										
26						27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34								
35			36		37		38		39	40											
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60		
		61	62		63		64		65			66						67			
		68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87
88	89	90	91	92		93		94		95	96	97					98	99			
	100	101	102	103	104		105	106	107	108		109	110			111	112	113			
	114	115			116		117	118	119	120	121		122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	
	130		131	132	133	134	135	136	137		138	139		140			141	142	143		
			144		145		146		147		148		149	150	151	152	153	154			
155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164		165	166				167	168	169	170		
171		172		173		174				175	176	177	178	179	180	181					
182	183	184	185		186	187	188				189	190									
191		192		193	194				195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204		205	
206	207		208	209	210	211	212	213		214		215		216			217	218			
219	220	221	222		223	224		225	226	227	228	229		230			231	232	233		
	234		235	236	237	238			239		240		241			242	243				
	244			245	246		247	248	249		250		251			252	253				
	254	255	256	257	258	259		260	261		262	263	264	265	266	267	268	269			
	270		271				272	273		274		275				276					
	277	278	279	280	281	282	283	284	285	286	287		288	289	290	291	292	293	294		
	295		296				297						298		299						
			300	301	302	303	304	305	306			307	308	309	310	311	312	313			
															314						

Published by  
SOUTH DAKOTA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION  
Editor: Dr. Dan Tallman  
NSC Box 740  
Aberdeen, S.D. 57401

Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 60  
Aberdeen, S.D. 57401

South Dakota State Library  
State Library Building  
Pierre, SD 57501