BIRDS OF THE RAINWATER BASIN, NEBRASKA

VERSION 1.0

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Stilt Sandpipers and White-rumped Sandpiper

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Purpose of this monograph

The purpose of this monograph is to provide a comprehensive review of the Rainwater Basin's avifauna in the form of an annotated list of all species that have occurred and been reported in the region. Based on the information available, each species' annual and seasonal occurrence and abundance is assessed. As with similar references, some conclusions are based on limited information and therefore are not as accurate as preferred. However, that is precisely why such a resource is constructed, to be a reference that can be easily consulted when observations are made. Users of this monograph are encouraged to challenge and question the conclusions made in this monograph. Furthermore, I would appreciate additional information or bird records that will improve the understanding of each species' occurrence and abundance. This will improve the information in future versions of this document.

The Rainwater Basin (RWB), located in south-central Nebraska, is known internationally as a critically important region for birds. This recognition developed when it became apparent that large proportions of North America's mid-continental duck and goose populations stopped-over in the region's playa wetlands during spring migration. In 1992, the RWB was designated as its own Joint Venture under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (USFWS-CWS-MMERF 1994). More recently, research has shown that the RWB plays a similar role for shorebirds that use these playa wetlands and terrestrial habitats during migration. In 2009, the RWB was recognized as the first "Landscape of Hemispheric Importance" by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WSHRN 2012). With an increased understanding of the RWB's role in supporting migratory waterfowl and shorebird populations, there is a corresponding focus on the importance of wetland conservation.

As important as the RWB's wetlands are to migratory waterfowl and shorebirds, the majority of the RWB landscape consists of terrestrial (largely cropped) habitats that are home to many other groups of birds. These terrestrial habitats, that were once a broad and uniform mixed and tall grass prairie plain, have been transformed to a patchwork of farmsteads, towns and cities, highways and roads, and more so than anything else, agricultural fields. The RWB's birdlife has been about both constancy and about change. Greater White-fronted Geese and Hudsonian Godwits still annually migrate through the RWB and stop to feed and rest at its wetlands just as they have done for millennia, but long since gone are Eskimo Curlews, nesting Black Terns and Lark Buntings, and Common Ravens. Once ubiquitous, Burrowing Owls and Greater Prairie-Chickens are now restricted to small grassland remnants. There have also been newcomers. House Finches and Eurasian Collared-Doves are now fixtures of suburban environs, Black-necked Stilts and Great-tailed Grackles now grace and even nest at the remaining wetlands, and the abundance of Snow and Ross's Geese during spring migration has increased dramatically.

Fortunately, coarse changes in the RWB's birdlife can be tracked because the region claims a relatively rich history of bird observation and study. The first recorded observations of birds go back to the late 1800s. Birding was a popular pastime of groups such as the Brooking Bird Club of Hastings during the first half of the 20th Century. In recent years, the RWB has become a popular destination for birders equipped with sophisticated optics, identification techniques, and communication devices. Even though there has been increased focus on birds in the RWB, a comprehensive summary of the region's avifauna has not been available. As the RWB landscape continues to evolve, there is a need to understand how the region's birdlife changes. The purpose of this monograph is to provide a comprehensive review of the RWB's avifauna and an annotated list of all species that have occurred and been reported in the region. This monograph consolidates and expands information from previous research (Jorgensen 2004 and 2005).

Setting

The RWB landscape is a loess plain located south of the Platte River in south-central Nebraska (Figure 1). The RWB is found principally in Adams, Butler, Clay, Fillmore, Hamilton, Kearney, Phelps, Polk, Saline, Seward, and York counties and extends into adjacent areas of southeastern Hall, northern Franklin, northern Nuckolls, western Saline, northern Thayer and northwestern Webster counties (Figure 2). The landscape is intensely agricultural with corn and soybeans as the principal crops. Landscapes that surround the RWB are primarily comprised of drainages, watercourses, and river valleys. The RWB plain is also interspersed by several stream courses. The largest is the Big Blue River and its tributaries. These areas have different topographies and habitats than those found in the RWB and these habitats includes riparian woodlands and upland slopes possessing oak woodlands.

The RWB loess plain has unique soil characteristics. Therefore, the study area was defined using a spatial data layer base generated from State Soil Geographic (STATSGO) data (provided courtesy of the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture). Clearly defining hard boundaries to the RWB study area is, at times, challenging and not always prudent because the landscape slowly transitions into the drainages, watercourses, and river valleys that surround the RWB. The intent is to focus attention on the loess plain that defines the RWB. Therefore, a small area in the extreme western portion of the RWB plain is excluded from the study area; this area is located west of U.S. Highway 283 and includes Johnson Lake. Johnson Lake is a large lake that attracts a notably different avifauna than the rest of the RWB. The RWB landscape defined here covers approximately 1,167,674 hectares.

Historically, the RWB landscape was defined by prairie grasslands interspersed with ephemeral playa wetlands. The tallgrass prairie in the east gradually transitioned into mixed-grass prairie in the west (Kaul and Rolfsmeier 1983). The playa wetlands were numerous, numbering in the thousands (LaGrange 2005). The primary water source for the playa wetlands is run-off (rain, snow and, currently, irrigation; LaGrange 2005), little water is contributed by intrusion of aquifer-originated water. RWB wetlands annually vary in depth, expanse and seasonality due to precipitation regimes in the Great Plains.

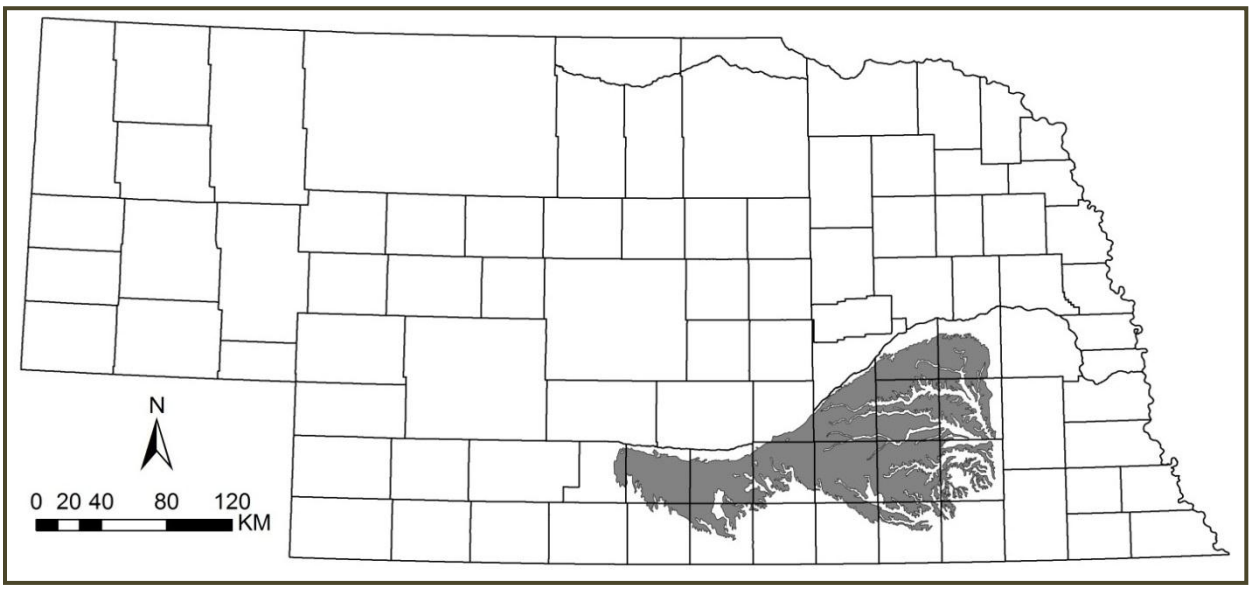


Figure 1. Location of the RWB landscape (dark gray) in Nebraska.

The territory that included the RWB was acquired by the United States in 1803 as part of the Louisiana Purchase. In 1854, Nebraska became a territory and settlement by farmers and ranchers rapidly followed. Excerpts from the early settlers' journals provide a unique perspective on the settlers' experiences. H.N. Logan settled in northeast York County, about 2 miles south of present-day Gresham, in 1871, at a time when other settlers were "scarce and remote" and when "the eye could sweep the entire horizon with scarcely an obstruction" (Campbell 1937). Lizzie Wirt (1937) "saw nothing but a broad expanse of blue sky above the broad expanse of prairie the following morning" at a settlement in York County. The vastness of the RWB that the first settlers beheld soon gave way to a population boom. For example, in Clay County, the population was only 54 in 1870, by 1880 the population was 11,294 and by 1890 it reached 16,310 (University of Nebraska at Omaha 2003).

The RWB landscape was rapidly transformed by agricultural development. Detailed descriptions of the pre-settlement landscape and the characteristics of the wetlands are not available because scientific surveys were not conducted prior to settlement and no unaltered remnants of the pre-settlement landscape exist (Kuzila et al. 1991). Kuzila (1994) notes the first mention of the RWB wetlands was made by surveyors in the 1850s. T.A. Bidwell (1871) surveyed and outlined the numerous wetlands in York County and referred to such sites as "hay marsh, "lake marsh", or "basin". Weaver and Bruner (1954) included the RWB as part of the greater Loess Plains region; they provide a description of the RWB wetlands based on an early study on prairie composition and types:

> *"This seemingly endless carpet of grass was not uninterrupted. Scattered throughout the nearly level prairie were depressed areas which were occupied by a very different type of vegetation. These varied greatly in size. Many were small, covering only one-fourth of an acre; others were 80 to 160 acres in extent. The largest were sometimes 1 to 3 miles long and 2 to 4 square miles in area. The smaller depressions were only a foot or two below the general soil level but the larger ones were depressed 10 to 15 feet. Depth of accumulated water varied greatly from year to year and spring to autumn. The shallow depression usually became dry by mid or late summer. In larger and deeper ones, water exceeded 3 feet in depth during wet seasons. These fresh water marshes were scattered thickly over the plain."*

The RWB has been recognized as a distinct landscape only in recent decades and even the name 'RWB' is a relatively modern term. Geologists and others often refer to the region as the "Rainbasin". The individual palustrine wetlands that comprise the RWB are referred to as RWBs, rainbasins, basins, lagoons, lakes, ponds, marshes, hay marshes, and lakes marshes. Palustrine wetlands are generally defined as being shallow and dominated by vegetation (Cowardin et al. 1979).

Geomorphology

All research on the origin and geomorphology of the RWB has been done only recently, beginning in the mid-1980s with Starks (1984). Starks recognized that most of the larger basins are elliptical in shape, oriented from southwest to northeast and the smaller wetlands tend to be irregularly shaped. Many of the large basins (51 of the 120 surveyed) have a crescent-shaped ridge found on the southeast side of the depression that Stark referred to as a "lunette". The material found on the lunettes is linked to that found in the depression, suggesting that the predominant wind direction (northwest) carried material from the basin and deposited it on the lunettes. Starks found that some basins were naturally "breached", or drained to an outside watershed, and no longer held precipitation run-off.

Krueger (1986) collected core samples from a wetland located at Kirkpatrick Basin North Wildlife Management Area in York County. Krueger's findings indicate that the Peoria Loess soil material present

in the cores was deposited 20,000–30,000 years ago during the Wisconsinan period. The regional source of Peoria Loess is the Platte River (Kuzila 1994). Krueger speculated that the removal of vegetation from an area, even by something as apparently inconsequential as bison grazing, was all that was necessary to begin the process of deflation (removal and deposition of soil by wind) that created the basins and lunettes. Krueger concludes that the prevailing winds were an important factor in shaping and orienting the elliptical basins. Recent work by Kuzila (1988, 1994), Kuzila and Lewis (1993) and Kuzila et al. (1991) provide additional information on the development of the RWB landscape. Kuzila (1994) found that the modern landscape and soil layer generally mirrors a previous "paleolandscape" that was deposited prior to the Wisconsinan Period. Thus, modern basins and ridges (lunettes) cover "paleobasins" and "paleoridges"; modern ridges tend to have less relief than the "paleoridges".

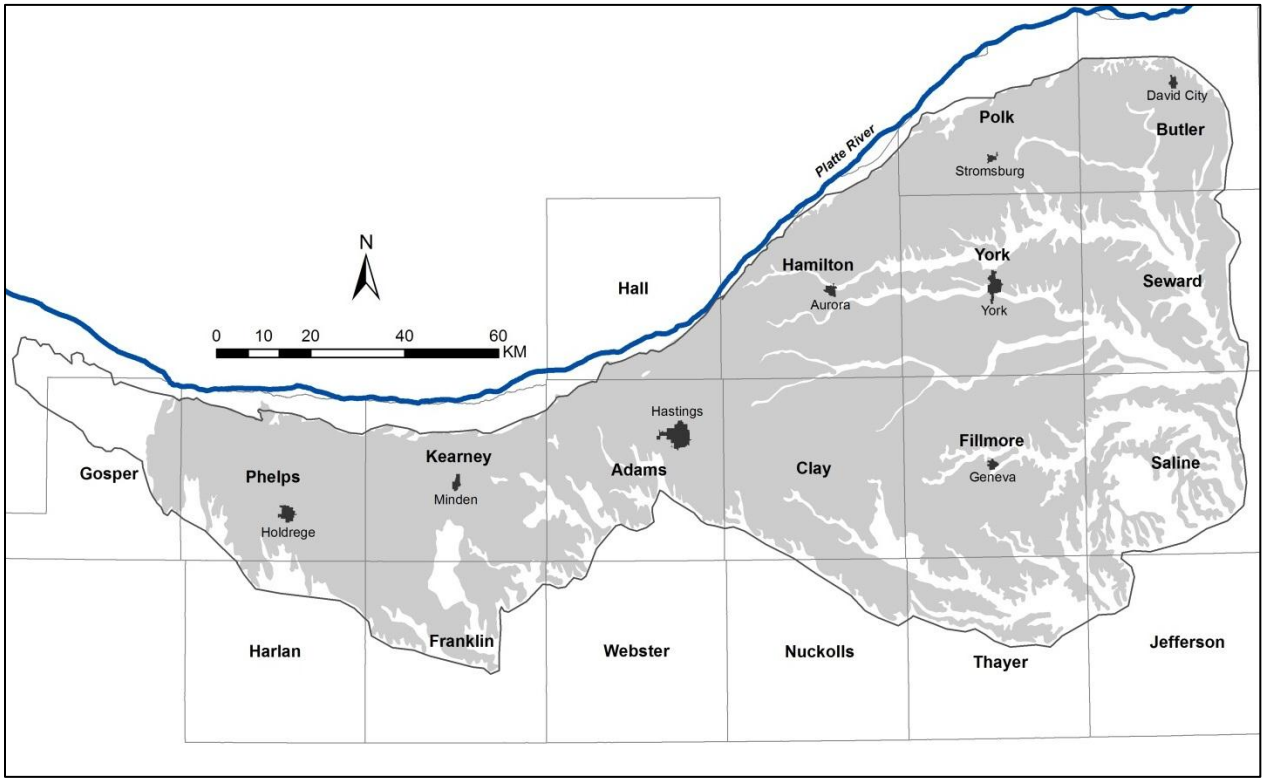


Figure 2. Location of the RWB relative to county boundaries and cities. The solid boundary is the RWB wetland complex identified by LaGrange (2005). This boundary is also used by the Nebraska Natural Legacy Project (Schneider et al. 2011) to identify the RWB Biologically Unique Landscape.

Ecology

The only detailed early account summarizing vegetation of RWB wetlands is from Weaver and Bruner (1954) who conducted field work during the early years of the 20th Century. Erickson and Leslie (1987), and Gilbert (1989) provide more recent information on the vegetation found in the RWB wetlands. Gilbert describes a cline of vegetation types running from the uplands surrounding the wetlands to the interior of the larger marshes and separates it into five discrete zones: Inner Marsh, Persistent Emergents, Outer Marsh, Transition, and Uplands. The wetlands are dominated by spikerushes (*Eleocharis* spp.), bulrushes (*Scirpus* spp.), smartweeds (*Polygonum* spp.), arrowhead (*Sagittaria* spp.) and cattails (*Typha* spp.). Modern vegetation composition and coverage of prairie wetlands may be quite dissimilar to what it was in the past due to a variety of human influences (Galatowitsch and van der Valk 1994).

Weaver (1943) described a seasonal wetland near Carleton, Thayer County, as being dominated by big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) and western wheatgrass (*Agropyron smithii*). Open prairie covered the uplands, with limited numbers of trees present along major watercourses, especially at the eastern edge of the region where Oak Savanna replaces the RWB (Bidwell 1871, Kaul and Rolfsmeier 1983). Tallgrass Prairie was present in much of the RWB and mixed with and was replaced by mixed-grass Prairie in western sections (Kaul and Rolfsmeier 1983). Dominant grasses in the prairie included big bluestem, indiangrass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), little bluestem (*Androgpogon scoparius*), and western wheatgrass (Weaver 1943, Weaver and Bruner 1954, Kaul and Rolfsmeier 1983).

Variable precipitation, and the associated run-off, produces variable water levels in the RWB wetlands which, naturally, influences vegetation community composition. The RWB currently averages from 56 centimeter (26 inches) of precipitation in western areas to 64 centimeters (30 inches) in eastern sections (Lawson 1977). The presence of water in the wetlands is generally most predictable in spring due to snowmelt and increased rainfall. During the drier portion of the year, August through December, many wetlands become dry (Condra 1906). Periods of drought in the RWB are followed by wet cycles; wetlands can be full of water one year and dry the next. A localized heavy downpour may flood a few wetlands, while wetlands only a few miles away remain dry. These annually and seasonally variable water levels prevent the establishment of stable vegetation communities in the playas (Haukos and Smith 1997).

The interior of large marshes may support stands of hydric vegetation in areas of open water that is several feet deep. The open water may eventually evaporate or drain and provide annual plants the opportunity to quickly sprout and establish in the barren, moist soil. If given enough time to complete their life cycle, this pioneering annual vegetation may grow several feet high and produce large quantities of seeds that are a valuable food resource to migrant birds. Alternatively, the vegetation may be flooded and destroyed prematurely from a single storm. The dynamic water levels would have been important in continually renewing food sources for migrant birds (van der Valk 1989, Anderson and Smith 1998). In addition to plant food resources, aquatic invertebrates are abundant in the wetlands (Gordon et al. 1990, Davis and Bidwell 2008). The variable water conditions and consequent variation in food supply in the RWB likely translates into variable numbers of bird species and numbers of individual birds that remained to breed in the marshes.

Prior to settlement by European Americans, the overwhelming majority of land in the RWB was open prairie. Several mammalian grazers, including bison (*Bison bison*), elk (*Cervus elaphus*) and prairie dogs (*Cynomys* spp.) were also important components of the ecosystem in the past. Fire was an important, regular event in the RWB landscape (Campbell 1937, Lanphere 1937, Liedtke 1937). Periodically, vast swarms of grasshoppers were present in the RWB. Accounts by the early settlers lament the destruction left in the wake of the grasshopper plagues that would arrive in late summer. Swarms would darken the sky and the “vibration of their wings made a roaring sound like an approaching storm” (Campbell 1937). Meeting a swarm of grasshoppers head-on was “like meeting a hail storm” (Liedtke 1937). Campbell (1937) noted that the most-destructive grasshoppers were “the Rocky Mountain type” and many other settlers remarked that during infestations the grasshoppers would lay eggs that would hatch the following spring. These eggs were a valuable food source for migrant birds such as the Eskimo Curlew that preferred to forage on burned patches of prairie (Gill et al. 1998). The Rocky Mountain grasshopper (*Melanoplus spretus*) is extinct and the Eskimo Curlew appears to be.

Settlement and Development

Early settlers began transforming the RWB landscape shortly after settlement (Farrar 1982, 1996a). The economic needs and industriousness of the settlers quickly turned wetlands into farmland. As summarized by Farrar (1982, 1996a), wetland drainage began slowly, since it was essentially done by hand. As technology and techniques improved during the middle portion of the 20th Century, more and more wetlands were destroyed or greatly modified. Wetland drainage was also encouraged by the federal government (Farrar 1982). Ditches or tunnels were dug to nearby watersheds that effectively drained and destroyed wetlands. Deep pits were dug to concentrate water at some wetlands, and other wetlands were filled in to level the land for surface water irrigation. For those wetlands that escaped outright destruction, culturally-accelerated sedimentation resulting from run-off from nearby cultivated fields has greatly reduced their value to wildlife (LaGrange et al. 2011). During the Dust Bowl years of the 1930s, large amounts of wind-blown soil was deposited in the wetlands (Weaver 1943, Farrar 1996a), with perhaps as much as three feet added in some basins (Farrar 1996a). Sediment carried by run-off from agricultural fields is a problem that persists today (LaGrange et al. 2011).

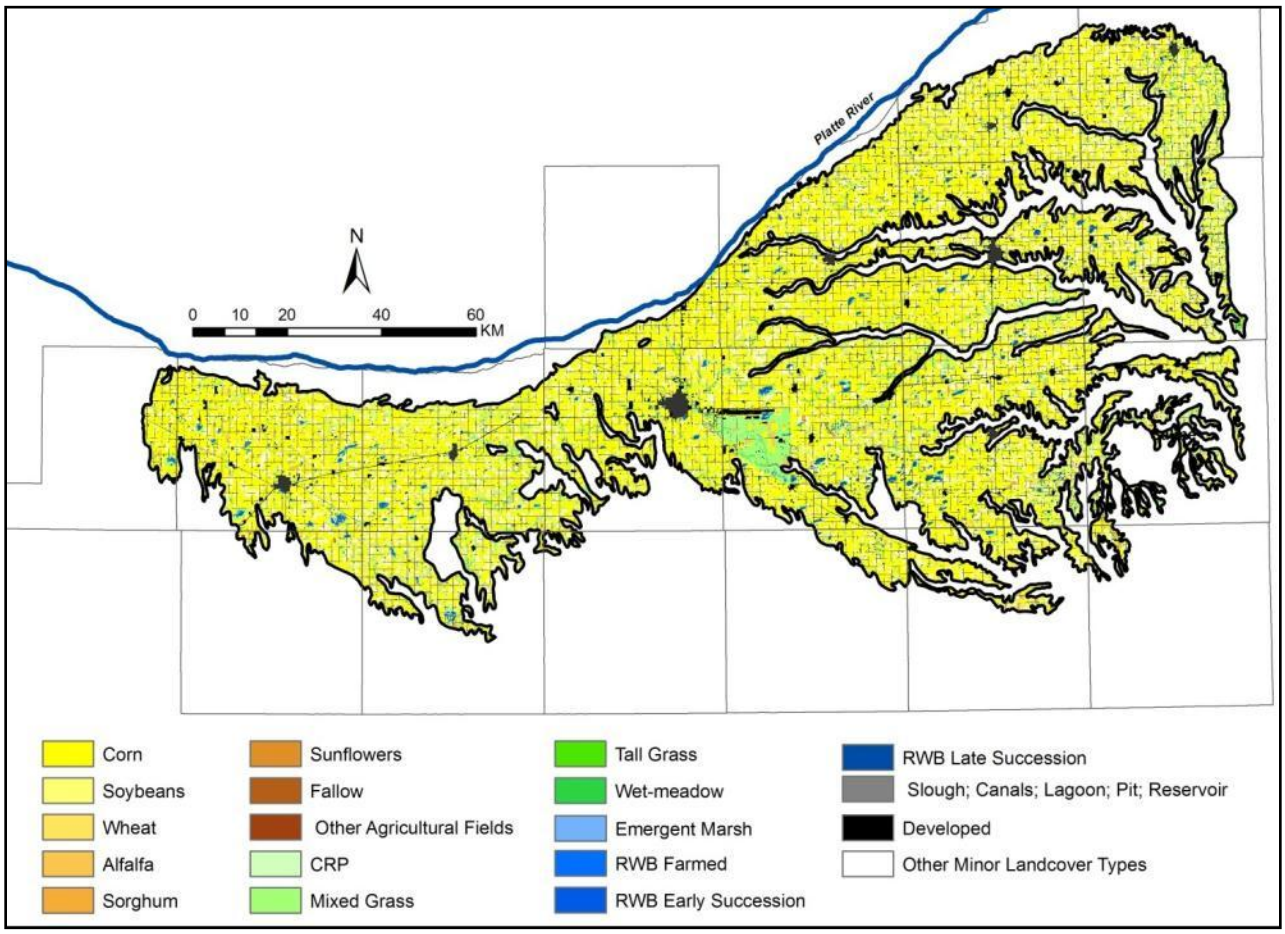


Figure 3. Land-use in the RWB landscape based on data from Bishop et al. (2009).

By the time M.S. McMurtrey began surveying the wetlands in the state in the 1960s; most of those in the RWB were already destroyed. By comparing his findings to the 1916 soil survey he was able to make the assessment that over 80% of individual wetlands and over 65% of the original wetland acres had been destroyed (McMurtrey et al. 1972). Two decades later, in the early 1980s, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission conducted a follow-up survey and found that the number of remaining wetlands and wetland acres had been halved (Schildman and Hurt 1984). The estimates provided by McMurtrey et al. (1972) and Schildman and Hurt (1984) are considered conservative (Ted LaGrange, pers. comm.) as the surveys were to inventory waterfowl breeding habitat, so many smaller wetlands were not inventoried. Wetland destruction continues at the present time.

The RWB landscape continues to change. The human population explosion of the late 1800s was short-lived. In Clay County, the population of 16,310 reached in 1890 was the highest it would ever be. The population has declined in each succeeding decade and by 2000 there were only 7,039 people living in the county (UNO 2003). Only the larger cities, such as Hastings and York, have maintained their populations or grown. The greatest reduction in population has been experienced in rural areas and small towns (UNO 2003). Farming practices and crops planted are less varied than in the past, facilitated in large part by the center-pivot irrigation system; there are fewer acres of pasture and hayfields in the landscape (Figure 3—5). Current land-use is dominated by agriculture, primarily corn and soybean production, and very little native habitat remains (Table 1; Figure 3). Figures 6—19 show various habitat types found in the RWB.

Dunlins, Semipalmated Sandpipers, White-rumped Sandpipers, Red-necked Phalaropes, Wilson's Phalaropes

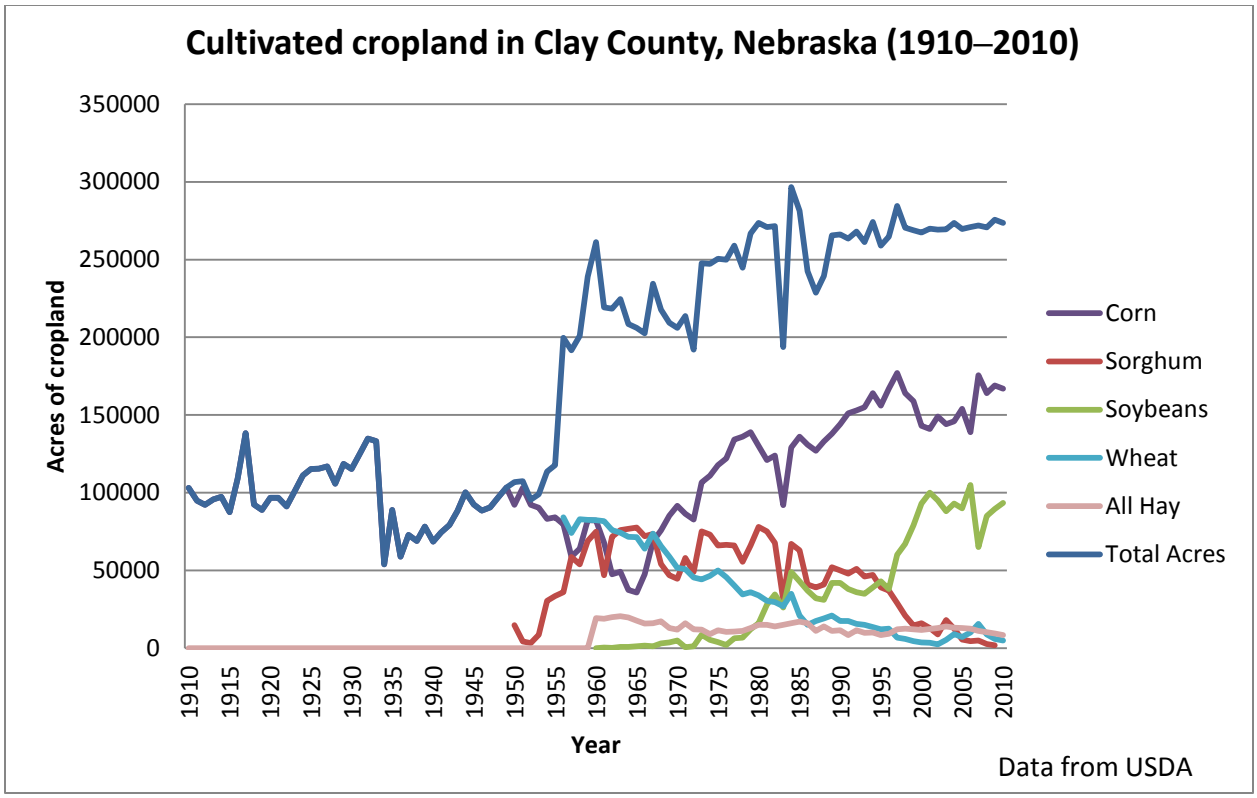


Figure 4. Cultivated cropland acres in Clay County, Nebraska 1910—2010.

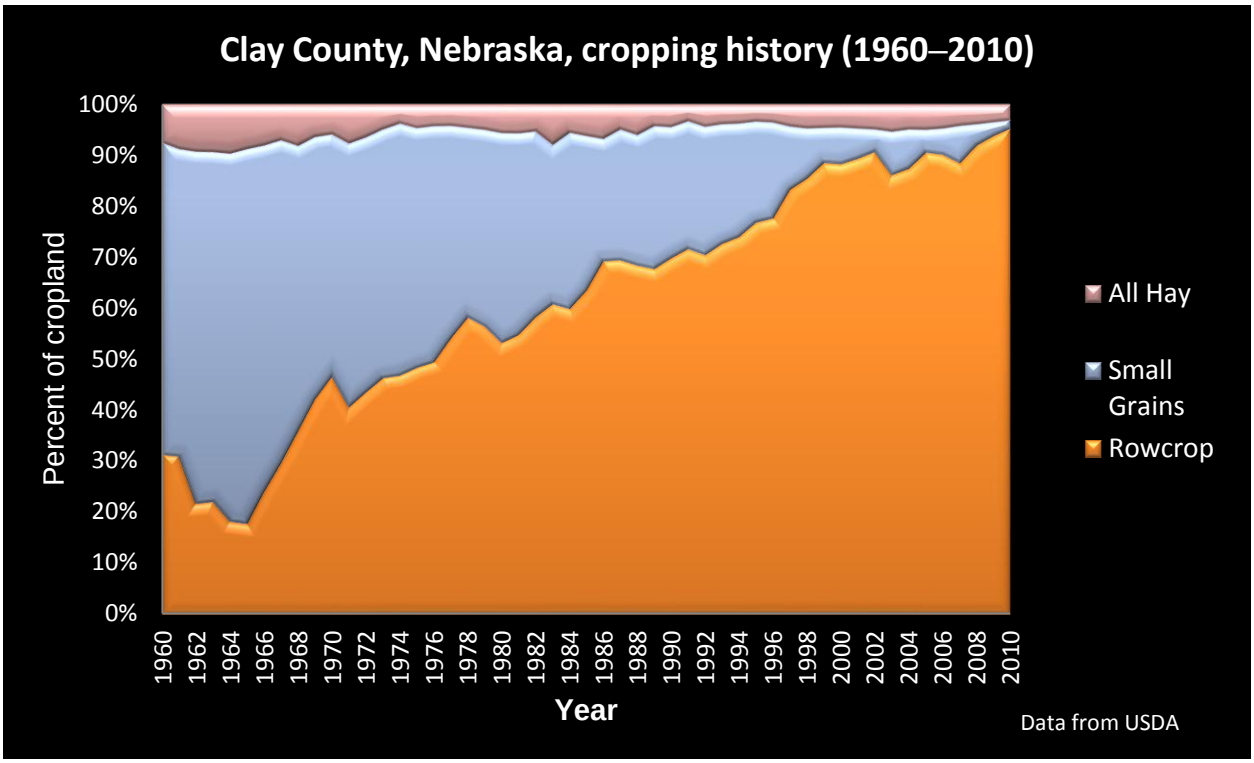


Figure 5. Percent of cropland in hay, small grains, and rowcrops in Clay County, Nebraska, 1960—2010.

Table 1. Land-use hectares and proportion of the entire RWB study area based on data from Bishop et al. (2009).

Land-use or landcover	Hectares	Proportion of RWB
Corn	609,591	0.522
Soybean	584,605	0.202
Mixed grass	358,348	0.124
Developed (urban)	204,817	0.071
Wheat	61,837	0.021
Other minor landcover types	34,690	0.012
Alfalfa	23,451	0.008
RWB wetland – early successional	20,052	0.007
Wet meadow	18,790	0.007
Sorghum	17,862	0.006
Slough, canal, pit, reservoir	15,785	0.006
RWB wetland – farmed	11,569	0.004
RWB wetland – late succession	10,935	0.004
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	9,775	0.003
Tallgrass	3,725	> 0.001
Other agricultural fields	250	> 0.001
RWB wetland – emergent marsh	22	> 0.001
Sunflowers	>1	> 0.001

American White Pelicans

History of bird observation in the RWB

Observations on the RWB's birdlife are limited, albeit a few key sources provide a wealth of information. One very important early observer was Wilson Tout who was born in Sutton in 1876 (Gates 1951). After attending the University of Nebraska he was a schoolteacher in York for several years before moving to North Platte. In 1902 he published a short essay "Ten years without a gun" in the Proceedings of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union (Tout 1902). While many early ornithologists were also specimen collectors, Tout clearly was not, he was an observer. Tout made numerous visits to the wetland at what is now Kirkpatrick Basin North Wildlife Management Area.

Another important early observer was Albert M. Brooking, who was a specimen collector. His contribution to the knowledge of the early avifauna of the eastern RWB, as well as that of Nebraska as a whole, is invaluable. In the 1910s, Brooking lived at Inland, very near Inland Lagoon, now known as Harvard Waterfowl Production Area. Many of the specimens and information he collected are from this site, which today is still a very important wetland. Brooking also gathered important information and specimens from other collectors in the area, including William Townsley. Townsley is perhaps the earliest source of information specific to the eastern RWB. A Civil War veteran, he settled ten miles north of Harvard in Hamilton County in 1871 (Brooking 1933b). Brooking passed away in 1946 (Haecker 1946). Most of the Brooking Collection is now housed at the Hastings Municipal Museum.

In 1920, the YMCA of Hastings organized a bird club and A.M. Brooking was the teacher and leader (NOU 1933). The group's first field trip was to Inland Lagoon on 22 May where the group observed an array of shorebirds. The classes continued and membership increased to 33 in 1923; in that same year, the group officially became known as the Brooking Bird Club. The club and its members were also active in the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union, and many of their sightings were reported in that organization's publications. The club remained active for several decades. Unfortunately, reports began dwindling during the 1950s and continued to drop off in following decades.

From the 1950s up until the early 1990s there is surprisingly little information available about the birds of the RWB landscape, with one notable exception. That exception is Lee Morris, a farmer and birder who lived in the midst of a group of basins near Benedict in northern York County. He is responsible for many important sightings, including a significant contribution to our knowledge of Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis*) migration and stopover. Morris is the only source of regular bird reports connecting the era of the Brooking Bird Club to the present time.

In recent decades, there has been substantial and important formal study on bird use in the RWB. Initial studies were crucial in defining the importance of the RWB to migratory waterfowl (Gersib et al. 1989). Additional and more recent work has been prompted by the need to prioritize conservation strategies and actions and improve decision-making as it pertains to the management of the remaining wetlands. Recent studies have focused on how migratory birds use of wetlands (Richert 1999, Jorgensen 2004a, Brennan 2006, Vrtiska and Sullivan 2009, Webb et al. 2010a, 2010b, 2011). Another study examined cowbird parasitism on songbirds (Post van der Burg 2005).

Figure 6. Rainwater Basin wetland in early spring; Snow Geese at Funk WPA, Phelps County 27 February 2007.

Figure 7. Rainwater Basin wetland in late April; Wilson's Phalaropes and American White Pelicans at Spikerush WMA, York County, 27 April 2007.

Figure 8. Rainwater Basin wetland in early May; Long-billed Dowitchers, Hudsonian Godwits and other shorebirds at Redhead WMA, Fillmore County, 5 May 2007.

Figure 9. Drying Rainwater Basin wetland with extensive mudflats in late April. Whooping Cranes, waterfowl and shorebirds at Griess WPA, Fillmore County, 24 April 2008.

Figure 10. Rainwater Basin wetland in May; Franklin's Gulls, Black Terns, Snow Geese, Ring-billed Gull and White-rumped Sandpiper at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA, York County, 14 May 2007.

Figure 11. Rainwater Basin wetland in June. Plant species include arrowhead, spikerushes, and smartweed. Wilkins WPA, Fillmore County, 24 June 2005.

Figure 12. Rainwater Basin wetland mid-July. The wetland dried and golden coreopsis, an annual forb, colonized the wetland. Also present is reed canary grass. Hultine WPA, Clay County, 3 July 2003.

Figure 13. Modified wetland where a pit has been excavated to concentrate water. Near Clay Center, Clay County, 12 July 2003.

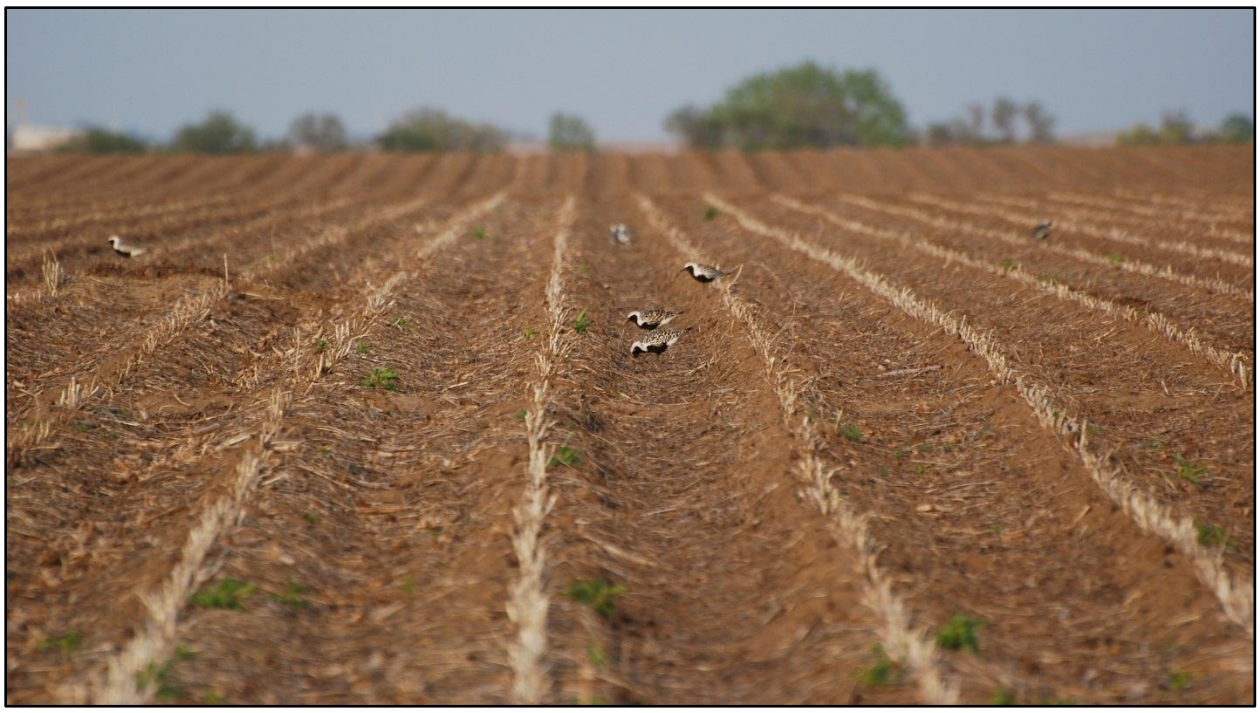


Figure 14. Agricultural field in spring with Black-bellied Plovers. Near Fairmont, York County, 17 May 2008.

Figure 15. Rainwater Basin agricultural landscape in late-July. Foreground is recently hayed alfalfa field and background is maturing corn. Near Tamora, Seward County, 31 July 2004.

Figure 16. Restored prairie in early summer. The Field Station, Clay County, 14 June 2006.

Figure 17. Virgin prairie remnant mid-July. Plant species present include white sage, leadplant, prairie coneflower, and native warm-season grasses. The Field Station, Clay County, 12 July 2003.

Data collection

Information on bird occurrence and distribution in the RWB was collected from all known sources. Primary sources included the Nebraska Bird Review, Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Letters of Information, Swenk (1925), Tout (1897, 1898, 1902), Nebraska Breeding Bird Atlas (Mollhoff 2001), specimen inventories from the University of Nebraska State Museum and those from the Hastings Municipal Museum, personal observations, and reports to the Nebraska birding internet discussion group, NEbirds (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NEBirds). The Nebraska Bird Review is the state's ornithological journal that has been published since 1933. The Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Letters of Information was the precursor to the Nebraska Bird Review and was published from 1925—1932.

It was difficult to evaluate the validity of some reports. Reports that are well outside regional patterns of a species occurrence are considered hypothetical or it is suggested that they may be in error. This was a subjective assessment on the part of the author. Sightings substantiated by details or other documentation are classified as "records" while sightings lacking details are referred to as "reports". In many species accounts, observations from the Nebraska Breeding Bird Atlas records are cited (Mollhoff 2001). Terms, such as "probable" and "confirmed", have standardized and specific meanings (see Mollhoff 2001 or the Nebraska Breeding Bird Atlas handbook for an explanation on these terms).

Northern Pintails

Explanation of species accounts

The information was compiled to make an assessment of individual species' status and used to construct accounts for each species. Species accounts, status and abundance qualifiers follow the general style of Sharpe et al. (2001). Status and abundance qualifiers have been modified, however, to better suit the nature of the information reviewed. Abundance qualifiers are only used for regularly occurring species. Nomenclature follows the most recent American Ornithologists' Union Checklist (AOU 1998) and supplements (AOU 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005. 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011). Terms used in the text are defined below.

Status

Regular: Occurred in at least 8 out of every 10 years.
Casual: More than one record, but not regular.
Accidental: One record.
Hypothetical: Reported with insufficient details so that the record cannot be accepted.
Unresolved: Data are limited so that any sort of determination cannot be made with confidence.
Extirpated: No longer occurs.
Extinct: Species no longer exists.

Abundance Qualifiers

Abundant: Large numbers generally in flocks, found on almost every field trip without much effort.
Common: Numbers found on almost every field trip without much effort.
Fairly Common: Small numbers encountered on almost every field trip and with some effort.
Uncommon: Not seen on every field trip but several are expected during each season with some effort.
Rare: Generally one record per season. Such species likely occur in very small numbers but require extreme birding effort to find.
Absent: Not present.

Occurrence Qualifiers

Summer resident: A species that is present during the summer and presumably breeds.
Summer visitor: A species that is present during the summer and is not known to breed.
Migrant: A species that occurs in the study area as it moves from wintering areas to breeding areas, and vice versa.
Winter Resident: A species that occurs in the study area over an entire winter.
Winter Visitor: A species that occurs in the study area during short period over the course of a winter.

Seasons

Winter: December through February
Spring: March through May
Summer: June through July
Fall: August through November

Table 2. Observer abbreviations

AB	Aaron Brees
BF	Bill Fink
BM	Bob Meduna
BP	Babs Padelford
CG	Carlos Grandes
CL	Chuck Lesiak
DH	Dave Heidt
DSt	Dave Stage
GJo	Gerald Jorgensen
GS	Gerry Steinauer
JC	John Carlini
JD	Jeff Drahota
JFa	Jon Farrar
JFo	Joe Fontaine
JG	Joe Gubanyi
JGJ	Joel Jorgensen
JM	John Murphy
JP	Jerry Probst
JR	Juanita Rice
JS	John Sullivan
JStr	Jon Strong
JW	Jake Walker
LE	Larry Einemann
LM	Lee Morris
LP	Loren Padelford
LR	Lanny Randolph
MB	Mark Brogie
MH	Mace Hack
MRK	Michelle Koch
NR	Neal Ratzlaff
PD	Paul Dunbar
PhS	Phyllis Salyards
RE	Rick Eades
RH	Robin Harding
RS	Ruth Stearns
SJD	Stephen J. Dinsmore
SS	Shari Schwarz
WF	William Flack
WRS	W. Ross Silcock

Seasons are defined in general terms. Occurrence by individual species occasionally extends beyond the limits of pre-defined seasons. For example, White-rumped Sandpipers' (*Calidris fusciollis*) northward migration extends into June, but birds found during that month are assigned to be spring migrants rather than as summer visitors. Many of the seasonal field reports in the Nebraska Bird Review are limited to date and county and are reported as such (e.g. 10 May 1935 Adams) or for early reports the city was reported (e.g. 10 May 1935 Hastings). For reports taken from NEbirds or through personal communications, observers are credited with their initials. Observers are listed in Table 2. Some abbreviations have been incorporated in the text and are listed in Table 3. Location of sites listed in the species accounts are listed in the gazetteer in the Appendix.

Table 3. Abbreviations used in text.

BBA	Breeding Bird Atlas (Mollhoff 2001)
CBC	Christmas Bird Count
HMM	Hastings Municipal Museum
LOI	Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Letter of Information
NGPC	Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
NOURC	Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee
NBR	Nebraska Bird Review
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
RWB	Rainwater Basin
UNSM	University of Nebraska State Museum
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
WMA	State Wildlife Management Area
WPA	Federal Waterfowl Production Area.

RESULTS

A total of 358 species have been observed in the RWB, with adequate supporting documentation; 232 species are considered regular, 68 are casual, and 56 are accidental in the area. One species, the Eskimo Curlew, was formerly regular but is now considered extinct. The total includes 37 species of waterfowl and 40 species of shorebirds. Of the total, 107 species are known to have bred in the RWB. Ten additional species have been reported in the RWB, but these reports lacked sufficient details and are considered hypothetical in the area.

Species Accounts

Anseriformes

Dendrocygninae (Whistling-Ducks)

Black-bellied Whistling Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*),

Status: Casual from summer through fall, hypothetical in spring.
Spring: There is an undocumented report of six birds found near Ong 15 April 1990 (Silcock 1999c).
Summer and Fall: There are three records. A male shot by J. Anderson of Ong 19 October 1989 was subsequently donated to the UNSM and is labeled ZM16079 (Labedz 1990). The bird showed no signs of captivity and the shooter mentioned that it appeared "very wary" and "did not decoy well" (Labedz 1990). A pair was at North Harvard Basin 2 August 1999 (JGJ) was relocated there the following day (Silcock 1999a). What was assumed to be the same pair was relocated 21 August at Hultine WPA (WRS, JS) and seen by several observers through 28 August. The most recent record was an adult at Harvard WPA on 6 June 2010 (JGJ, PD).

Anserinae (Geese and Swans)

Taiga Bean-Goose (*Anser fabalis*)
Status: Accidental spring migrant. A single adult, identified as *A.f. middendorfi*, was with Greater White-fronted Geese at Funk WPA 4 April 1998 (NBR 66:35; SJD). This particular subspecies is rarely kept in captivity (Bray et al. 1986) and reports of this race in North America have been accepted as natural vagrants (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Provenance of vagrant waterfowl

The RWB has a remarkable list of waterfowl, including records of several goose species that breed on different continents. Determining the provenance of such vagrant waterfowl is a challenging endeavor that is unlikely to yield an absolute answer. Furthermore, opinions regarding the natural vagrancy potential of species evolve with new information and research. For example, the notion advanced by Ryff (1984) that most Barnacle Geese found in North America were captive escapees was recently challenged by Sherony (2008). In this work, records of vagrant waterfowl that are not obvious captive-reared birds or from feral populations (e.g. Mute Swan) are generally accepted with the acknowledgement that there is uncertainty regarding the origin of these birds. The reader is invited to make their own conclusions regarding the legitimacy.

Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*)

Status: Accidental in winter. A single adult was photographed at Harvard WPA 30 January 2006 (PD). The NOURC reviewed, but did not accept the record, concluding identification was not in question but provenance was uncertain (Brogie 2007). Pink-footed Geese are rarely kept in captivity and records from northeastern North America are routinely accepted as wild birds.

Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*)

Status: Abundant spring migrant and common fall migrant, rare summer visitor. Nearly all mid-continental Greater White-fronted Geese are *A.a frontalis*. Nineteen UNSM specimens collected in the RWB all appear to be *A.a. frontalis* based on culmen and tarsus measurements. Krapu et al. (1995) discuss the species' food preferences and time management in the study area.

Spring: Usually departs by late April although small numbers remain into May. Peak numbers are present during early to mid-March. Gersib et al (1989) showed that as many as 200,000 individuals can be present at any one time in the RWB during spring migration and concluded 90% of the mid-continental population stops-over in the RWB.

Summer: There are about a dozen records from 6 June through 1 September. These birds are sometimes injured or otherwise discontinued their spring migration. Most often single birds remain, but occasionally pairs or small groups are found. High count: 4 at Harvard WPA 5 July 1995.

Fall: Migration is generally during October, however, the species may be present into late fall or winter if conditions allow. High count: 620 at Harvard WPA 10 October 2008 (PD) and 500 near Hastings 11 December 2008 (PD).

Emperor Goose (*Chen canagica*)

Status: Accidental spring migrant. A dead adult was collected at Harvard WPA 17 March 1997. While the possibility of the bird being an escapee from a captive collection was considered, the record was accepted by NOURC based on the condition of the bird (Brogie 1998).

Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens*)

Status: Abundant spring and uncommon to common fall migrant, rare to uncommon summer and winter visitor.

Spring: Brooking considered it abundant in the early 1900s. Abundance has increased in recent decades as the overall population has increased and the spring migration route has shifted west, away from the Missouri River Valley (Sharpe et al. 2001). Gersib et al (1989) reported that peak numbers reached only 15,000 in 1974, but peaked at 456,860 in 1987. Vrtiska and Sullivan (2009) more recently provided estimates of 1.2 to 7.3 million light geese (Snow and Ross's) use the Rainwater Basin during spring.

Summer: Prior to the 1980s, summer records of this species were unusual but are now annual or nearly so. Increases in summer records are presumably the result of overall increases in numbers (Sharpe et al. 2001). However, 2 Snow Geese were at Harvard WPA during June 1929 (LOI 44:5). Recent late high counts include 55 at Massie WPA 29 May 2000 (JGJ), approximately 50 at Harvard WPA 6 June 2010 and 42 at County Line WPA 1 June 1997 (JGJ). From early June on these laggards tend to disappear; whether they move out of the area, starve, or are preyed-upon is not known. A few individuals do appear to successfully summer. Of the 90 found 2–3 June 2001 only 3 remained to 11 August 2001. As many as 22 were at North Lake Basin WMA from June through early August 1995, but only 10 were found by the end of August (JGJ; NGPC, unpubl. data). Other August reports include 6 at Harvard WPA 20 August 1995 and one at Real WPA 17 August 1996.

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*)

Status: Common spring and an uncommon fall migrant, casual summer visitor. Formerly either very rare or absent as species was considered rare throughout North America in the early 1900s (Ryder and Alisauskas 1995). It has only recently become more common in the North American mid-continent (Ryder and Alisauskas 1995) and Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001). This increase has been noted in the frequency that dead Ross's Geese are picked during Avian Cholera outbreaks (Stutheit 1988). The first Ross's Goose picked up was not until 1986 (Stutheit 1988). During that year nineteen were deposited to the UNSM after numerous geese were killed during a severe thunderstorm (see Gabig 1991). Recent high counts support the notion that the increase continues. Vrtiska and Sullivan (2009) recently estimated 1.2 to 7.3 million light geese (Snow and Ross's) use the Rainwater Basin during spring.

Spring: High counts: 410 at Mallard Haven WPA 25 March 2000 and 340 Hansen WPA 19 March 2000. It has been estimated that the number of Ross's Geese using the region in spring may be as high as 20,000 (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Summer: There are seven records from 15 May–16 June. However, a single bird summered at a wetland in Clay County in 1998 (JGJ) and another was at Hultine 5 July–11 August 2008 (PD).

Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*)

Status: Accidental in spring. An adult was with 12 Cackling Geese at Massie WPA 28 March through 4 April 1998 (JS). On 9 May 1998, presumably the same adult was with a small group of geese at Harvard WPA (JGJ).

Brant (*Branta bernicla*)

Status: Casual spring migrant. The 2011 report, below, was a bird of the Pacific subspecies, *B.b. nigricans,* and the earlier records were identified as the Atlantic subspecies, *B.b. hrota*.

Spring: Three records: One was at Funk WPA, 21 March 1988 (Fall 1988), another was in Kearney County 22 February 1998 (LR, RH) and another was photographed at Lake Hastings 6–7 March 2011 (PD).

Brant, Lake Hastings, Adams County, 6 March 2011
Photo by Paul Dunbar

Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*)

Status: Abundant spring and uncommon to common fall migrant, casual summer visitor, and rare to uncommon winter visitor. Silcock (2006) reviewed the status of "white-cheeked" geese in Nebraska following the split of the Canada Goose into two species in 2004 (AOU 2004). Silcock (2006) concluded *B.h.hutchinsii* (Sharpe et al. 2001) is the only subspecies of Cackling Goose that occurs in Nebraska and the study area. Brooking considered the "Hutchin's" Goose common at Inland (Swenk 1925).

Summer: Late reports include singles at Harvard WPA 14 May 1999 and 6 June 1999 and at East Harvard Basin 14 June1999, all of which may be the same individual. Two other individuals were found 27 May through 2 June 1999 at Sinninger #Y22 and a singles were at Hultine WPA 2 June 2008 (LE) and a private wetland 25 June 2011 (JGJ).

Winter: Like other geese, Cackling Goose can be found during this period if conditions allow. Perhaps late fall migrants were 200+ at Harvard WPA 12 December 2005 (PD) and 560 at Lake Hastings 16 December 2005 (PD). "Canada" Goose was reported on one Hastings CBC 1964-1980, 25 in 1971. The 60 at Harvard WPA 9 January 2006 is perhaps the only January report in the study area.

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis)*

Status: Abundant spring and common fall migrant, uncommon summer visitor, rare summer resident, and a rare winter visitor. Silcock (2006) reviewed the status of "white-cheeked" geese in Nebraska following the split of the Canada Goose into two species in 2004 (AOU 2004). Silcock (2006) concluded "Giant" Canada Goose, which includes both and introgressants of *B.c. maxima* and *B.c. moffitti*, occurs throughout Nebraska. Canada Geese with this genetic heritage are established throughout the state as a result of reintroduction efforts. While common elsewhere in Nebraska, large Canada Geese are an uncommon migrant and a rare to uncommon summer visitor. Silcock (2006) also noted that several early specimens of *B.c. interior* were collected in central Nebraska. This subspecies may occur in small numbers during migration in the study area.

Summer: Breeding records are few at wetlands. D.G. Rose, a wetland manager at the time, received reports that breeding occurred at Harvard WPA in two years in the early 1970s (NBR 42:24). He was unable to confirm the reports, however. The frequency of nesting may be slowly increasing. Two pairs with broods were at North Lake Basin WMA 6 June 2010 (JGJ). Nesting occurs regularly at Lake Hastings (PD).

Winter: "Canada" Goose was reported on one Hastings CBC 1964–1980, 25 in 1971.

[Mute Swan] (*Cygnus olor*)

Status: Hypothetical in spring and summer. Two adults were at Harvard WPA 16 April 1995 (JGJ) and 3 adults were at Kissinger Basin WMA 13 June 2011 (JW; Silcock 2011). While occasionally birds are observed in Nebraska, no records are considered acceptable as they likely originated from feral populations or private collections (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*):

Status: Accidental spring migrant, summer visitor and fall migrant. This species is increasing in eastern Nebraska as reintroduced populations in Iowa and Minnesota also increase, a pattern that is expected to continue.

Spring: An adult was observed at Waco WPA 5 April 2008 (JGJ).

Summer: One record: an unmarked adult at Hansen WPA 16 June 1999 (JGJ).

Fall: A juvenile at Recharge Lake 30 November through 27 December 2003 (LR, RH) and four there, including one with a red-neck band, 2 December 2003, is the only record.

Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*):

Status: Casual spring and accidental fall migrant.

Spring: Five reports in the period 19 March–3 April: 19 March and 15 April (which may be different birds) 1975 in Clay County (NBR 43:47), 3 near Benedict 21 March 1979 (Morris 1979a), 1 April 1948 Adams (NBR 16:84, 18:23), 2 near Benedict 4 April 1969 (Morris 1970a), 30 April through 3 May 1936 at Harvard WPA (NBR 4:60, 89; Kinch 1968).

Fall: The only record is of 1 shot by a hunter 1 November 1952 in the vicinity of Hastings. The specimen is now in the HMM.

Swan species (*Cygnus spp.*)

Status: Brooking (1942) mentioned "during my boyhood I frequently saw many flocks of swans flying over, but in the past forty years I have observed them but once. This was in the spring of 1915 when a flock of seven flew over the [Harvard WPA]". Additional sightings that were reported as "swan species" include: 7 March 1973 Clay (NBR 41:47), 1 at Theesen Basin 11 March 1984 (NBR 52:52) and 6 found by L. Morris near Benedict 16 March – 15 April 1984 (NBR 52:52, 56).

Anatinae (Ducks)

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)

Status: Fairly common spring migrant and uncommon fall migrant, uncommon summer resident and rare winter resident.

Summer: Brooking (Notes) considered it "very common in the summer of 1915" at Harvard WPA and he believed it bred in the area (Swenk 1925). This was at a time when Nebraska breeding records were limited to three southeastern counties (Sharpe et al. 2001). Tout does not mention this species.

Winter: Several pairs routinely overwinter in Heartwell Park in Hastings (PD).

Duck nesting studies

Three duck nesting studies (Evans and Wolfe 1967, Harding 1986 and Schroeder 1986) have been conducted in the Rainwater Basin and these are referred to in some duck species accounts.

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)

Status: Abundant spring and fairly common fall migrant, uncommon summer visitor and casual summer resident and winter visitor.

Summer: Duck nesting studies showed this species is a low-density breeder (Table 4). Nesting was also confirmed in the Clay Center and Harvard BBA blocks in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). The only nesting record in the last fifteen years was of a hen with a brood of 6 at Heron WPA 16 August 2003 (JGJ). However, there are several additional observations of this species during the summer that suggest breeding occurs occasionally.

Table 4. Number of Gadwall nests from duck nesting studies.

Author, years of study	Total nests	# for species	% of all nests
Evans and Wolfe (1958–62)	206	1	0.5
Schroeder (1984–85)	190	10	5.3
Harding (1981–85)	723	32	4.4

Winter: Reported on two Hastings CBCs 1964–1980, 2 in 1964 and 1 in 1976. Also reported 7 January 1968 Adams (NBR 36:71).

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)

Status: Casual spring migrant and accidental fall migrant.

Spring: Sixteen records are during the period 5 March–10 April. There is one other late record from 27 April. In addition to phenotypically pure Eurasian Wigeons, three apparent American Wigeon x Eurasian Wigeon hybrids have also been found during the period 6–22 April. Hybrids can closely resemble pure Eurasian Wigeons (Sibley 1994). All records of Eurasian and hybrid wigeons have been males and all but one has occurred since 1992.

Eurasian Wigeon, Spikerush WMA, 5 April 2008

Fall: One record: an adult male taken 26 September 1914 at Harvard WPA is now in the HMM (#1782). This record has been questioned (Sharpe et al. 2001).

American Wigeon (*Anas americana*)

Status: Common to abundant spring and uncommon to fairly common fall migrant, rare summer visitor and accidental summer resident.

Summer: The only breeding record is a hen tending a brood of ten ducklings at Kissinger Basin WMA 30 June 2001. This species breeds regularly as close as the northwestern Sandhills in northern Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001).

American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*)

Status: Accidental in fall and winter. While formerly regular in eastern Nebraska as late as the 1980s, American Black Ducks have become casual across the state. Reports of this species should be well documented. Observers should also be aware that the Mottled Duck (*Anas fulvigula*) may also occur in the region.

Fall: The only record is 1 taken by W. Townsley at a "lagoon near Sutton" 10 September 1910 (Swenk 1925). A bird found at Waco WPA 4 August 1996 and with a black-purple-white speculum was likely a hybrid between this species and Mallard (Silcock and Jorgensen 1996b).

Winter: A male was at Harvard WPA 9 January 2006 (PD).

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

Status: Common to abundant spring and fall migrant, uncommon summer resident and winter visitor.

Spring: It has been reported that 50% of the mid-continental population use the RWB in spring (Gersib et al 1989).

Summer: Third most common nesting species found by Evans and Wolfe (1967), although later studies found it to be the second most common after Blue-winged Teal (see Table 5).

Table 5. Number of Mallard nests from duck nesting studies.

Author, years of study	Total nests	# for species	% of all nests
Evans and Wolfe (1958–62)	206	37	18.0
Schroeder (1984–85)	190	39	20.5
Harding (1981–85)	723	119	16.4

Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*)

Status: Abundant spring and fall migrant, fairly common summer resident, hypothetical in winter.

Summer: The most common breeding duck in the region (see Table 6).

Fall: A hen with a nearly fledged brood was found at Father Hupp WMA on the late date of 3 September 2000. Extreme date: 6 October 1962 Adams (NBR 31:42).

Winter: Reported on two Hastings CBCs 1964-1980, 6 in 1965 and 13 in 1967. The latter also likely referred to the sighting, 28 December 1967 Adams (NBR 36:59), listed in the seasonal field report in the NBR. No winter report is substantiated by details and none are considered reliable.

Table 6. Number of Blue-winged Teal nests from duck nesting studies.

Author, years of study	Total nests	# for species	% of all nests
Evans and Wolfe (1958–62)	206	104	50.4
Schroeder (1984–85)	190	128	67.3
Harding (1981–85)	723	536	74.1

Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)

Status: Rare to uncommon spring and casual fall migrant, casual summer visitor, and hypothetical in winter.

Spring: Most records fall within the period 23 March through 18 May (NBR 44:42). Extreme dates: 24 February 1956 Adams (NBR 24:67) and a male at Mallard Haven WPA 1 March 1995 (Silcock 1995a). High count: 7 at Funk WPA 28 March 1994 (NBR 62:69).

Summer: Perhaps a casual breeder, but there is no evidence other than a few summer observations. Early reports include a single bird at Harvard WPA 14 June 1929 (LOI 44:57) and a pair in the vicinity of Wetland #C229 30 June 1938 (Eckhoff 1938). Nesting was reported as "probable" in the Theesen Basin BBA block in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). Other recent records include: 1 at Waco WPA/Spikerush WMA 5 June 1995 (NGPC, unpubl. data), a male at Hastings Basin 7 June 2006 (PD), a male at Funk WPA 13 June 2008 (PD), a male in Clay County 13-17 June 2011 (PD, JW; Silcock 2011), a male at Theesen Basin 23 June 1996 (JGJ), a male at Freeman Lake 14 July 1996 (JGJ), 1 in basic plumage and identified by bill shape and red iris at Wetland # C125 30 July 2000 (JGJ). The only other report is 14 June 1985 Adams (NBR 53:52).


Northern Shoveler

Fall: Three reports: 3 August 1975 Adams (NBR 34:20), 2 Sep 1973 Adams (NBR 42:23), and a single at Moger WPA 18 August 2007 (JGJ).

Winter: One unsubstantiated report: 9 January 1967 Adams (NBR 35:5).

Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*):

Status: Common to abundant spring migrant and common fall migrant, rare summer visitor and casual summer resident.

Summer: Brooking considered it a common breeder at Harvard WPA (Swenk 1925). Now it is generally rare in summer, although data from the three duck nesting studies suggest it is a low-density breeder (see Table 7). Nesting was "confirmed" in the Greenwing, Clay Center, and Glenvil BBA blocks in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). Young were found in York County in 1986 (Bennett 1987). It appears likely that the species bred at Hastings Basin in 1935 (NBR 3:149–150). A hen with a brood was at Kissinger Basin WMA 14 July 2001 (JGJ) and 2 hens were observed feigning injury at Harvard WPA in June 2001 (JGJ). A hen and brood was at Harvard WPA 20 July 2001 (Silcock 2001) and at North Lake Basin WMA 16 July 2005 (JGJ).

Table 7. Number of Northern Shoveler nests from duck nesting studies.

Author, years of study	Total nests	# for species	% of all nests
Evans and Wolfe (1958–62)	206	5	2.4
Schroeder (1984–85)	190	4	2.1
Harding (1981–85)	723	8	1.1

Fall: Reported on two Hastings CBCs 1964-1980, 40 in 1965 and 12 in 1967. The latter also reported 31 Dec 1967 (NBR 36:59).

Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*)

Status: Abundant spring and fairly common to common fall migrant, rare summer visitor and summer resident, and casual winter visitor. Pearse et al. (2011) studied spring migration ecology in the RWB.

Summer: Brooking found it nesting at Harvard WPA only in 1915 (Swenk 1925). Breeds in low numbers but, during some years, may be absent entirely during summer. This was the second most common breeding species found by Evans and Wolfe (1967), but later studies found proportionately fewer nests (see Table 8). L. Morris recorded nesting in York County during 1973, an apparent wet year (Morris 1973b, Bennett 1974). Nesting was "confirmed" in the Benedict, McCool Junction, Clay Center, and Glenvil BBA blocks in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). A hen with nearly full-grown young was at Harvard WPA 17 July 1999 (JGJ) and two hens were tending broods at Kissinger Basin WMA 30 June 2001 (JGJ). A nest was found at the north unit of Mallard Haven WPA in May 2007 (JPM, JGJ).

Table 8. Number of Northern Pintail nests from duck nesting studies.

Author, years of study	Total nests	# for species	% of all nests
Evans and Wolfe (1958–62)	206	37	17.9
Schroeder (1984–85)	190	9	4.7
Harding (1981–85)	723	24	3.3

Fall: Migrants arrive by early to mid-August and increase dramatically by the end of the month. High count: 424 Sinninger #Y22 30 August 1998.

Winter: Reported on three Hastings CBCs 1964–1980, 1 in 1966, 50 in 1969, and 4 in 1971.

Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*)

Status: Abundant spring and common fall migrant, rare summer visitor and casual summer resident.

Spring: High count: High counts: 8,500 at Harvard WPA 3 April 1997 (JGJ).

Summer: There are two breeding records. A nest was discovered at Massie WPA in 1985 (Harding 1986) and a hen with a brood of 7 ducklings was at Harvard WPA 28 July 2007 (PD). These are the only breeding record south of the Platte River in Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001). However, breeding may occur more regularly. There were six reports of "probable" or "possible" breeding from BBA blocks during the 1980s. Morris (1973b) noted the species during June 1973 and speculated nesting occurred that year. Additionally, courtship behavior was observed at Harvard WPA 6 June 2010 (PD).

Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*)

Status: Common spring and uncommon fall migrant, casual in summer.

Spring: There are five May reports. Extreme dates: 1 at Freeman Lake 16 May 1997 and 1 at North Harvard Basin 28 May 2001. High counts: 550 at Harvard Sewage Lagoons 24 March 2001.

Summer: Three reports: 14 June 1929 Harvard WPA (LOI 44:5), 19 June 1967 Adams (NBR 36: 3) and 4 July 1973 Adams (NBR 42:24).

Fall: Extreme dates: 10 August 1975 Adams (NBR 34:21). Reported on one Hastings CBC (1964–1980); 6 in 1965.

Northern Shovelers

Redhead (*Aythya americana*)

Status: Common to abundant spring and an uncommon to fairly common fall migrant, rare to fairly common summer visitor, a casual summer resident, and an accidental winter visitor.
Spring: High counts: 34,000 at Harvard WPA 1 April 2001 and 3,700 at Ayr Lake 24 March 2001.
Summer: Abundance varies from year to year. Absent some years, but in others may be relatively numerous with counts of several dozen found at individual wetlands. Birds often occur in flocks and are apparently groups of non-breeders. High counts: 95 at Wetland #C32 28 June 1998 and 50 at Harvard WPA 16 June 2001. There are few breeding records. A hen tending a brood of one was discovered at Sinninger #Y22 30 June 2001. Ducey (1988) mentioned that Brookings found eggs in 1916 in Clay County. Some were apparently present in several BBA blocks during the 1980s and nesting was "confirmed" at the Benedict block. A nest with 16 eggs located at Harvard WPA 28 May 2007 was believed to be this species (PD). The nest was confirmed to belong to Redhead on 5 June 2007 (WM). These are the only reports of nesting for the RWB and the only Nebraska nesting records outside the Sandhills of north-central Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001).
Winter: One winter report, 7 January 1967 Adams (NBR 36:71).

Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*)

Status: Fairly common spring and uncommon fall migrant, casual summer visitor.
Spring: High counts: 2,200 at Harvard WPA 1 April 2001 and 312 at Kissinger Basin WMA 20 March 1999. Most depart before May and there are few reports during that month. Extreme dates: a female at Ayr Lake 24 May 1999, 2 in Clay County 28 May 2001, and 2 at Harvard WPA 31 May 1998 (Silcock and Jorgensen 1998a).
Summer: Single males were at Harvard WPA 3 June 2008 (PD), Ayr Lake 6 June 2010 (PD), both Sinninger #Y22 and Kissinger Basin WMA 16 June 2001 (JGJ), at North Hultine WPA 15 June 2002 (JGJ), Harvard WPA 5 July 2010 and North Lake Basin WMA 9 July 2011 (JGJ). Other reports include 2 June 1967 Adams (NBR 36:3) and 4 August 1990 Polk (NBR 59:16). These records appear to be the only June or July records south of the Platte River in Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001).
Fall: Reported on one Hastings CBCs 1964–1980, 2 in 1965.

Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*)

Status: Rare spring migrant and accidental in summer and fall.
Spring: Twenty-one records are from 5 March–10 May. The records includes a specimen (UNSM ZM14529) taken near Waco 9 April 1904
Summer: A female was photographed near Grafton 3 July 2005 (JGJ).
Fall: One record: 3 at Ayr Lake 17 December 1998.

Greater Scaup, flooded field near Grafton, 3 July 2005

Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*)
Status: Common spring and an uncommon fall migrant, casual summer visitor. Brooking considered it uncommon in spring and abundant in fall, opposite of the assessment made here.
Spring: Extreme date: 6 February 1964 Adams (NBR 32:69). High counts: 2,800 at Harvard WPA 1 April 2001 and 1,200 at Mallard Haven WPA 1 April 2001.
Summer: There are about twenty-one reports 24 May through 7 August, eight of which are in June. Most often singles are found, but 8 were at Harvard WPA 15 June 1998.

Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*)
Status: Accidental in fall. An immature/female type was photographed at Harvard WPA 29 October 2007 (PD). This species is regular in low numbers in Nebraska during fall, but is usually found at reservoirs.


Surf Scoter, Harvard WPA, 29 October 2007, Photo by Paul Dunbar

White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*)
Status: Accidental in spring and fall.
Spring: One taken in Clay County 14 February 1916 is now in UNSM (ZM7684).
Fall: The only report, 20 October 1972 Adams (NBR 41:29), is not supported by details but occurred at a time of year when small numbers of scoters migrate through the Great Plains (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*)
Status: Accidental spring migrant. The only record is an immature at the Fairmont Sewage Lagoons 4 April 2005 (JGJ).

Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*)
Status: Fairly common spring and rare fall migrant.

Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)
Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and winter visitor. Most often observed at impoundments such as Lake Hastings or the Harvard Sewage Lagoons rather than at natural wetlands.
Winter: Reported on two Hastings CBCs 1964–1980, 2 in 1964 and 1 in 1976.


Long-tailed Duck, Fairmont Sewage Lagoons, 4 April 2005

Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*)

Status: Rare to uncommon spring migrant, rare summer visitor, casual in fall.
Summer: Intriguing is the remark, based on information from Brooking, by Swenk (1925) that this species "remains all summer and probably breeds" at Harvard WPA; this is presumably the same report mentioned by Ducey (1988). This species is strictly a cavity nester (Dugger et al 1994) and the presence of large trees at Harvard WPA seems unlikely at that time. Birds observed during the summer fits the pattern observed in recent times and may explain Swenk's (1925) remarks. The majority of recent reports have been from May through August with about fifty observations since 1996 and the vast majority of birds are in female-type plumage. These may be females but are perhaps sub-adults. Exceptions are males, perhaps late migrants, at Pintail WMA 7 May 2000 (JGJ) and Kissinger Basin WMA 14 May 2000 (JGJ). Most records are in June (21) and July (14), followed by May (13) and August (1).
Fall: Prior to 2003, the only record is a female taken by W. Krug at Inland 20 November 1915 (Brooking Notes). Recent reports include 4 at Harvard WPA 29 October 2007 (PD), 4 at Lake Hastings 9 November 2003 (PD) and a single at a small wetland southeast of Hastings 14 November 2005 (PD).

Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*)

Status: Rare to uncommon spring and casual fall migrant. Usually found at impoundments such as Lake Hastings rather than at natural wetlands. Swenk (1925) claimed that Brooking considered both the Red-breasted and Common Merganser as common at Inland. This is a departure from recent observations.
Spring: Extreme date: 29 April 1968 Adams (NBR 36:72).
Fall: Reported on one Hastings CBC 1964–1980, 1 in 1966. Also reported 19 December 1964 Adams (NBR 33:36). It is perhaps at least a rare or casual late fall migrant.

Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant. Swenk (1925) claimed that Brooking considered both the Red-breasted and Common Merganser common at Inland (see comments under Common Merganser).
Spring: Brooking (Notes) mentioned that it was present at Inland 15 April 1914 and that a male was taken near Harvard by W. Townsley. Other reports are from Adams County 29 February 1956, 7 March 1937 Adams (NBR 5:60), 14 March 1934 Adams, 30 March 1955 Adams (NBR 23:67). The only recent spring record is two female-plumaged birds at Hansen WPA 7 May 2011 (JGJ).
Fall: Two records: 2 were at Lake Hastings 9 November 2003 and 3 were at Harvard WPA 6 November 2007.

Ruddy Duck *(Oxyura jamaicensis*)

Status: Common spring and a fairly common fall migrant, rare summer visitor and summer resident.
Summer: Evans and Wolfe (1967) found five broods in Clay County 1958–62. Nesting was considered "probable" at the Glenvil and Mallard Haven BBA blocks, and breeding was "confirmed" at the Benedict block in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). The remaining breeding records all have observation dates and interestingly none are during May or June. All breeding records (with dates) are relatively late, from July and August and even into September. Brooking (Notes) collected a nest with eggs at Harvard WPA 12 July 1915. Morris (1983a) found a hen with a brood in northern York County September 1982. Hens were tending broods at Smith WPA 14 July 2001 (JGJ) and Sinninger #Y22 12 August 2001 (JGJ). A hen with a brood was at Johnson WPA 6 August 1996 (JGJ, WRS) and another hen with brood was at Deep Well WMA 17 August 2010 (JGJ). Late summer/early fall 2008 was notable because there were four breeding records from Seward and eastern York Counties. Two hens with broods were observed at a private wetland near Goehner 23 August 2008 (JGJ). Hens with broods were also at Straightwater WMA 30 August 2008 (JG) and at North Lake Basin 12 September 2008 (LE).
Fall: Extreme date: 5 at Ayr Lake 17 December 1998.

Galliiformes

Odontoporidae (Quails)

Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*)
Status: Uncommon permanent resident throughout. Brooking considered it common at Inland (Swenk 1925) and Tout (1897) found it nesting in the York area in 1897.
Winter: Recorded on 14 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 30 individuals).

Phasianidae (Partridges and Pheasants)

Gray Partridge (*Perdix perdix*)
Status: Casual in summer. Two reports: a well-described bird found at a wetland north of Edgar 25 June 1966 (NBR 34:77) and the other report is 25 June 1967 York (NBR 35:7). This species' range in Nebraska has decreased dramatically in recent decades and may no longer occur regularly even in northern Nebraska. Thus, additional records of wild birds are not anticipated.

Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*)
Status: Uncommon permanent resident.
Winter: Recorded on 15 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 25 individuals).

Sharp-tailed Grouse (*Tympanuchus phasianellus*)
Status: Accidental. Prior to 1925, Brooking had never seen this species in the area (Swenk 1925), however, Greater Prairie-Chicken, was common. Brooking's farther shot a Sharp-tailed Grouse near Axtell, date unknown, and that "in a long experience as a hunter in western Kearney and eastern Phelps Counties", this was his only record of the species. Brooking also reported this species 2 May 1943 Hastings (NBR 11:40). Other reports include 21 December 1987 Polk and 12 January 1976 Adams. Any sightings of this species in the study area should be documented because of similarity to the Greater Prairie-Chicken.


Snow and Ross's Geese

Greater Prairie-Chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido*):

Status: Uncommon resident, possibly formerly a common and widespread resident in eastern sections. Abundance and range within the RWB apparently declined during the 20th Century, possibly so much so that it was extirpated as a resident in the mid- to late 20th Century. In just over the last decade, the species appears to have recolonized parts of the RWB.

The Greater Prairie-Chicken was restricted to eastern Nebraska prior to settlement (Sharpe et al. 2001). A westward expansion took place in the late 1800s with the mixing of crops with grassland (Sharpe et al. 2001). It was reported as early as the mid-1870s from northeast York County (Liedtke 1936) suggesting that it was present prior to settlement. Brooking claimed that it was a common resident at Inland (Swenk 1925). Ducey (1988) cited a breeding record from Fillmore County in the late 1800s. Tout (1902) remarked at the turn of the century "with the breaking of the prairie the Burrowing Owl and Pinnated Grouse have become quite scarce in [the York area]". In 1926, Mrs. A.H. Jones recorded 30, eight miles from Hastings on 14 March. She also observed a lone displaying male in a pasture twelve miles east of Hastings in Clay County (LOI 15:4).

It is likely that by the 1930s or shortly thereafter the Greater Prairie-Chicken was extirpated as a breeding species in most, if not all, of the RWB and became casual in occurrence. A sighting by Brooking near Hastings 5 March 1933 was unusual enough to merit mentioning. Also in the 1930s, 17 were found near Deweese (barely southwest of the study area) 26 December 1932 (NBR 1:46–47) and it was reported 19 December 1937 Adams (NBR 6:18). During the winter of 1983–84, Morris reported several during December and January, the observations highlighted by a flock of "at least 100" along the Polk-York County line 7 January 1984 (Morris 1984). Birds are known to wander widely, especially south and east from breeding areas during severe winters (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Over the past ten to fifteen years this species has increased. Unusual, at the time, were reports of 12 near Pintail WMA 21 October 1997 (JGJ, WRS) and 12 were found by one mile south and one mile east of Eldorado 19 October 2002 (DH). As late as 2001, Sharpe et al. (2001) noted that there were no summer/breeding observations for Clay, Fillmore and Nuckolls Counties. Since about 2005, however, leks have been observed at several sites, generally at or near conservation properties. Perhaps the first location where lekking was noted was Hultine WPA, where up to 14 males and 8 females were observed 26 March 2005 (JGJ). Lekking birds have also been observed at Harvard WPA, Wilkins WPA, Rauscher WPA, Kirkpatrick Basin South WMA (2007, 2008, and 2010), Verona Complex, Hansen WPA, Moger WPA, and Brauning WPA.

Meleagridinae (Turkeys)

Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*)

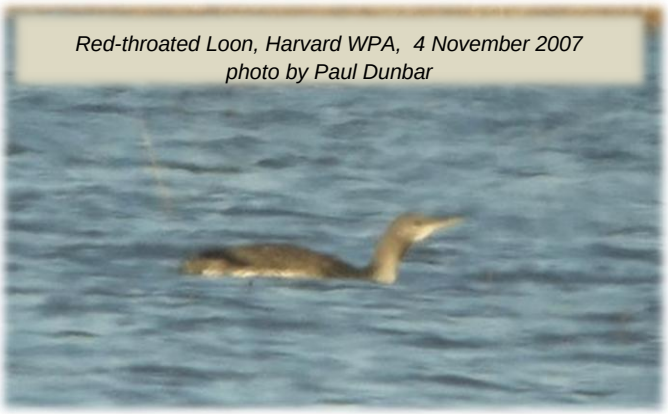
Status: Rare to uncommon permanent resident. This species has been reintroduced and has reoccupied much of its former range. This species is most often observed near wooded streams.

Gaviiformes

Gaviidae (Loons)

Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*)

Status: Accidental in fall. An immature was photographed at Harvard WPA 4 November 2007 (PD).



Red-throated Loon, Harvard WPA, 4 November 2007
photo by Paul Dunbar

Common Loon (*Gavia immer*)

Status: Casual spring migrant and summer visitor, accidental in fall. In addition, Brooking collected a specimen at Funk in 1900 (Swenk 1925).

Spring: Seven reports in the period 2 April –15 May. High count: 2 adults at Wetland #F11 late April 1994.

Summer: Two reports: a single at an irrigation re-use pit in northern York County 1–10 June 1978 (Morris 1978b) and 4 July 1965 Adams (NBR 34:51).

Fall: The only report is from Harvard WPA 30 October 1927 (NBR 1:88)

Podicipediformes

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*)

Status: Fairly common spring and uncommon fall migrant, formerly a common summer resident now uncommon.

Summer: Brooking noted that it was a "common breeder on the lagoon, near Inland, each year" (Swenk 1933b) and Tout (1902) found it nesting at the wetland at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA. Breeding numbers have presumably decreased. Evans and Wolfe (1967) observed 2 broods in Clay County 1958–62. In 1982, Morris (1983a) noted several nests at a basin near Benedict that was denuded by grazing cattle; the cattle eventually destroyed some of the nests. "Confirmed" nesting was reported from the McCool Junction and Benedict BBA blocks in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). In 2001, as many as 6 nests were located at Harvard WPA 23 May (JGJ). Nest building was observed at Moger WPA 28 June 2003 (JGJ) and adults were sitting on a nest at Kissinger Basin WMA 12 and 19 July 2003 (JGJ). Nesting was observed at multiple sites in 2005, including Waco WPA/Spikerush WMA where two broods were found 17 July 2005 (JGJ). Nesting has occurred every summer at North Lake Basin WMA from 2007 – 2011 (JGJ, JG). Regular nesting at this location followed sediment removal a year earlier. Sediment removal is discussed by LaGrange et al. (2011). A brood was observed at Kissinger Basin WMA 24 July 2011 (JGJ).

Fall: During October 1972 "a hundred or more" were seen at Harvard WPA "largely due to an abundant minnow supply" (NBR 41:28). During that particular year the wetland was reported as having a "good supply of water all summer (six feet deep at times)" (NBR 41:28).

Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*)

Status: Uncommon spring and rare to uncommon fall migrant.

Eared Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*)

Status: Fairly common spring and uncommon fall migrant, casual summer visitor and summer resident, accidental in winter.

Spring: Reports are from 29 March through 1 June. High count: 162 at Harvard WPA 15 Apr 1998.

Summer: Brooking observed breeding at Harvard WPA, as reported by Swenk (1925, 1933):

> *"However at the lagoon near Inland, Clay County, A.M. Brooking reports that in recent years it has still been a fairly common summer resident and breeder, and at that place he collected a specimen on July 28, 1914, several sets of eggs on July 4, 1915, and four young birds on July 28, 1915, in which latter year it bred abundantly at the lagoon. Concerning the habits of this grebe, at the Inland Lagoon, A.M. Brooking says that it "nests in about three feet of water and always covers its eggs."*

The only other confirmed nesting is from York County. On 22 June 2008, 12 birds and at least two active nests were found at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA (JGJ). In addition to these confirmed reports, breeding activity has been observed at other times. A pair was exhibiting breeding behavior (bringing nest material, sitting on the developing mound, hopping off again) at Harvard WPA, Clay County, on 28 May 2007 (PD). BBA data included nesting reported as "possible" in the Mallard Haven WPA block, "probable" from the Benedict block, and "confirmed" from the Clay Center block (Mollhoff 2001).

Fall: There are a handful of August reports that are considered early migrants. Otherwise found singly or in small groups throughout the remainder of migration. Extreme date: 4 November 2000 Sinninger #Y22.

Winter: One remained in the Hastings vicinity 30 December 1928 (LOI 37:1) through 20 January 1929 (LOI 39:2).

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant and summer visitor.

Spring: Eight reports are during the period 30 March–17 May. Three records occurred on the same rainy day (24 Apr 1999) and were likely the result of a small "fallout" of birds. High count: 7 at Harvard WPA 24 April 1999.

Summer: Three recent records of single birds: Fairmont Sewage Lagoons 5 June 2006 (PD), Kissinger WMA 17 June 2011 and Sacramento Wilcox WMA 20 June 2009 (JGJ).

Fall: Three early and one recent record. Early records include a specimen (HMM #2699) collected at Harvard WPA 12 October 1917 (Brooking Notes), a female (HMM #2657) collected by Brooking (Notes) at Harvard WPA 18 November 1915 (Swenk 1933) and 2 December 1967 Adams (NBR 35:59). The only recent record is a single bird at Harvard in October 2007 (PD).

Clark's Grebe (*Aechmophorus clarkii*)

Status: Accidental in spring and summer.

Spring: A single was at Funk WPA 19 April 1995 (SJD).

Summer: An adult was at Waco WPA 4 June 2005 (JGJ).

Ciconiiformes

Ciconiidae (Storks)

Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*)

Status: Accidental. Swenk (1918, 1925) and Brooking (1933b) account for the single record as follows; Brooking (1933b) confirms the date of collection as "the early 1880s"; Swenk (1918) lists it as 1885. Swenk's notes (1925, excerpt below) list the date as 1895, apparently a typographical error.

> "*In April 1895 (sic), Mr. William Townsley shot a Wood Ibis just across the road from his home near Harvard, on Section 19 of Township 9, Range 6, Hamilton County, Nebraska. This specimen was mounted by Mr. Townsley and was secured from him by Mr. Brooking for his collection, where it bears No. 2796. It is a bird in immature plumage and had the head feathered and the bill and legs a light color. This record places the Wood Ibis definitely on the Nebraska list.*"

This specimen no longer exists (Bray et al 1986), but the record is considered to be likely correct.

Suliformes

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants)

Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, uncommon summer visitor.

Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*)

Status: Accidental summer visitor. An immature with Double-crested Cormorants was at Hultine WPA 31 May (PD) – 4 June 2008 (JGJ).

Neotropic Cormorant (left) with Double-crested Cormorant, Hultine WPA, 4 June 2008

Pelecaniformes

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*)

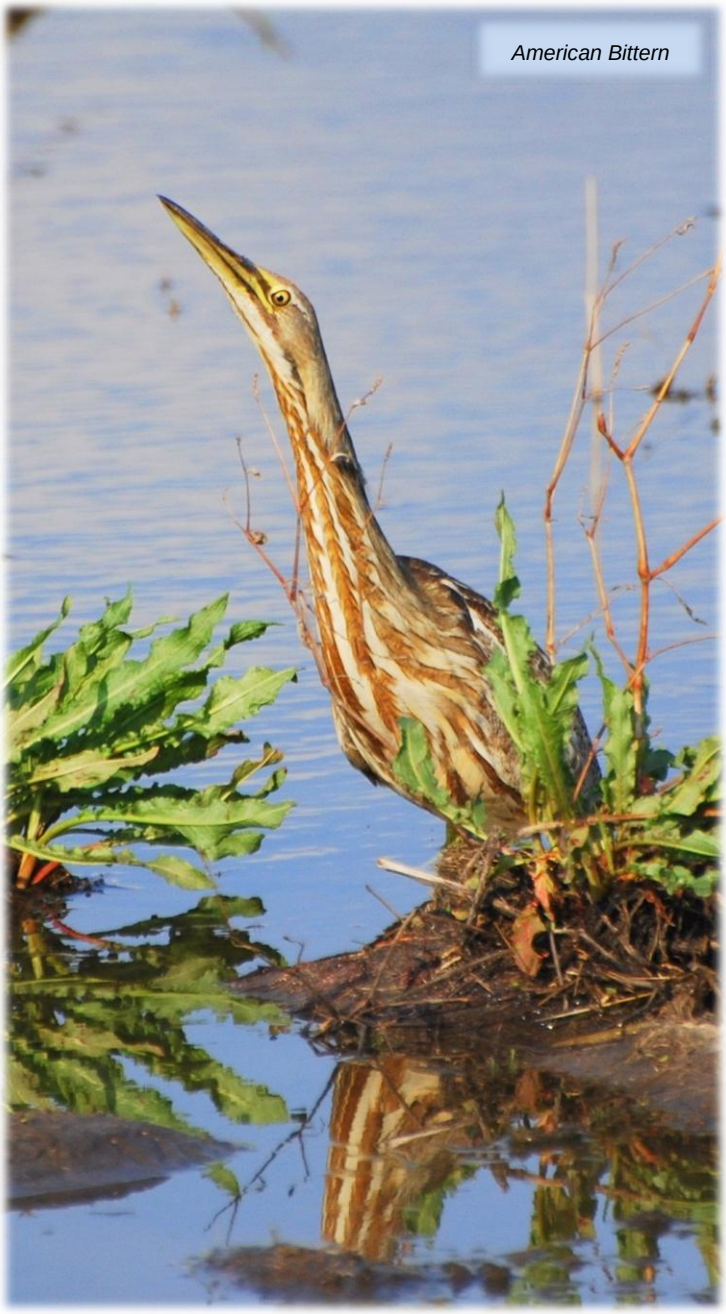
Status: Common spring and uncommon fall migrant, absent to fairly common summer visitor. Abundance during any particular season is correlated with the presence of water at larger wetlands.

Summer: Morris (1983a) reported that the 30 that arrived at a wetland in northern York County in late July grew to over 200 (high count) in the following weeks.

Fall: High count: 110 at Heron WPA 30 August 2003.

Ardeidae (Bitterns and Herons)

American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*)


American Bittern

Status: Fairly common spring and uncommon fall migrant; rare to uncommon summer visitor or resident. Breeding status unresolved.

Spring: Extreme date: 11 April (NBR 16:84).

Summer: Brooking reported it as common during the summer and stated that it "undoubtedly breeds" at Harvard WPA, where he found a nest that he believed belonged to this species (Swenk 1925). Tout (1902) considered it a "migrant only". Recent summer observations are infrequent. A nest was found at either Harvard WPA or Massie WPA in 1984 or 1985 (RH; Silcock 1999b). "Impressive numbers" were at Massie WPA 22 June 1981 (JFa). Nesting was reported as "confirmed" from Clay Center, "probable" from McCool Junction, and "possible" from the Benedict and Mallard Haven BBA Blocks in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). A pair was in courtship flight at North Lake Basin WMA 31 May 1998 (WRS, JS). A pair was exhibiting courtship behavior at Kissinger Basin WMA 28 May 2001 and 2 were at Harvard WPA 16 June 2001. It was reported as present in "summer" from both Adams and Clay Counties in 1973 (NBR 41:46) and from Adams County in 1974 (NBR 42:67). A single was flushed from a nest with 6 eggs at Harvard WPA 28 May 2007 (PD). Two nests were found at Harvard WPA 7 June 2008 (PD). These and numerous observations during the summer suggest that the species is a low-density breeder throughout the study area, mostly at large wetlands.

Fall: Extreme dates: 7 November 1972 Adams County (NBR 41:29), a single at Harvard WPA 11 November 2007 and 14 November 1951 Adams County (Jones 1952).

Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*)

Status: Rare spring migrant and summer visitor or resident.

Spring: Extreme date: 24–30 April 1967 (NBR 35:4), there are no other reports prior to 24 May.

Summer: Formerly more common, perhaps very common, and bred at least during "some years" (Brooking Notes). It was described as a "very common breeder at [Harvard WPA] 1915–16" (Swenk 1925) and Brooking collected a female (UNSM ZM7657) 9 August 1914, a pair (HMM #2051) June 1915 and a male (HMM #2521) 4 Jun 1916. Other early reports include a single bird at Theesen Basin 14 May 1927 (LOI 22:4), 16 May 1929 Hastings (LOI 43:7), and 17 May 1931 Hastings (LOI 60:16). There are no other reports until 1971, when J. Van Remsen (pers. comm.) observed a lone bird at Massie WPA 7 August 1971. L. Morris saw a single bird on two occasions in northern York County during June 1973 (Morris 1973b). As late as the 1981, J. Farrar (pers. comm.) found a small breeding colony of at least 4–5 nests at Massie WPA 21 June 1981. Garthright (1985) observed the species at Weis WPA 23 Jun 1985 and breeding was considered "possible" at the Benedict BBA block (Mollhoff 2001). Reports were regular from Funk WPA during the late 1990s (Sharpe et al. 2001), but there have been no recent reports from this site. The species has been reported five of the last six years (2005-2011), with the majority of reports from Seward County and specifically North Lake Basin WMA. Recent reports outside of Seward County are from Harvard, Waco, and Hultine WPAs.

Fall: Only one report is later than 15 August. A dead Least Bittern was found at the downtown Hastings Post Office 23 September 2008 and was presumed to be a window-strike.

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and summer visitor and rare summer resident. Most common during late summer and early fall when small groups can be found with other herons at wetlands.

Summer: Ducey (1988) cited breeding in Clay County from Bennett (1971). BBA reports of possible and probable breeding from wetland blocks (Mollhoff 2001) are questionable because breeding habitat (large trees) is absent at most of these sites. Lingle (1994) reported a small colony at what is now Kenesaw WPA. Prior to purchase and renovation in the 1990s, this wetland was surrounded by woody vegetation and breeding herons presumably used the large trees. The woody vegetation was removed during restoration.

Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)

Status: Uncommon spring migrant, rare early summer visitor but becoming fairly common in late summer and fall. The Great Egret has likely increased in the 20th century, neither Brooking (Notes) nor Tout (1902) mentioned this species. Earliest reports include 6 at a lagoon 3 miles east of Doniphan 1-15 September 1930 (LOI 53:2), 2 at Ayr Lake 14 April 1936 (Fuller et al. 1936) and up to 9 at Weis WPA during July 1952 (Rapp and Baumgarten 1953)

Spring: Reports are from 3 April through 29 May. High count: 14 at North Lake Basin 26 April 2009 (JGJ).

Summer: There were no June reports prior to 2000. That year 1 was found at Harvard WPA 25 June. Since then there have an additional six reports including 3-4 at Kissinger Basin WMA 16-24 Jun 2001.

Fall: A few birds begin appearing by early Jul and the species becomes most common in Aug and early Sep. High counts: 80 adjacent to Tamora WPA, 7 September 2008. Extreme date: 21 Oct 1972 Adams (NBR 41:29).

Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*)

Status: Rare spring migrant and uncommon late summer/fall migrant.

Spring: Reports are from 14 April through 16 May. High count: 4 at North Lake Basin WMA 27 April 2001.

Fall: Reports are from 16 July through 10 October. High count: 61 at Fillmore #22 5 October 2006 (JGJ).

Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*)

Status: Casual spring migrant, rare summer visitor and fall migrant.

Spring: Sixteen reports. Three are from the 1930s and seven are from 1996 onward. High counts: 4 adults at North Hultine WPA 17 May 1996. Extreme dates: 5 April (NBR 43:46) and 6 June.

Summer/Fall: There are only three reports in the period 7 June to 15 July. However, one report involved 4 adults at a small wetland south of Massie WPA. All other reports are from 16 July through 20 October (NBR 43:25). High count: 8 at Harvard WPA 5 September 1998.

Tricolored Heron, Wetland #C229, 30 August 2003

Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*)

Status: Casual in late summer and fall. An adult was found by J. Van Remsen at Massie WPA 7 August 1971 (Cink 1973a). This is the second record for Nebraska. The adult was well described and "remarkably the same bird, or perhaps another was later seen flying due east at a marsh about two miles due east of the first location" (Cink 1973a). The only other records are one at Funk WPA 27 July 2003 (LR, RH) and an immature at Wetland #C229 30 August – 2 September 2003.

Reddish Egret (*Egretta rufescens)*

Status: Accidental summer visitor. K. Skaggs observed an adult at Funk WPA 12 June 2008.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)

Status: A fairly common spring and fall migrant, rare to uncommon summer visitor. A singleton found by Morris (1969) on 29 May 1969 near Benedict was the first RWB report. Morris (1971) observed a second Cattle Egret in York County 24 April 1971 and one was seen near Aurora 30 April 1971 (Swanson 1971). Another single was found near Harvard 1 October 1972 (Ritchey 1973). The five found by Morris (1978a) at his pasture basin in late May of 1977 were "the most he had ever seen at once". The increase continued in following years. The species was perhaps most common during the early and mid-1990s. Abundance has lessened or leveled off since the late 1990s, especially as a late summer and fall visitor.

Spring: Reports are from 19 April through 1 June. High counts: 40 near Pintail WMA 1 May 1999.

Summer: Usually least numerous in June and early July, but several were present throughout the region during 2001 and 2003. The 11 found 2–3 June 2001 grew to 64 by 30 June. Breeding has been considered a possibility based on independent observation of birds (PD, JGJ), but no direct evidence has been found.

Fall: Most observations are from August and September. High counts: 400 in Phelps County late August 1993 (JGJ), 303 at Funk WPA 19 August 1998 (Sharpe et al. 2001), and 175 at Kissinger Basin WMA 20 Aug 1995 (JGJ, GJ).

Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant, casual summer visitor.
Spring: Extreme date: 10 April 1968 Adams (NBR 36:70).
Summer: Tout (1902) reported that it was occasionally found nesting around York and Brooking (Notes) claimed it was "very common along watercourses". As a breeder, this species may still be common along wooded watercourses. Nesting was reported as "confirmed" from the Hastings BBA block and "possible" from the Clay Center and Benedict BBA blocks during the 1980s. Recent mid-summer records are few, however, breeding is suspected along wooded streams around Hastings (PD).
Fall: Extreme dates: 20 October 1974 Adams/Clay (NBR 43:25), and 21 October 1964 Adams (NBR 33:35).

Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

Status: Fairly common spring and uncommon fall migrant, rare to uncommon summer visitor, casual summer resident.
Spring: Reports are during the period 15 April—16 May. High counts: 47 at Kissinger Basin WMA 24 April 1999 (JGJ) and 55 at North Lake Basin WMA 20 May 2006 (JGJ).
Summer: Brookings (Notes) considered it "very common" and collected a young male at Harvard WPA 31 July 1915, but does not specifically mention breeding there. Tout (1902) did not mention breeding at the wetland at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA. The species may have been a regular breeder, historically. Up to 32 were at Hastings Basin 11 June 1936 (NBR 4:90). Hudson (1937) listed the species as common in the Hastings vicinity in early June 1937. There are few recent June reports, but breeding appears to occur infrequently when favorable conditions exist. Garthright (1985) found "a very large colony" and "counted 30 at one time" at Weis WPA 23 June 1985. Several nests had eggs and many others were being constructed. This is the same "confirmed" breeding mentioned in Molhoff (2001). A breeding colony of at least 15 birds, and probably more, included four nests containing 1, 3, 3, and 4 eggs was located at Massie WPA 22 June 1981 (JF). Approximately 25 birds, several carrying sticks, were observed in a White-faced Ibis colony at Kissinger Basin WMA in June 2001 (JGJ). No nests were found and the entire rookery was abandoned by late June, presumably due to low water levels. Additional observations were made at BBA blocks in the 1980s, including "probable" breeding in the McCool Junction block and "possible" breeding in the Clay Center and Harvard blocks.


Black-crowned Night-Heron

Fall: Reports are during the period 31 July–10 September. High count: 45 at Funk WPA late August 1993 (JGJ) and 18 at Kernan Lagoon 31 July 1932 (LOI 67:3).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*)

Status: Casual spring and rare fall migrant and summer visitor.
Spring: Eight reports are from 24 April through 16 May. There is an additional early report, of an adult at Hastings 10 April 1939 (Jones 1939c).
Summer/Fall: Reports are from 28 June through 24 September. There are later records; single immatures were near Massie WPA 7 October 2011 (PD) and Glenvil WPA 11 October 1998 (JGJ). There is also an early record, a first- or second-year bird at Moger WPA 18 June 2003. All but a few reports are since 1995 and most are juvenile or immature birds. High counts: 9 (1 adult, 8 immatures) at Hastings Basin 15 August 2005 (PD) and 5 immatures at Heron WPA 2 August 2003 (JGJ).

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*)

Status: Casual summer visitor. There are three records. An adult was at Harvard WPA 12–19 June 1916 (Swenk 1925). This is not an officially accepted Nebraska record (Bray et al 1986) because first-hand documentation is not extant. Brooking relayed to Swenk (1925) that he saw the bird and its black wing tips. While Bray et al (1986) correctly did not accept this record the burden of proof is less in this work. This record is almost certainly correct based on the information available. The second record is a first-year bird at Kissinger Basin WMA 5–22 July 1999. This sighting was well-documented and is Nebraska's first accepted record. An immature was observed at Funk WPA 9 August 2001 and was relocated at Johnson WPA 13 and 19 August 2001.

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

Status: Rare, but rapidly increasingly, spring migrant, casual fall migrant and summer visitor. The first record for the RWB and the state was an adult with 28 White-faced Ibis at Wilkins WPA 24 April 1999 (JGJ). The following spring, an adult was with a flock of 15 White-faced Ibis at McMurtrey Refuge 6 May 2000 (JGJ). The following summer, 2 adults were with 70+ White-faced Ibis at Harvard WPA 14–22 July 2001 (JGJ, WRS, MB, SJD). The next sighting was a single adult at Kissinger Basin WMA 20 May 2003. In 2005, 2 adult were at Harvard WPA 15 April–27 May (PD, WRS, RE). In 2006, up to 6 were with 68 White-faced Ibis 6 May (PD) and another (or a hybrid) was at Hasting Basin 14 May (PD). An adult Glossy Ibis was found in a White-faced Ibis nesting colony 2 June 2007 (PD), although it was not certain whether the Glossy was nesting.

Since 2008 the species' frequency of occurrence has increased even more. There were about seven reports during 2008, including 2 found amongst 107 White-faced Ibis at a nesting colony at Harvard WPA 7 June. There were also three reports during August 2008 from Seward County, including a single at Tamora WPA 23 August 2008 (JGJ). There were three reports during the spring 2009, six during spring 2010, and three during spring 2011. Finally, a single was found at Sacramento-Wilcox WMA 18 July 2011 (WF). In addition, 4–5 birds observed in the study area over the past decade were believed to be possibly hybrids with White-faced Ibis. Early reports, such as 24 April 1975 Clay (NBR 43:47) and two ibis found by Morris (1965), are considered likely to be observations of White-faced Ibis. This species is expected to occur regularly, at least in the near future, and it may possibly breed if it has not already. Both species of *Plegadis* ibis have undergone recent range and population expansion (Patten and Lasley 2000).

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, rare summer visitor and casual summer resident.

The earliest RWB records are from Clay County during the years 1915–17. The first was an immature shot at Harvard WPA 26 July 1915 that was later secured in a decomposed state by Brooking (Swenk 1925). Further events were summarized by Swenk (1925):

> *"About the middle of May, 1916, several White-faced Glossy Ibis appeared at the large lagoon near Inland, Clay County, Nebraska. Mr. A.M. Brooking wrote me on May 26, that he had seen three of these birds. On June 4, Mr. Brooking and Mr. Edward Wallace set out to secure a pair of these birds for the Brooking Collection, and, while attempting to approach them, met a farmer named John Nawka who had just driven out into the lagoon in his buggy and who reported that he had flushed an ibis from a nest containing four eggs. Directed by Mr. Nawka, Messrs, Brooking and Wallace located the nest and shot the female bird when she returned to it. Toward evening Mr. Wallace also collected the male bird, and another pair of ibises. The nest and eggs and one pair of ibises are in Mr. Brooking's collection at Hastings, the birds being #2493, and the eggs #2495...*
> *...After taking the four birds and the nest and eggs on June 4, 1916, another pair of ibises was observed by Messrs, Brooking and Wallace about the lagoon. Two birds, probably the same pair, were again noted there on the night of June 5. Mr. Brooking noted six of the Ibises there June 14. These birds were not further disturbed and may have nested there that season, except that one Theodore Tickler shot one of the birds from three seen, and broke its leg, but it got away, at the Tickler Lagoon near Harvard. A fourth specimen of the White-faced Glossy Ibis in Mr. Brooking Collection was taken at Inland Lagoon September 22, 1917. It is in immature plumage and measures...."*

Swenk (1918) also summarized this breeding record. There is only one other breeding record from the Great Plains prior to 1950 (Jorgensen and Dinsmore 2001). Other than the 1915–17 records, there are very few reports prior to 1980. A single ibis was "observed in a lagoon ten miles southeast of Hastings", presumably on 6 May 1951 (NBR 19:54) in the vicinity of Glenvil (Jones 1951). Additional Adams County reports include 8 May 1976 (NBR 44:41) and 18 May 1978 (NBR 46:69). The only Clay County report during the middle part of the 20th Century was at Overturf's Basin (incorrectly referred to as Overture's Basin, it is now Greenhead WMA) 12 June1962 (Huntley 1963). A single bird, identified as a Glossy Ibis, was found at Deep Well WMA 6 October 1954 (Larson 1956). Morris (1965) found 2 *Plegadis* ibises in northern York County in May 1964. The birds were identified as Glossy Ibis, and considering his description, these two birds may have been Glossy rather than White-faced Ibis. Additionally from York County, Morris (1973a) found a White-faced Ibis 7 May 1973.

White-faced Ibis nest, Rauscher WPA, 2 July 2005

White-faced Ibis reports began to slowly increase by the 1980s. Morris (NBR 54:15) had several sightings in northern York County in different years and in 1985 remarked that "[concentrations of] Great Egret and White-faced Ibis on September 28 were greater than he had ever seen before." The species became a fairly common spring and fall migrant by the 1990s. Notable flocks recorded during this decade include: 15 at Harvard WPA 13 October 1990 (Johnson-Mueller 1990), 39 at Weis WPA 8–10 May 1995 (Silcock 1995a), 44–47 frequenting wetlands in northern Clay

County in September 1998, and 28 at Wilkins WPA 24 April 1999. Summer reports included 5-6 June 1991 Polk (NBR 59:65), 8 at North Lake Basin WMA 10 June 1996 (Silcock and Jorgensen 1996a), and a *Plegadis* ibis found in Seward County 26 July 1999 (Silcock 1999b). The latter being the first July report; a year later, in 2000, six additional July sightings were reported.

White-faced Ibis were numerous during spring 2001. In June, 12-16 were present at Kissinger Basin WMA 17 June (JGJ) and on further investigation on 24 June 2001, nesting was documented. While surveying an area of bulrush (*Scirpus* spp.) near the center of the wetland, 5 nests were discovered, with 2-4 eggs each (JGJ). Additional nests were believed to be present based on the number of birds present (75). In addition, approximately 25 Black-crowned Night-Herons were present, several of which were observed carrying sticks. The two species are known to routinely breed in close association (Seyffert 2001). Breeding activity was again observed at Kissinger Basin WMA 30 June. On 14 July, no Ibis were present at Kissinger Basin WMA and the colony was believed to be abandoned due to falling water levels.

Additional recent breeding records include 3 pairs and at least 1 nest with 2 eggs at Rauscher WPA 2 July 2005 (JGJ), 68 ibis and at a minimum 6 nests at Harvard WPA 27 May 2007 (PD) and 50 ibis and 12 nests were found at Harvard WPA 6 June 2010. On 5 July 2010, 42 ibis and 15 nests were located at Harvard WPA. Between the initial visit on 6 June and 5 July, water levels increased by about eighteen inches so it was suspected that the original nests were inundated and that the 15 nests were the result of renesting (JGJ). The 14 White-faced Ibis at Sacramento-Wilcox WMA 12 June 2009 were suspected to be nesting (JGJ).

Fall: Extreme dates: 14 October 2005 (RE) and 15 October 1990 Harvard WPA (Johnson-Mueller 1990). High counts: 47 at Harvard WPA 5 September 1998 and 44 at North Hultine WPA 19 September 1998.

Plataleinae (Spoonbills)

Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*)

Status: Accidental summer visitor. Two birds were found west of Greenwood Cemetery 20 August 1966 (Maunder 1966). Although the description of these birds is limited it does eliminate all other species. Greenwood Cemetery is located three miles west of Trumbull, Adams County.

Accipitriformes

Cathartidae (American Vultures)

Black Vulture (*Coragyps astratus*)

Status: Accidental in summer. A specimen collected at Hildreth was subsequently secured by Brooking and placed in his collection (HMM #2649; Swenk 1925). This is the only accepted record for Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant, uncommon summer visitor.
Fall: Extreme date: 27 November 1971 Adams (NBR 40:30).

Pandionidae (Ospreys)

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant, casual summer visitor.
Summer: Two reports from Adams County: 10 July 1973 (NBR 42:25) and 17 June 1976 (NBR 44:43).

Accipitridae (Kites, Hawks, Eagles, and Allies)

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*)

Status: Accidental. Brooking reported that Townsley collected a specimen as it flew over his home near Harvard about 1910 (Swenk 1925). This species formerly occurred regularly in eastern Nebraska but was extirpated by about 1900 (Sharpe et al. 2001).

White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*)

Status: Accidental in spring. Morris (1995a) observed an adult in Polk County just across the county line with York County 6 May 1995. The bird and its behavior were well-described.

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*)

Status: Casual summer visitor. While it is expected that occasional post-breeders or migrants would appear in the RWB, not all reports have followed this pattern. A few reports suggest the possibility of casual breeding in the RWB. Two adults and an immature were found along Lincoln Creek Parkway in Aurora 8 August 1988 (NBR 57:88). The immature was identified as a Broad-winged Hawk, although the date and the fact that it was observed with two adult kites suggests otherwise. A few years earlier in Aurora, 4 were found 3 September 1983 (Morris 1983c). Several reports also come from Polk and York Counties in the 1980s. (Sharpe et al. 2001), including 6 June 1987 York/Polk Counties (NBR 55:52, 59). Another report involved a kite observed on several occasions during the late summer of 1985 (Morris 1986). More recently, an immature was observed flying over Hastings 8 June 2011 (PD).

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant and winter resident.

Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant and winter resident, rare summer visitor, casual summer resident.

Summer: A former regular breeder. Brooking (Notes) considered it a common breeder at Inland. Ducey (1988) cited an early nesting record from Clay County. Hudson (1938) listed this species as “common” in Hastings vicinity in early June 1937. Modern nesting records are few. Harding found a nest at Harvard WPA 17 May 1984 (Sharpe et al. 2001). Breeding apparently occurred in Fillmore County in 1986 (Bennett 1987). Several were apparently observed during the BBA project in the 1980s. Nesting was considered “confirmed” at the Harvard, “probable” at the Clay Center, Greenwing, and McCool Junction, and “possible” at the Benedict, Wilkins, Glenvil BBA blocks (Mollhoff 2001). Other than an adult observed carrying nesting material at Mallard Haven WPA 15 and 22 May 2000, there are no nesting reports since the 1980s. A few pairs may currently breed within Hruska Meat Animal Research Center MARC.

Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and winter resident.

Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperi*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and winter resident, rare to uncommon summer resident.
Summer: There were no confirmed breeding records until 2010 when 3 active nests were located in or near Hastings (PD). A dead juvenile was also found at Sacramento-Wilcox WMA 30 July 2011 (PD). This species has apparently increased, particularly in suburban environs, in Nebraska as a breeder in recent decades (Sauer et al. 2011).

Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant and winter visitor. In addition to the reports below, Townsley reportedly killed two specimens near Harvard in the spring of 1897 and another in December 1916 (Swenk 1925). Nine reports are during the period 24 November (NBR 42:24) through 27 April 1956 (NBR 25:27, 24: 63). There are no reliable reports since 1974.


Swainson's Hawk

Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus)*

Status: Accidental summer visitor. The only report supported by identification details is a single seen and heard at Prairie Lake Recreation Area 14 July 2007 (PD). Several additional reports, none supported by details, include: 3 January 1955 Hamilton (NBR 23:67), 4 February – 30 April 1974 Adams (NBR 42:69), 28 March 1957 Hamilton (NBR 25:55), 7 May 1977 Adams (NBR 35:36), 11 July 1973 Adams (NBR 42:25). Tout (1898) mentioned examining a decomposed hawk that he thought may have been this species, but could not be certain.

Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 19 April 1998 and 18 May 2011 at Crystal Lake (PD).
Fall: Extreme dates: 3 October 1965 (NBR 34:52). A later report, 9 November 1965 Adams (NBR 34:52), is considered a possible error.

Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, rare summer visitor. Apparently no longer breeds in the RWB.

Spring: Extreme dates: 23 March 1964 Adams (NBR 32:70). High counts: 237 on and near a recent burn at Mallard Haven WPA 21 April 2011 (JGJ).

Summer: Formerly a regular breeder throughout the RWB, although actual breeding records are few. Brooking considered it only a migrant in the early 1900s (Swenk 1925). The earliest breeding record is from 1948, when Youngworth (1948) flushed four young birds at the Harvard Airport 26 August. Ducey (1988) cited Morris for a 1960 breeding record from York County and nesting was reported in Adams County in 1965 (Ducey 1988). Turner (1976) reported two nests in 1976, one of which was along Highway 10 south of Minden, just inside the Franklin County Line. A pair was reported to have summered in Kearney County in 1994 (NBR 62: 106) and a single bird was seen in Kearney County in June and early July 1996 (NBR 64:93). Nesting was "confirmed" from the Aurora and Benedict BBA blocks (Mollhoff 2001). "Probable" nesting was reported from the McCool Junction and Clay Center Blocks, and it was observed in the Glenvil, Greenwing, and Wilkins blocks (Mollhoff 2001). A pair was observed regularly in the vicinity of Smith WPA in the late 1990s and breeding was suspected. However, there are no recent summer reports from this area. Breeding is perhaps most likely to occur within or near the Hruska Meat Animal Research Center.

Fall: Peak migration usually occurs in early October (Sharpe et al. 2001). "Hundreds, if not thousands" were observed "kettling" west of Sutton 1 October 1944 (Wampole 1946). Turner (1944) reported 300 in Adams County the same day. Tout (1902) reported seeing over a hundred birds twelve miles northwest of York in 1896. Recent high counts are less impressive, best being 49 in Fillmore County 3 October 1998. Extreme dates: 1 near Field Station 21 October 2000 and 27 October 1962 Adams (NBR 31:42). The latest report is a specimen (HMM #21764) taken 12 November 1937 (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Winter: There are a handful of winter reports, all are considered likely errors.

Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Status: Common permanent resident. Four subspecies occur in Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001). All four occur regularly in the RWB and specimens of each have been collected and are housed at UNSM; these records are summarized below. *B. j. borealis* is the only subspecies that breeds locally, all others occur as migrants and/or winter visitors.

Table 9. Subspecific Identification of Red-tailed Hawk specimens

Subspecific Identification	UNSM #	Collection Location	Date
B.J. borealis	ZM16971	near Exeter	2 March 1980
B.J. calurus	ZM16761	near Hastings	9 November 1988
B.J. krideri	ZM16017	west of Sutton	24 November 1982
B.J. harlani	ZM17182	near Waco	8 April 1991
B.J. harlani	ZM16440	near Hastings	January 1986.

Winter: Recorded on 13 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970, 0 to 5 individuals).

Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant, accidental in winter. The majority of reports are from Adams and Clay counties westward, including a specimen (ZM17439) collected in the Hastings area 24 January 1993. Reports east of Adams and Clay counties include an immature at Mallard Haven WPA 18 November 1998 and the most easterly report was 1 at North Lake Basin WMA 20 March 1999 (JG; Silcock and Jorgensen 1999a). A few birds may winter regularly in the region, especially within MARC. Possibly more numerous in the past, Brooking considered it a common migrant at Inland (Swenk 1925). Spring reports are from 23 February 1973 Clay (NBR 41:49) through 18 April 1972 Adams (NBR 40:75).
Fall: Reports are during the period 8 October 1969 Adams (NBR 38:30) through 18 November.
Winter: There is only one mid-winter report, 2 January 1956 Adams (NBR 24:63).

Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and winter resident.
Spring: Extreme dates: a specimen (ZM17924) collected near Hastings 9 April 1997 and 18 April 1998 near Verona (JGJ).
Fall: Extreme date: 2 October 1967 Adams (NBR 36:60).
Winter: Recorded on 8 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970, averaging 0.53 individuals (range 0 to 2).

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant and winter visitor. Apparently more common formerly as Brooking considered it rather common during fall and winter (Swenk 1925).
Fall/winter: Sixteen reports in the period 15 October (NBR 34:26) through 25 February (NBR 41:49).
Spring: Other than the March 1962 Adams County report (NBR 30:59), the only other records are an immature at Mallard Haven WPA 9 April 2000 (JGJ) and a carcass recovered near Harvard WPA 29 February 2012 (JD).

Falconiformes

Falconidae (Falcons)

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, uncommon summer visitor, casual summer resident and uncommon winter resident.
Spring: High count: 29 at Harvard WPA 24 April 1999.
Summer: Brooking considered it a very common migrant but does not mention breeding (Swenk 1925). It was widely reported in several BBA blocks, but nesting was not confirmed in any block (Mollhoff 2001).
Winter: Recorded on 13 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970, averaging 1.41 individuals (range 0 to 3).

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)

Status: Rare to uncommon spring and fall migrant and winter resident. Two subspecies occur in the RWB and each has their own pattern of occurrence. Sightings in September–October and April–May have been *F.c. columbarius. F.c. richardsonii* has been observed during November–February.
Spring: Extreme date: 22 May 1948 Fillmore (Johnson 1948).
Fall: Extreme Date: a singleton (*F. c. columbaris*) at Hultine WPA 19 August 2006. High count: 3 at Mallard Haven WPA 26 September 1999.
Winter: Reported on only one Hastings CBC 1964–1980, 1 in 1979.

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*)

Status: Rare to uncommon fall migrant and winter resident. Reports are during the period 20 October – 17 April. High count: 4 in Clay County 24 December 2011 (JGJ).

Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)

Status: Fairly common spring migrant, casual fall migrant, accidental in winter and summer. Brooking did not have any records (Swenk 1925). The overwhelming majority of Peregrine Falcons observed in the study area appear to be *F. p. tundrius*, although, *F. p. anatum* may occur on occasion.

Spring: Extreme dates: 8 April 2001 (2 birds at different locales) and an immature at Kissinger Basin WMA 3 June 2001. Most often single birds are found, but several observations are of two birds, and one observation of three birds that appeared to be hunting together.

Summer: An immature Peregrine Falcon harassed by a Black-necked Stilt at North Lake Basin 17 July 2006 (JGJ) is the only record.

Fall: Three records: singles at Hansen WPA 17 September 1995 (JGJ), Harvard WPA 17 September 1995 (JGJ), and Mallard Haven WPA 5 October 2006 (JGJ).

Winter: One report: 4 February 1974 Adams (NBR 42:70).

Peregrine Falcon, photo by Paul Dunbar

Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*)

Status: Casual in late fall through spring. Three records: Morris (1993) identified a large falcon to be this species 10 May 1993. His description included that "it was uniformly gray with no dark helmet such as a Peregrine Falcon has", Morris also observed a gray-morph chasing a Great Horned Owl at close range in York County 28 November 1984 (NBR 53:17), and an immature male was captured by a falconer seven miles west of Minden 15 December 1974 (Ohlander 1976).

Gruiformes

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*)

Status: Accidental in spring, summer and fall. Likely occurs more frequently than the few reports indicate.

Spring: A single bird was flushed at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA 15 May 2008 (SJD).

Summer: Brooking (Notes) briefly mentioned "1 in my collection taken at Lagoon"; this is presumably the specimen taken at Harvard WPA 12 June 1920. The specimen is now in the HMM (#1604) (Bray et al 1986)

Fall: A tower kill specimen was collected at Waco 21 September 1991 and is now in the UNSM as ZM15789.

King Rail (*Rallus elegans*)

Status: Accidental spring and casual fall migrant, casual summer visitor and accidental summer resident.
Spring: The only report is Adams County 2 April 1967.
Summer: Brooking collected a specimen (HMM #2496A) 5 June 1916 at Harvard WPA and also found a "wrecked nest in the [Harvard WPA] on June 22, 1916, which he believed to be the nest of the King Rail" (Swenk 1925). This is the only evidence of breeding for the study area. In 1991, Connie and Marty McCartney photographed a single bird at Deep Well WMA 10 June; this record was accepted by NOURC (Gubanyi 1996a). The only other record, also accepted by NOURC (Brogie 1997), was one found at North Lake Basin WMA 1 June 1996 (LP, BP). This bird was observed (WRS, JGJ), recorded (JG), and photographed (JS) through 4 June (Brogie 1997).
Fall: There are several early records including: Gresham, York County 24 September 1896 and reported in Bent (1926), another (HMM #2496) taken at Harvard WPA 23 September 1922, a juvenile (HMM #7458) collected 1 October 1916 at Harvard WPA, and a juvenile (HMM #7458) taken at Inland 1 October 1916 (Swenk, Notes after 1925). Brooking (Notes) mentioned another specimen taken at "Inland, Nov. 16, by Lawson's clerk, Harry Schroeder", year unknown.

Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*)

Status: Rare to uncommon spring and rare fall migrant, rare summer visitor, casual summer resident.
Spring: All reports are in the period 2–28 May. M. Samuels apparently had three, at least one he found dead, in his yard in May 1976 (Alfred 1976). During that same year Morris' grandchildren chased a Virginia Rail into a barn; Morris later caught the bird and released it at a local wetland (Alfred 1976). High count: 4 at Spikerush WMA 13 May 2005 (MH).
Summer: Swenk (1925) reports "Brooking finds the Virginia Rail during migrations at Inland and in the summer of 1915 found a nest that he thinks was this species if not the nest of the King Rail". There are only a handful of recent summer reports. An adult and 2 downy chicks were on the county road at Tamora Basin WPA 30 August 2008 (JG) and 4 young were running across the county road at North Lake Basin 1 August 2009 (RH). Breeding was considered "probable" at the Benedict BBA block in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). An adult at Smith WPA 8 August 1973, "behaved as though it had young in the area" (NBR 42:24). Other reports include Hamilton County 10 June 1991 (NBR 59:91) and 1 was at Heron WPA 19 July 2003 (JGJ).
Fall: Extreme date: 1 in Clay County 5 September 2004 (JGJ).

Sora (*Porzana carolina*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant, rare summer visitor, casual summer resident.
Summer: Formerly more common. Brooking reported it as a "common migrant and breeder at Inland" and also found a nest along the Little Blue River near Spring Ranch (Swenk 1925). Tout (1897) found two nests, one containing twenty eggs, the other fourteen, at the wetland at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA. Recent June observations are few and there are no recent breeding records, although nesting was reported as "probable" at the Benedict BBA block and "possible" at the McCool Junction Block (Mollhoff 2001). In 1982, Morris (1983a) reported "we had unusually large numbers of Soras spend the summer this year...I'm sure they were nesting in the roadside ditches".
Fall: Reports increase sharply during July, which may represent an influx of migrants rather than breeders based on the paucity of modern breeding records. Likewise observations of juveniles, such as 1 at Hultine WPA 7 August 1999 (JGJ), are believed to be migrants rather than locally hatched birds. Extreme date: 18 November 1972 Adams (NBR 41:31).

Common Moorhen (*Gallinula galeata*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant, summer visitor and resident; accidental in fall.
Spring: Four early reports: 1 was either found dead or shot near Saronville 28 April 1920; the specimen is now HMM #2793 (Brooking Notes, Swenk 1925), 2 May 1930 Hastings (LOI 51:11), 1 taken near Exeter 7 May 1911 is now in the UNSM (ZM10394), 12 May 1934 Hastings (NBR 2:85). The only recent report is a single at North Lake Basin 20 May 2010 (MRK).
Summer: There are two nesting records. Garthwright (1985) discovered a nest with eleven eggs at Weis WPA June 1985. Adults and as many as eight chicks were at North Lake Basin late June through July 2009 (m.obs). Other reports include single birds at North Lake Basin WMA 7 June 1997 (JG), Kissinger Basin WMA 20 July 2001 (SJD), at a private wetland near Hidden Marsh WMA 12 June 2005 (JGJ), and Funk WPA 31 July 2011 (JM).
Fall: One record: an immature found at Wetland #C79 30 August 1998.

American Coot (*Fulica americana*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant, uncommon summer visitor and summer resident.
Spring: Arrives in March, most depart by mid-May.
Summer: Brooking found this species to be a common breeder at Harvard WPA (Swenk 1925) and Tout (1902) found nests at the wetland at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA. Breeding still occurs when local conditions are favorable. Evans and Wolfe (1967) observed 10 broods 1958-1962. Nesting was "confirmed" at the Benedict, McCool Junction, Mallard Haven WPA, and Clay Center BBA Blocks, and considered probable at the Harvard block in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). In 1982, Morris (1983a) noted several nests at a basin that was denuded by grazing cattle; with some of the nests were eventually destroyed by cattle. Adults with downy young were observed 28 July 1996 at North Lake Basin WMA and 7 August 1999 at Hultine WPA. Up to 30 nest mounds were active at Harvard WPA during late May and early June 2001 (Silcock 2001), although these were later abandoned due to falling water levels (JGJ). Four family groups (adults with downy young) were at Moger WPA 2 August 2003. Up to 13 nest mounds were at North Lake Basin WMA 10 June 2007 (JGJ). Nesting was also noted at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA 22 June 2008 (JGJ).
Winter: One report: 31 December 1967 Adams (NBR 36:60).

Gruidae (Cranes)

Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*)

Status: Uncommon to abundant spring and uncommon fall migrant, rare summer visitor, and casual summer resident. *G. c. canadensis* and *G. c. rowani* occur as migrants and *G. c. tabida* as a migrant and summer resident (Sharpe et al. 2001).
Spring: Arrives in February in the Platte River Valley and large flocks can be found feeding in the northwest portion of the RWB that borders the Platte River Valley. Most observations away from the Platte River are later during late March and early April. Easterly reports include 16 at Father Hupp WMA 4 April 1997 (JGJ) and 16 at Freeman Lake 16 April 1997 (JGJ). High count (away from Platte River): 150 at Harvard WPA 17 April 1999 (JGJ).
Summer: Likely formerly bred in the RWB but there is no definitive evidence. Evidence of breeding was observed on several occasions during the 1990s and breeding may have occurred as early as 1994 (Jorgensen 2002b). Breeding records are summarized by Jorgensen (2002b) and all known recent summer observations are summarized in Table 10. Breeding most recently occurred in 2003 (Jorgensen 2003b) bringing the number of RWB nesting/breeding records to six. These were the first modern breeding records for Nebraska, but breeding has also recently occurred in Morrill and Rock Counties.

Breeding birds are presumably "Greater" Sandhill Crane (*G. c.tabida*) which breeds and has been increasing in the Great Lakes region in recent decades (Tacha et al 1992). Breeding is expected to occur at large wetlands in future years when favorable conditions exist.
Winter: Two reports: 8 December 1978 near Benedict, York County by Morris (NBR 47:18) and 18 December 1976 Lake Hastings (NBR 35:8).

Table 10. Modern breeding season observations of Sandhill Crane (breeding records shaded dark beige).

Date	Location	# of Birds	Source
14 June 1992	Clay County	Unknown	NBR 60:145
20 August 1994	Wetland #C79	2 adults, 2 juveniles	JGJ, GJo
3 September 1995	Wetland # F11	2 adults, 2 immatures	Silcock 1995c
14, 21, 28 July 1996	Harvard WPA	2 adults	JGJ
25 June–9 July 1996	Krause WPA	2 adults, behavior suggests possible breeding	Sharpe et al. 2001
16 May 1997	Pintail WMA	1 adult	JGJ
13 July 1997	Harvard WPA	1 adult	Silcock and Jorgensen 1997b
25 April–9 May 1998	Harvard WPA	2 adults	JGJ
16, 22 August 1998	Wetland #C79	2 adults, 2 juveniles	JGJ
May 1999	Harvard WPA	2 adults, 2 chicks	JGJ
May 1999	Kissinger Basin WMA	2 adults, one chick	Hoffman 1999, NGPC
30 April, 7, 13–15 May 2000	Father Hupp WMA	1 adult	JGJ
15, 20, 28 May 2000	Massie WPA	1 adult	JGJ
21, 28 May 2000	Harvard WPA	1 adult	JGJ
20 August 2000	South of Massie WPA	2 adults flying	JGJ
24 June, 1 July 2001	Krause WPA	2 adults	JGJ
14–17 July 2001	Harvard WPA	1 adult	JGJ, WRS, MB
28 June 2003	Mallard Haven WPA	2 adults, 2 juveniles	JGJ
12 July 2003	feedlot adjacent to Sinninger WPA	1 adult	JGJ
23 May 2005	Harvard WPA	1 adult	PD
31 August 2010	County Line WPA	2 adults, 1 juvenile	JD

Common Crane (*Grus grus*)

Status: Accidental in spring. An adult was in northern Adams and southern Hall Counties 30–31 March 1996 (Silcock 1996, Lingle 1996). While most of the few Nebraska records are associated with Sandhill Cranes staging along the Platte River Valley, this record is the only one to occur within the study area. Common Crane records in Nebraska have been accepted as wild birds (Sharpe et al. 2001)

Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant, accidental in summer; casual in the eastern portion of the RWB.
Spring: Extreme dates: 6 March 2012 Sacramento WMA (BM) and 17 May 1996 Funk WPA. High count: 13 at Gleason WPA 12 April 1994 (JGJ).
Summer: An adult was at a wetland near Bertrand from 20 May–18 June 1950.
Fall: Extreme dates: 9 October 1993 at a wetland north of Axtell and 3 December 1987 at a wetland northeast of Holdrege. High count: 8 near Smithfield 24–25 October 1992.

American Coot nest

Charadriiformes

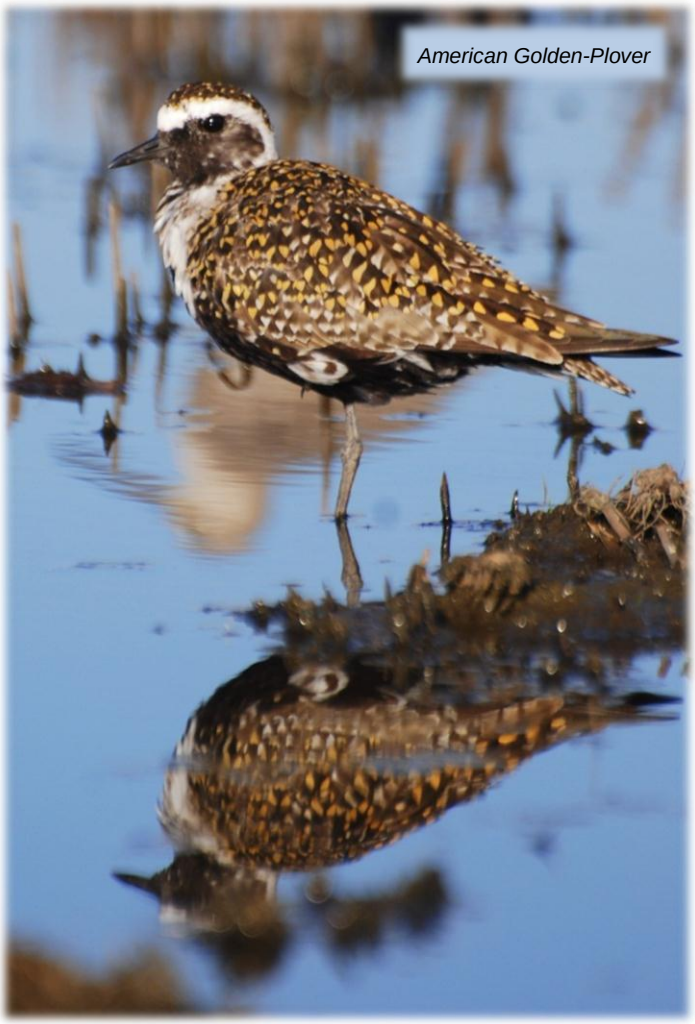
Charadriidae (Plovers)

Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

Status: Fairly common to occasionally common spring migrant and rare to uncommon fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 15 (SJD), 19, 21 April and 5, 10, 14 June. High counts: 334 at Harvard WPA 10 May 2000 (SJD) and 295 at Harvard WPA 14 May 2000
Fall: Adult migrants are casual, as there are only seven records. Recent observations include 2 at Tamora WPA 9 August 2008, a single adult at North Lake Basin WMA 29 August 2004, a single bird in a disked field 2 miles south of Utica 27 August 2006, and another at Seward #5 17 August 2007. Extreme dates: 9, 11, 11 August and 3 (NBR 31:43), 7, 17 November (NBR 4:13). High Counts: 14 juveniles at Harvard WPA 10 October 1999 and 10 juveniles at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA 27 September 1998.

American Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*)

Status: Common spring and uncommon fall migrant.
Spring: Migration is primarily from early April through mid-May. Extreme dates: A single at Tamora WPA 6 March 2009 (JGJ), 5 were at Harvard WPA 19 March 2007 (PD) and the species was reported 5 June 1983 Adams (NBR 51:69). High counts: 714 in an agricultural field south of Freeman Lake 16 May 2006 and 544 in an agricultural field 4 miles west of Utica 15 May 2006.
Summer: Individuals were observed on two occasions in mid-June in 2005, a single was in western York County 17 June and 2 birds, one in basic plumage with an injured leg and another in partial alternate plumage, at Waco WPA 24 June. In 2008, 3 Golden-Plovers were at Tamora WPA 14 June and a single bird was at Hultine WPA 22-28 June.
Fall: In addition to the early dates above, an injured adult was at Kissinger Basin WMA 17 July–7 August 1999. Other single adults, that may have been early migrants, were at Gleason WPA 14 July 2011 (LE) and Freeman Lake 16 July 2005 (JGJ). Few adults have been observed in fall, most reports are of juveniles during September and October. Extreme dates: 2, 4, 17 August and 10, 24 October, 18 November. High counts: 420 at Tamora WPA/Basin 2 October 2008 (JD) and 336 at Wetland #Y73 5 October 2007 (JGJ).


American Golden-Plover

Snowy Plover (*Charadrius nivosus*)

Status: Rare spring and accidental summer visitor and fall migrant.
Spring: Thirty-five reports are during the period 22 April – 30 May. All spring reports are since 1996 and are presumably the result of increased birding activity. High count: 2 at Harvard WPA 14 May 2003 (SJD, WRS, AB).
Summer: Bliese (1975) reported a single bird from what is now Funk WPA 20–29 June 1975.
Fall: There is one record, a single bird at Springer WPA 4 August 2007.

Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*)

Status: Fairly common spring and uncommon fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 11, 11, 13 (JG) April and 5, 10 (JG), 11 June. High counts: 300 at Harvard WPA 9 May 2005 (PD) and 257 at Harvard WPA 3 May 2005 (JGJ).
Fall: Extreme dates: 16, 17 July and 25 September, 10 October. High counts: 17 at Wetland #F3 26 August 1995 and 7 at Wetland #Y115 30 August 2003.

Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*)

Status: Rare spring migrant, accidental in summer.
Spring: There have been three recent records of banded Piping Plovers in the RWB. An adult photographed at Spikerush WMA 26 April 2009 (JGJ) was banded as an adult female at Big Quill Lake, Saskatchewan, in 2006 (Cherri Gratto-Trevor, Environment Canada, pers. comm.). This same bird was observed on Padre National Seashore, Texas in 2008. An adult photographed at the Verona Complex on 2 May 2010 (JGJ) was originally banded as a chick on a Missouri River sandbar near Washburn, North Dakota, 20 July 2007 (Mark Sherfy, U.S. Geological Survey, pers. comm.). A third Piping Plover photographed at Green Acres WPA 21 April 2011 (NR) was originally banded as an adult during the summer of 2010 on a sandbar on Lewis and Clark Lake on the Nebraska—South Dakota border (Kelsi Hunt, Virginia Tech, pers. comm.). Extreme dates: 13, 21, 22 April and 18, 22, 26 May. High counts: 19 at Harvard WPA 3 May 2005 and 7 at Wetland #C29 22 April 2001.

Piping Plover, Verona Complex, 26 April 2009

Summer: Two were at a wetland near Sinninger WPA 11 June 2005 (LE).

Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferous*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and summer resident.
Spring: Extreme dates: 5, 12, 19 March. High counts: 141 at Father Hupp WMA 14 March 2004 and 87 at Hansen WPA 14 March 2004.
Summer: Jorgensen et al. (2009), using a statistically-based survey method, estimated that as many as 100,000 may breed in the eastern portion of the RWB.
Fall: Commonly found in harvested soybean fields during late September and October. Extreme dates: 7, 14, 17 November. High counts: 700 at Sinninger #Y22 6 August 2004 (JGJ) and 300 at a private wetland in Seward County 15 October 2010 (JGJ).

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*)

Black-necked Stilt nest, June 2005, Spikerush WMA

Status: Rare to uncommon spring and casual fall migrant and summer visitor, casual breeder. However, this species' frequency of occurrence is increasing. There was only one record, 12 May 1956 Adams County, prior to 1996 for the RWB (Jorgensen and Dunbar 2005). Since 1996, reports have increased. The increase has followed a pattern of every few years or so, one year there is a spike in the number of reports. This occurred in 2005, when several nesting records occurred and again in 2011, when there were numerous reports throughout the study area.

Spring: Approximately twenty reports since 1997. Extreme dates: 9 April 2002 Funk WPA (JD). High Count: 6 at Harvard WPA 20 May 2005 (PD).

Summer: Recent breeding records are summarized by Jorgensen and Dunbar (2005), but six additional records have been noted since that summary. All breeding records are summarized in Table 11.

Fall: Not recorded during August and September prior to 2008. Recent sightings not involving breeding include: 8 at North Lake Basin 27 July – 16 September 2008 and 9 at a private wetland SW of Massie WPA 15 August 2011 (JGJ). High counts: 42–43 at Funk WPA 28–30 July 2011 (JD, PD) and 11 at Smith WPA 26 July 2011 (PD).

Table 11. Breeding Season Observations of Black-necked Stilt

Date	Location	# of Birds	Source
21 July 2003	Funk WPA	2 adults with 2 chicks	Drahota 2003
May—June 2005	Harvard WPA	2 nests as many as 7 adults	PD, WRS, others
Late June 2005	Spikerush WMA	1 nest and 4 adults	JGJ, LE
24 June 2005	Trumbull Basin	Adult pair tending 3 chicks	JGJ, PD
July 2006	North Lake Basin WMA	Nesting pair	JGJ
22 June 2008	Hultine WPA	1 nest with 3 eggs	JGJ, PD
3 June 2009	Harvard WPA	1 agitated male	PD
22 June 2011	North Lake Basin WMA	1 nesting pair	CL, JGJ
27 June—2 July 2011	Hultine WPA	1 nest and 6 adults	RS, LE
26 August 2011	South of Harms WPA	1 adult with 2 juveniles	PD

American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*)

Status: Fairly common spring and uncommon fall migrant, rare summer visitor and casual summer resident.

Spring: Extreme dates: 8 (RE), 11, 11 April and 1, 1, 2 June. High counts: 85 at Ayr Lake 27 April 1995 (SJD) and 79 at Harvard WPA 3 May 2005 (JGJ).

Summer: There are about twenty June reports. Possibly most are non- or failed breeders from other areas, but the species has occasionally nested in the RWB. Nesting was reported as "confirmed" from the Clay Center and Theesen BBA blocks and "possible" from the Harvard and Mallard Haven blocks (Mollhoff 2001) in the 1980s. J. Farrar (pers. comm.) observed nesting at Harvard WPA in 1989. Farrar found three nests containing four eggs each in the southeast portion of the wetland on 6 June 1989. One nest contained only eggshell fragments 8 June and was apparently depredated. C. McCartney reported that eggs had hatched successfully after visiting Harvard WPA 25 June 1989, but no other details were provided (Labedz 1989). P. Dunbar found 2 pairs at Harvard WPA, one with an apparent nest without eggs on 30 May 2005. Also in 2005, 2 birds were at Trumbull Basin 5 June (JGJ). P. Dunbar found 2 pairs, each with nests with 4 eggs, at Hultine WPA 31 May 2008. The 2008 nesting attempts apparently were not successful, however.

American Avocets, photo by Paul Dunbar

Fall: Extreme dates: 30 June, 9, 17 July and 28 October, 7, 7 November. High counts: 37 at Sinninger #Y22 18 September 2001 and 35 at Harvard WPA 20 August 1994.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers)

Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, accidental winter visitor.

Spring: Extreme dates: 7 (PD) 10, 10 (PD) March and 27 May, 9, 12 June. High counts: 111 at North Harvard WPA 12 April 2009 (JGJ) and 94 at Ayr Lake 3 April 1999 (JGJ).

Fall: Extreme dates: 19, 26 June, 2 July and 9, 14, and 25 (PD) November. High counts: 31 at North Hultine WPA 26 September 1999 and 29 at North Hultine WPA 25 September 1999.

Winter: Two reports of possibly the same bird: B. Nelson identified one at Hastings 1 January 1962 (NBR 30:54) and another was reported a few days earlier from Adams County 28 December 1961 (NBR 30:44).

Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 7 (PD), 10, 19 March and 30 May, 3, 5 June. High counts: 470 at Wilkins WPA 27 April 2001 and 344 at Freeman Lake 27 April 2001.
Summer: One injured Lesser Yellowlegs was observed at Hultine WPA 14 June 2008.
Fall: Extreme dates: 19, 22, 25 June and 24, 25, 29 October. High counts: 641 at Harvard WPA 20 July 2001 (Silcock 2001; SJD) and 315 at Harvard WPA 14 July 2001 (JGJ).

Solitary Sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fairly common fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 19, 22, 23 April and 10, 13, 14 May.
Fall: 25 June 2, 4 July and 29, 30 August, 2 September. High counts: 38 at Wetland #H17 12 July 2003 and 28 at Harvard WPA 28 July 2001.

Willet (*Tringa semipalmata*)

Status: Fairly common spring and rare fall migrant, casual summer visitor.
Spring: Extreme dates: 11, 13, 15 April and 27, 27, 28 May. In addition, Brooking (Notes) collected a male and female at Harvard WPA 28 May 1916. An early report, 2 April 1978 Adams (NBR 36:73), is considered a possible error. High counts: 84 at Massie WPA 30 April 2000 and 79 at Harvard WPA 22 April 2000.
Summer: Mid-June reports are from Adams and Clay County, 3-26 June 1937 Adams (NBR 5:60) and 15 June 2001 Harvard WPA.
Fall: 21 records, 17 are from 1995 onward. Records are clustered in the period 9-21 July and 11-17 August, likely representing peak movements of adults and juveniles, respectively. Extreme dates: 15, 26 June, 9 July and 27 August, 17, 26 September. High counts: 8 at Sinninger WPA 14 August 1995 (Silcock 1995c; BP, LP) and one adult and 5 juveniles at Ayr Lake 2 August 1999.

Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, uncommon summer visitor.
Spring: Extreme dates: 22, 27, 30 April and 28 May, 1, 3 June. High counts: 7 at Harvard WPA 22 April 2000 and 7 at Wetland #C32 14 May 1999.
Summer: While present in low numbers and may breed locally, there are surprisingly very few confirmed breeding records. Neither Brooking (Notes) nor Tout (1902) mentioned breeding. Nesting was considered "confirmed" in the Benedict and Smartweed BBA blocks and "probable" in the McCool Junction block during the late 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). Some birds found in summer may be late or early migrants or non-summer residents.
Fall: Extreme dates: 29 August, 2, 11 September.


Spotted Sandpiper

Upland Sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant and an uncommon to fairly common summer resident. During settlement of the RWB by pioneers, numbers were reduced as a result of excessive market hunting throughout the Midwest and Great Plains (Houston and Bowen 2001, Dinsmore 1994). By the early 1900s, the species' former abundance was being lamented in Nebraska. Sandy Griswold, a hunter and reporter for the Omaha World-Herald, reporting on a hunting excursion in Fillmore County for this species in late August 1904 and remarked "do you not recall those days, too, when the upland plover used to come here in countless thousands and what sport we had no further away than a pleasant buggy ride?" (Griswold 1904). Brooking noted "this bird migrates through the Inland region by the thousands in August and September. He says they "arrive in the full of the moon, and leave during the first full moon after their arrival" (Swenk 1925). Habitat alterations brought about by modern farming practices currently limits the amount of favorable breeding habitat (grasslands) and thus the numbers of birds breeding in the region. However, Upland Sandpipers do breed regularly in the agricultural habitats in the RWB.

Spring: Extreme dates: 18, 22, 24 April. High counts: 7 at Harvard WPA 22 April 2000 and 7 at Wetland #C32 14 May 1999.

Summer: Low densities appear to breed throughout the landscape, including in agricultural habitats. An adult and three young were observed along a roadside near Verona well away from any grassland tracts 30 June 2007.

Fall: Extreme dates: 16, 17, 19 September (NBR 30:44). High counts: 118 in an alfalfa field in northern York County 28 July 2003 (CG) and 49 in a hayfield near Theesen WPA 12 August 2000.

Eskimo Curlew (*Numenius borealis*)

Status: Extinct, formerly a common, perhaps abundant, spring and perhaps an uncommon fall migrant in the eastern portion of the RWB, less common westward. Accounts of this species' former abundance and slaughter are discussed elsewhere (Swenk 1915, Gill et al. 1998, Sharpe et al. 2001). According to reports, the Eskimo Curlew was a numerous spring migrant in much of the central plains and RWB. Similar to other upland-foraging shorebirds, such as the American Golden-plover and Buff-breasted Sandpiper, their greatest abundance in Nebraska likely occurred in the eastern portion of the RWB. This is supported by Swenk (1915) who wrote "the chief feeding grounds of these curlews at the time (1877) were in York, Fillmore, and Hamilton Counties, and their heaviest lines of northward migration between the 97th and 98th meridian". A hunter's field report from a publication called *Forest and Stream* stated:

> *"Our hunters have been having plenty of good shooting for some time. First came ducks and geese in large numbers, and then about three weeks ago the annual flight of the Eskimo curlew (Numenius borealis) commenced. The birds have been in great abundance this season. At first they were poor, but later were very fat and fine; they are leaving now. Edgar appears to be in the center of a small piece of country in which they light and they do not appear to visit other parts of the State." (Anonymous 1890)*

Edgar is a small town situated within the RWB landscape in southern Clay County. The curlew favored burned prairies in spring. The demise of the species occurred during a very short period of time from about 1850-1890 (Gill et al. 1998). Townsley collected 2, near Harvard, during the fall of 1880 and the birds were "common during the fall migration at that time" (Swenk 1925) and Townsley reported that he could have collected many more specimens (Brooking 1933b). Townsley collected 2 more 10 April 1887 (HMM #2469) and conveyed to Brooking that the "birds were becoming so scarce he thought he had better add a pair to his collection before it was too late" (Brooking 1942). Brooking (1942) noted that by the late 1880s only the "last straggling flocks" were encountered. In 1911, 2 females were collected in York County (Sharpe et al. 2001). The last accepted record for Nebraska and the RWB was Brooking's first sighting when he found a flock of 8 five miles east of Hastings 8 April 1926 (Brooking 1942).

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)

Status: Rare spring migrant.
Spring: Nineteen records, all but three are since 1995. Extreme dates: 27, 29 April, 4 May and 15, 17, 27 May. High counts: 21 at Theesen Basin 11 May 1935 (NBR 3:95) and 20 near Grafton 18 May 2005 (JGJ).

Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*)

Status: Casual spring migrant, accidental in fall. Intriguing are remarks in Swenk (1925) that the Long-billed Curlew occurred around Funk in the 1890s. It is unclear whether this species was observed as a migrant or during the summer.
Spring: Only eight records, even though the species breeds commonly only 200-300 miles northwest of the RWB in the Sandhills of north-central Nebraska. Extreme dates: 30 March, 3, 6 April and 7, 18, and 27 April. Except for 2 at Moger WPA 7 April 2006, all other records have involved single birds.
Fall: One record: a singleton was at Funk WPA 13 September 1997.

Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*)

Status: Fairly common spring and accidental fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 7 April (PD), 11, 14, April and 5, 5 (Swenk 1925), 6 June. High counts: 1,033 at Freeman Lake 20 May 2005, 487 at Spikerush WMA 15 May 2005 (+WRS), and 159 at Rausher WPA 15 May 2005.
Fall: A juvenile at Sinninger #Y22 30 August 1998 is the only record.

Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*)

Status: Uncommon spring and rare fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 7, 7, 9 April and 18, 19, 22 May. High counts: 78 at Harvard WPA 16 April 1995 and 37 at Harvard WPA 3 May 2005.
Fall: Only about a dozen records. Fall migration commences as early as mid-June. Extreme dates: 5, 12, 25 June and 13 September (PD), 20 September 2008 (JGJ), and 24 October (NBR 42:28).

Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)

Status: Uncommon spring and accidental fall migrant.
Spring: 3, 6, 7 May and 26, 31 May (WRS, JS), 5 June. High counts: 44 near Utica 20 May 2007 (JGJ) and 42 at Wilkins 22 May 2005 (JGJ).
Fall: The only record is a juvenile at a wetland near Giltner 7 August 2010 (PD).

Ruddy Turnstone

Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*)
Spring: Two records: 4 at Springer WPA 18 May 2005 (E. Volden) and 27 at Ayr Lake 20 May 1999 during a rainstorm (JGJ).
Fall: The only record is an adult at Sinninger #Y22 13 August 1995.

Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)
Status: Uncommon spring and casual fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 30, 30 April, 1 May and 28, 31 May, 2 June. High counts: 81 at Harvard WPA 13 May 2000 and 42 at a wetland in York County 10 May 2004.
Fall: Six records: 2 at Green Acres WPA 7 August 2011 (LE), 2 at Kissinger Basin WMA 7 August 2011 (LE), A juvenile at Harvard WPA 13 September 2007 (PD), a juvenile at Sinninger #Y22 22 September 2001, a juvenile at Harvard WPA 10 October 1999, and a "small flock" at Hastings 12-13 October 1934 (NBR 3:36).

Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*)
Status: Common to abundant spring and fairly common fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 11, 13, 13 April and 12, 14, 22 June. In addition, a single bird was observed at Waco WPA 26 June 2005. High counts: 3,300 at Harvard WPA 30 April 2005 and 2,300 at Harvard WPA 9 May 2005.
Fall: Extreme dates: 2, 3, 4 July and 14 September, 1, 10 October. High counts: 150 at Wetland #F3 19-26 August 1995 and 52 at Sinninger #Y22 29 August 1997.

Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*)
Status: Rare spring and fall migrant.
Spring: About twenty reports, all recent. Extreme dates: 18, 22, 30 April and 9, 13, 20 May. In addition, a single was at Sora WMA 14-16 March 2012 (JGJ, PD). High counts: 6 at Hultine WPA 27 April 2008 (PD), 3 at Massie WPA 30 April 2000 (JGJ) and 3 at Harvard WPA 9 May 2005 (PD).
Fall: Extreme dates: 19, 25 July, 1 August and 3, 5 September, 28 October. High counts: 35 at Wetland #F3 19–26 August 1995 (JGJ) and 5 at Theesen Basin 25 July 1995 (JGJ).


White-rumped Sandpiper

Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*)

Status: Common spring and fairly common fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 24 March, 1, 1 April and 24, 28, 30 May. High counts: 300 at North Hultine WPA 3 May 1994 and 300 at Harvard WPA 9 May 2005 (PD).
Fall: Extreme dates: 5, 5 (LE), 7 July and 1, 4, 7 November. High counts: 137 at Sinninger #Y22 29 August 1997 and 125 at Wetland #F3 26 August 1995.

White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*)

Status: Abundant spring migrant and accidental fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 19 (SJD), 24, 24 April and 20, 22, 26, 28 June. A relatively large number, 60 birds, was tallied on the late date of 18 June 2005 and 26 birds were at Hultine WPA 22 June 2008. Late spring records likely include birds that "short-stopped". High counts: 3,600 at Freeman Lake 17 May 1997 and 3,200 at Harvard WPA 5 June 2005.
Fall: The only documented record is 1 found at Harvard WPA 20 July 2001 by S. Dinsmore (Silcock 2001). This individual may have been an early fall migrant or a spring migrant that discontinued its migration. Another single at Harvard 25 July 2009 had an injured wing. There are other fall reports, but as Sharpe et al. (2001) pointed out, none are accompanied by details. White-rumped Sandpipers migrate eastward to the Atlantic Coast in fall and are essentially absent from the Great Plains during that season.

Baird's Sandpiper (*Calidris bairdii*)

Status: Common spring and uncommon fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 10, 10 (PD), 12 March and 28, 30 May, 6 June. A very late migrant that likely discontinued its migration was near Verona 14 June 2003. High count: 6,400 at Harvard WPA 3 May 2005 and 900 at Harvard WPA 9 May 2005.
Fall: Extreme dates: 12, 14, 16 July and 28 October, 7 November. High counts: 270 at Sinninger #Y22 6 August 2005 and 77 at Theesen Basin 28 July 1996.

Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 18, 21 (PD), 24 (PD) March and 10, 12, 12 June. In addition to the extreme dates, 4 were observed 19 June 2005 and 18 were observed 14 June 2008. High counts: 375 at Mallard Haven WPA 30 April 2000 and 300 at a sheetwater wetland (flooded field) in Butler County 18 May 2005.
Fall: Extreme dates: 24, 26, 26 June and 4, 7, 7 November. High counts: 327 at Wetland #C132 15 August 1998 and 300 at Kissinger Basin WMA 20 August 1995.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*)

Status: Accidental in fall.
Fall: A juvenile was at Cottonwood WPA 6 October 2010 (JGJ).

Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)

Status: Fairly common spring and casual fall migrant.
Spring: Less common westward. Extreme dates: 3, 3, 8 April and 2 (NBR 36:7), 5, 11 (LE) June. High counts: 133 at Renquist WMA 18 May 2007 and 65 at a sheetwater wetland southeast of Utica 18 May 2007.
Fall: Eleven records, all from 1996 onward, are in the period 5 October — 7 November. High counts: 16 at Wetland #C81 10 October 1998 and 8 at Theesen Basin 10 October 1998.

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*)
Status: Accidental fall migrant.
Spring: a molting adult at Funk WPA 19 July 1997 is the only record for the RWB and Nebraska (Jorgensen and Silcock 1998).

Stilt Sandpiper (*Calidris himantopus*)
Status: Common to abundant spring and fairly common fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 18, 22 (PD), 24 April and 2, 4, 5 June. In addition to these extreme dates, a single was at Kissinger Basin WMA 30 March 2012 (PD) and 3 birds were at Waco WPA 10 and 24 June 2005. High count: 1,461 at Harvard WPA 13–14 May 2000 and 875 at Hultine WPA 18 May 2008.
Fall: Extreme dates: 5, 7, 16 July and 25, 28, 29 October. High count: 570 at Sinninger #Y22 11 August 2001 and 340 at Sinninger #Y22 6 August 2005.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis*)
Status: Fairly common spring and rare to uncommon fall migrant, casual summer visitor.
Spring: Primarily occurs in agricultural fields, preferring those with soybean stubble. Jorgensen et al. (2008) estimated that 22,000—78,000 Buff-breasted Sandpipers migrate through the eastern portion of the Rainwater Basin during spring migration. Additional studies discuss habitat use (Jorgensen et al. 2007) and behavior (McCarty et al. 2009) during migratory stopover. Extreme dates: 25, 30 April, 1 May and 26, 28 May, 5 June. One was at Moger WPA 13 April 2006 (P. Doherty) and 6 were at Harvard WPA 22 April 2006 (PD). High counts: 700 in a field south of Kirkpatrick Basin South WMA 10 May 2006 and 622 in a field in northeastern York County 17 May 2008
Summer: Two birds were at Hultine WPA 22 June 2008 (JGJ) and a single was reported at Waco WPA/Spikerush WMA 26 June 2005 (LE).
Fall: Extreme dates: 25 (Swenk 1925), 27, 28, 28 July and 20, 27 September. High counts: 317 in a hayfield within MARC 30 July 2003 (JD) and 151 in at hayfield near Goehner 2 August 2003 (JGJ).

Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*)
Status: Casual spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Three records: A male in basic plumage was at Eckhardt WPA 26 March 2005, a red-maned male was at Sacramento-Wilcox WMA 19 April 1994 (Jorgensen 1994) and a black-maned male was at Funk WPA 24 May 1997 (LR, RH; NBR 65:82).
Fall: Two records: A juvenile in a flooded field southwest of Axtell 22–23 September 1993 and a juvenile male at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA 27 September 1998.


Whooping Cranes

Short-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus griseus*)


Short-billed Dowitcher

Status: Uncommon to fairly common spring migrant and uncommon fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 25, 27 (PD), 30 April and 24, 26, 30 May. High counts: 97 at Spikerush WMA 12 May 2008 and 35 at Griess 18 May 2005.
Fall: Adult and juvenile movements are separate and well defined. Twenty-one records of adults are in the period 9–28 July, and sixteen (76%) in the period 14–17 July. Adult high counts: 15 at Kissinger Basin WMA 17 July 1999 and 9 at Wetland #Y26 16 July 2000. Eighteen days pass from the last record of an adult to the first juvenile record. Fifteen juvenile reports are during the period 16 August–11 September, 11 (73%) reports are during the last ten days of August. Juvenile high counts: 7 at Wetland #F3 19–26 August 1995 and 4 at Sinninger #Y22 11 September 1997.

Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*)

Status: Common to abundant spring and fairly common fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 10, 10 (PD), 18 March and 23, 30 May, 5 June. In addition to the extreme dates listed, 2 were at Waco WPA 24 June 2005. High counts: 1500 at Smith WPA 29 April 2011 (PD) and 1,377 at Hultine WPA 3 May 2008 (JGJ).
Fall: Extreme dates: 13,15, 19 July and 7, 7, 18 November. High counts: 212 at Cottonwood WPA 6 October 2010 (JGJ) and 182 at Fairmont Sewage Lagoons 23 October 2006.

Wilson's Snipe (*Gallinago delicata*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, casual summer and winter visitor.
Spring: Extreme dates: 10 (PD), 20, 25 March and 2, 7, 7 May. High counts: 52 at Sinninger #Y21 3 April 1999 and 8 at Bluewing WMA 4 April 1997.
Summer: A single bird was observed at Spikerush WMA 6 Jun 2008. In addition, there is a report from Adams County 27 May 1974 (NBR 42:71).
Fall: Extreme dates: 30 June, 14 July, 1 August and 10, 28 October, 7 November. High counts: 200+ at Harvard WPA 6 November 2005 (PD) and 73 at Wetland #C132 13 September 1998 (JGJ).
Winter: Two reports: 18 December 1976 Adams (NBR 35:22) and 16 December 1971 Adams (NBR 41:31).

American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*)

Status: Casual spring and accidental fall migrant.
Spring: A single bird was “just a few yards from the [Eldon and Ruth] Percival’s porch” near Sutton 12 March 1975 (NBR 43:51). Another was photographed on the same date in 2011 in a Hastings yard (fide PD).
Fall: A singleton was flushed by L. Morris in York County while harvesting corn and he then approached closely before being flushed again 6 October 1988 (NBR 57:28).

Wilson's Phalarope (*Phalaropus tricolor*)

Status: Common to abundant spring and fairly common fall migrant, rare summer visitor and casual summer resident.

Spring: Extreme dates: 15, 17, 18 April and 28, 30, 31 May. High counts: 1,700 at Harvard WPA 13—14 May 2000 and 1,200 at North Lake Basin 13 May 2006.

Summer: Recent records of confirmed or suspected breeding are few. Four agitated and defensive males were at Harvard WPA 7 and 14 July 1996 and a young juvenile with remnant down was observed there on 21 July (JGJ). Courtship flight was observed at North Hultine WPA 15 June 2001 (WRS). An agitated and defensive male was at Mallard Haven WPA 12 July 2003 (JGJ). A nesting bird was observed at Harvard WPA 18 June 2005 (PD). Pairs were observed copulating at Sora WMA 9 May 2007 and at Wetland #Y77 26 May 2007. Five agitated males and two nests, each with four eggs, were located at Harvard WPA 29 May 2007 (PD). An adult male was tending 2–3 downy young at Spikerush WMA 2 June 2007 and 2 fresh-plumaged juveniles were observed at this location 30 June 2007. In addition to recent breeding records below, nesting was considered "probable" in the Theesen BBA Block and "possible" in the Mallard Haven Block in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001).

Fall: Extreme dates: 5, 9, 16 July and 11, 18 September, 21 October (NBR 53:10). High counts: 46 at Sinninger #Y22 29 August 1997 and 20 at Theesen Basin 30 July 1999.

Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*)

Status: Uncommon to fairly common spring and casual fall migrant.

Spring: Extreme dates: 1, 6, 7 May and 26, 27 30 May. High counts: 37 at Moger WPA 12 May 2006 and 28 at Hansen WPA 12 May 2008 (JGJ).

Fall: Seven reports. Extreme dates: 26 August 1970 Adams (NBR 34:28) and 5 juveniles at Harvard WPA 25 September 1999 (JGJ). The latter is also the high count for the season.

Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant, accidental in summer.

Spring: Two records: a molting adult was at Wilkins WPA 28 April 2001 and an adult female in breeding plumage was at Q2 Basin, a couple miles east of Sinninger WPA, 21 May 2011 (JGJ).

Summer: R. Silcock found a bird in basic-plumage at North Hultine WPA 15 June 2001 (Silcock 2001).

Fall: Two reports: A female in worn breeding plumage was in Phelps County, 1 August 1993 and another, in basic plumage, was 2 miles south of Funk 24 August 1993.

Wilson's Phalarope

Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*)

Status: Casual spring migrant.
Spring: Two well-documented records. F. Van Arsdale shot a female at Inland 2 April 1915 that was later mounted by Brooking and became #2631 in his collection (Brooking 1933a). While the bird is described, the specimen no longer exists (Sharpe et al. 2001). An adult was photographed at Father Hupp WMA 4 April 1997 (JGJ); this record was accepted by NOURC (Brogie 1997).

Franklin's Gull (*Leucophaeus pipixcan*)

Status: Abundant spring migrant and fairly common fall migrant, uncommon summer visitor.
Spring: Arrives in early April and migration is at its peak by the end of the month, when it can be abundant. Most often it is observed in flight. Most are gone by late May.
Summer: Migrants occasionally linger at large wetlands into June. Many lingered in 1935, as noted in the NBR (3:96):

> *"The Franklin's Gulls lingered about the lagoons and fields in the Hastings vicinity for an unprecedented long period this year. Mr. A.M. Brooking reports that there were many large flocks of them feeding in the fields by day and resting in the lagoons at night as late as June 25, but by the end of the month the large flocks had disappeared, though there were some smaller flocks and individual birds still to be seen flying over the lagoons as late as July 11."*

A similar pattern has been observed, in some years, in recent time. Very few or no birds may linger some years and during other years, flocks remain well into June. High counts includes 250 at Harvard WPA and 200 elsewhere in Clay County 1 June 1996 (BP, LP). The overwhelming majority of birds found in summer are in first-year plumage. Reports drop off markedly after June and there are few reports from July and August. A report of "young" from York County in the 1987 Nesting Survey (Bennett 1988) is presumably an error.
Fall: Peak migration is late September to early October. Extreme dates: 12 November 1964 Adams (NBR 33:38).

Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*)

Status: Accidental in spring. A first-year bird was at Massie WPA 6 May 2000 (JGJ). This record was accepted by NOURC (Jorgensen 2002a).

Bonaparte's Gull (*Chroicocephalus philadelphia*)

Status: Uncommon spring migrant and accidental in summer. Unrecorded in fall as of yet, but likely occurs on occasion.
Spring: Extreme date: 10 May 1980 Adams (NBR 48:76).
Summer: Brooking noted that a pair spent the summer of 1915 at Harvard WPA and eventually collected one, a male, 28 August that is now HMM #2167.

Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and rare summer visitor.
Summer: Observations during this period usually involve immature birds.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*)
Status: Accidental in summer.
Summer: A 3rd or 4th-year bird was observed with Franklin's Gulls at Cottonwood WPA 4 June 2008 (JGJ).

Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*)
Status: Accidental in winter.
Winter: An adult was at Lake Seldom near Holdrege 8 December 2008 (PD). Lake Seldom is near the Holdrege city dump.

Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)
Status: Casual spring migrant and accidental in fall.
Spring: There are about ten reports in the period 25 February through 26 May. Four recent records include 1 first-year bird at Harvard WPA 11 April 1999 (SJD), 1 adult at Harvard WPA 30 April 2000 (JGJ), and 2 first-year birds at Ayr Lake 3 May 2001 (JGJ), and a first-year bird at Smith WPA 17 April 2011 (JGJ).
Fall: One record: 1 first-year bird at Harvard WPA 16 October 1996 (SJD).

Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*)
Status: Accidental in winter.
Winter: An adult was at Lake Seldom near Holdrege 8–11 December 2008 (PD). Lake Seldom is near the Holdrege city dump.


Glaucous Gull, Lake Seldom, 8 December 2008
Photo by Paul Dunbar

Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*)
Status: Casual spring migrant. Recent records include 2 at Massie WPA 22 April 2000 (JGJ), 1 at Harvard WPA 14 May 2000 (JGJ), 2 at North Lake Basin 26 April 2009 (JGJ), and one at Lake Hastings 17 May 2010.

Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)
Status: Casual spring migrant.
Spring: Seven reports. Extreme dates: 12 May 1955 Hastings (NBR 23:70) and 31 May 1968 Adams (NBR 36:75). High count: 5 at Kirkpatrick North WMA, York County, 11 May 2008 (JGJ). There are additional reports, 18 March 1979 Adams (NBR 47:48) and 25 March 1968 (NBR 36:75), that are extremely early and certainly errors. If these observations were indeed very early S*terna* terns, the more likely species would be Forster's Tern (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*)
Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and rare summer visitor.

Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*)

Status: Casual spring migrant and accidental summer visitor and resident.
Spring: The only recent records are single adults at Spikerush WMA 17 May 2004 (JGJ), in a flooded field 0.5 miles south of Bluewing WMA 19 May 2001 (JGJ), and at Harvard 27 May 2011 (PD). Also reported at Lake Hastings 9 April 2005 (PD) and 8 March 1948 Adams (NBR 16: 86), but the latter is an exceptionally early date and certainly an error. A specimen (HMM #2678) was taken at Harvard WPA 17 May 1917 and it was reported 27 May 1928 Hastings (LOI 33:10) and 30 May 1930 Hastings (LOI 51:11).
Summer: Tout (1902) found this species nesting at what is now Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA. While at first glance this report may seem unlikely, Tout (1902) distinguished the nesting styles of the Black and Least Tern in which he reported the following: "During the summers of 1896 and 1897 I found in this basin nests of Least and Black Terns,...The nests of the Least Tern were not over water but on the banks and only one of five contained three eggs, the other four recorded having only two each until incubation was well advanced". This is the only nesting record for the species in the study area. The only other summer report is a single at Straightwater WMA 11 June 2005 (LE).

Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant, extirpated summer resident.
Spring: High count: 1200 at Harvard WPA 22 May 2005 (JGJ, WRS).
Summer: Formerly a regular breeder. Brooking (Swenk 1925) reported it was common and bred at Harvard WPA. Tout (1902) found several nests in 1896 and 1897 at the wetland at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA and noted "The Black Tern nests in colonies of three to ten pairs in a bit of open shallow water. Their nests were always up above the water level although saturated with moisture". Tout (1897) also reported "some boys near Bradshaw got a set of Black Tern eggs today from a big basin May 30, 1897." There are no modern reports of breeding, although "probable" nesting was reported from the Theesen BBA block and "possible" nesting was reported from the Mallard Haven and Greenwing BBA blocks (Mollhoff 2001). Black Tern migration lasts into June and this may explain BBA reports of this species.

Stercorariidae (Jaegers)

Jaeger species (*Stercorarius* spp.)

Status: Accidental. A bird seen by A.M. Brooking at Hastings was reported as "Parastic (?) Jaeger" (LOI 23:4). This may mean that a jaeger was seen and the suspected identity was Parasitic, but identification was uncertain. No other details about this report are available.

Columbiformes

Columbidae (Pigeons, Doves)

Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*)

Status: Common introduced permanent resident.

Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)

Status: Common introduced resident, first recorded 6 August 2000 at Sutton (JGJ).

Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)

Status: Common spring migrant and summer resident, abundant fall migrant and rare winter resident.
Winter: Recorded on 15 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970, (range 0 to 98 individuals).

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*)

Status: Casual, but increasing, spring and summer visitor.
Spring: An adult was near Krause WPA 2 May 2004 (JGJ).
Summer: There are recent reports from both Hastings and Fairmont. The Hastings reports included a single bird coming to a backyard feeder in a subdivision west of town beginning May 2009 and photographed 23 June 2009 (PD). During August, two White-winged Doves were seen in this same backyard (fide PD). Another was reported at a feeder in Hastings 8 June 2011 (BN). In Fairmont, White-winged Doves were first observed at a residence 2–5 August 2007 (JR). In 2008, "at least a pair" was present from 28 May through summer. Again during the summer of 2009 the species was reported at this location (JR). The most recent report from the Fairmont residence was 31 July 3011 (JR).

White-winged Dove, Hastings, 23 June 2009
Photo by Paul Dunbar

Cuculiformes

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythropthalmus*)

Status: Unresolved. Brooking reported this species as uncommon at Inland (Swenk 1925) and Sharpe et al (2001) considered it a fairly common spring and fall migrant and uncommon breeder statewide. It was reported nesting from both Adams and Seward Counties in 1965 (Sharpe 1966), and there is a summer report from Clay County 2–31 July 1973 (NBR 42:29). There are only three recent reports from the RWB, singles in a stand of wild plums along county road two miles east of Waco WPA (LE) and at Prairie Lake Recreation Area 7 July 2007 (MB) and 10 August 2009 (PD, BF).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant and summer resident, possibly decreasing. Status poorly known and occurrence data are limited. Brooking considered it a common breeder (Swenk 1925) and Tout (1897) found a nest in the York area in 1897. It was regularly reported from Adams County during the 1900s and was observed at several BBA blocks (Mollhoff 2001). It probably occurs primarily along watercourses, as the author has only four records away from such areas. Dunbar reports only 3–4 sightings total for the area. Arrives in May and departs in September. Extreme dates: 1 May 1999 Lange WPA, 11 October 1950 (B.M. Jones 1951), and 26 October 1952 Hastings (NBR 21:11).

Strigiformes

Tytonidae (Barn Owls)

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant and summer resident, casual winter visitor. Brooking considered it common at Inland (Swenk 1925) and Tout (1902) reported four young found in a barn near Utica in 1899. In 1976, it was reported as "rare" in Adams County (NBR 44:40). There are several nesting records indicating the species is present in at least low numbers. Nesting records are from York County in 1985 (Bennett 1986), Fillmore County in 1985 (Bennett 1986), and Clay County in 1986 (Bennett 1987). It was also reported from the Clay Center BBA block (Mollhoff 2001). There are about twelve additional reports, with five from spring during the period 22 March through 27 May and five from fall in the period 22 September through 9 November.

Winter: Two reports include 10 February 1962 Adams (NBR 30:62) and the other report was that the species was a "permanent resident" in Adams County in 1976 (NBR 44:45).

Short-eared Owl

Strigidae (Typical Owls)

Eastern Screech-Owl (*Megascops asio*)

Status: Fairly common resident.

Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*)

Status: Fairly common resident. Recorded on 15 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970, (range 0 to 4 individuals). Resident birds are members of the eastern subspecies *B. v. virginianus.* An individual of the pale northern race, *B. v. wapacuthu*, was collected near Harvard (Swenk 1925) and barely outside the study area at Spring Creek, Clay County 12 December 1916 (Swenk 1937). The northwestern race, *B. v. lagophonus*, has been recorded on three occasions: Townsley collected a large dark-colored individual in Hamilton County near Harvard in November 1901 (Swenk 1937), Brooking shot a very dark male near Hastings 14 January 1903 that Swenk (1937) later identified as *B. v. lagophonus,* a third specimen was collected north of Harvard in the winter of 1916–17 (Swenk 1937).

Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus*)

Status: Casual late fall and winter visitor. The majority of records are from three invasion years. During the winter of 1917–18 there were fifteen reports. In the fall of 1954 there were four reports. There were also reports in 1913, 1930, 1932, 1964, 1967, and 1976. There was only one report from 1976–2010, a road-kill immature collected two miles north of Aurora 14 January 2006. A major invasion occurred during the winter of 2011–12 when approximately 19 reports were recorded 18 December through 5 March. Extreme dates: 11 November 1930 (LOI 54:2) and 12 March 1918.

Snowy Owl, Renquist WMA, 29 December 2012

Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant and summer resident, formerly more common.

Brooking reported it was very common at Inland (Swenk 1925). By the late 1800s, Tout (1897) reflected "in the early days, the plains of Nebraska were covered with the holes of the Burrowing Owl but now they are quite scarce". Small numbers apparently remained through much of the 20th Century. Hudson (1938) listed the species as "common" in the Hastings vicinity in early June of 1937. It was regularly reported from Adams County until the early 1980s, but in 1984 "Mrs. Helzer and Miss Welch visited a prairie dog colony where they usually see Burrowing Owls, but didn't find any" (NBR 53:6). A pair was present at a now exterminated small prairie dog town in the pasture south of Hansen WPA in 1989 (JGJ). Burrowing Owls were regularly found at a small prairie dog colony west of Funk WPA during the 1990. Up to five were found here 30 May 1994 (NBR 62:77). This prairie dog colony is also no longer present. Similarly, Burrowing Owls were regularly found at a small pasture/prairie dog town 2.5 miles south of Geneva where owls were found in the mid-1990s (SJD). This prairie dog town was converted to an agricultural field in 1998.

The species is extirpated from much of the eastern portion of the study area. The only location where the species occurs regularly is a small prairie dog colony northeast of Wilkins WPA. In addition, a landowner reported a pair of Burrowing Owls guarding a burrow in a soybean field between Utica and Tamora in 2008 (fide JGJ) and another pair was found guarding a "badger" burrow near Fairmont 11 June 2005 (LE). Small prairie dog colonies have been allowed to persist and expand at a small number of WPAs in Clay County. For example, two small prairie dog towns currently exist at Hultine WPA. Two pairs were found here 17 April 2010 (JGJ) and five Burrowing Owls were here 7 May 2011. On 2 August 2011, up to twelve fledglings were seen here (JC, SS). Further west, Burrowing Owls have also been found on a prairie dog colony at Atlanta WPA (JGJ). Extreme Dates: modern observations fall in the period 14 April through 20 October, with a later report, 9 November 1965 Adams (NBR 34:53).

Barred Owl (*Strix varia*)

Status: Accidental. Tout (1902) mentioned a nesting record for the York area around 1900, although he gives no details. There are several other records away from what is now considered the current range of this species during this period (Sharpe et al. 2001). The only other reports include a calling bird heard near Stockham 16 November 2011 (GS) and the other report is Adams County 4 February 1974 (NBR 42:74). It is possible the latter record, like one picked-up injured near Pauline, Adams County, 10 March 2008 (fide PD), occurred outside the RWB.

Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant, accidental in winter.
Spring: Five reports: 9 March 1972 Adams (NBR 40:77), 18 March 1945 Hastings (NBR 13:60), 20 March 1931 Hastings (LOI 57:2), 28 April 1957 Adams (NBR 25:60), 30 April 1943 Hastings (NBR 11:41).
Fall: Two reports: 28 October 1933 Aurora (NBR 1:12) and a single bird at the Field Station 7 November 1999
Winter: One report: 18 December 1976 Adams (NBR 35:24).

Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant and winter visitor, casual summer visitor. Probably more common during migration and winter than the number of reports suggest. Extreme dates: 13 November 1970 Adams (NBR 34:29), 14 May 1944 Adams (NBR 12:34), and 28 May 1975 Clay (NBR 43:54). Early high count: 5 at Hastings 14 February 1926 (LOI 13:3).
Summer: Formerly more common and certainly bred. Brooking considered it a common resident at Inland (Swenk 1925). Two relatively recent reports: 2 July 1970 Adams (NBR 34:29) and 14 July 1973 Adams (NBR 42:30).

Boreal Owl (*Aegolius funereus*)

Status: Accidental in fall. One was shot by C. Ley at Inland 5 October 1916 and is now in the HMM (#2710). This is the only accepted record for Nebraska.

Short-eared Owl

Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*)

Status: Casual winter visitor, accidental in fall.
Fall: Brooking collected a specimen (HMM #2731) at Inland 10 November 1917 (Swenk 1925).
Winter: Brooking reported a specimen was collected at Hastings College during the winter of 1922–23 and other specimens were collected in the vicinity of Hastings and Inland (Swenk 1925). A road kill specimen was found in York County in January 1990 (LM; NBR 58:68).

Caprimulgiformes

Caprimulgidae (Goatsuckers)

Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant and breeder in towns and cities, rare in open country. Extreme dates: 30 April (NBR 32:73) and 10 October (NBR 32:52).

Common Poorwill (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*)

Status: Casual fall migrant, accidental in spring.
Spring: Reported 26 April 1951 Adams (NBR 19:64). This report lacks details but may be correct because it is probable that this species occasionally migrates through the region.
Fall: A boy found a dead poorwill 20 September 1930 and brought it to Brooking to be mounted (LOI 53:3). Swenk (1925) also noted that "Brooking records the Poor-will from Funk, Nebraska in the fall of 1914".

Eastern Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*)

Status: Accidental spring migrant.
Spring: Townsley collected a specimen in May 1896 at Giltner that was later secured by Brooking and is now HMM #2733 (Swenk 1925). Townsley told Brooking that he had heard the species at Harvard on different occasions and had taken a specimen at his farm in Hamilton County near Harvard in 1900 (Swenk 1925). Swenk (1925) speculates that the 1900 date may be an error for the 1896 date because there is only one specimen. The range of this species in Nebraska has traditionally been in the east in dense deciduous forests along major rivers. Turner (1934) reported this species near Holstein 18 May 1934; this record is believed to have occurred just outside the RWB.

Apodiformes

Apodidae (Swifts)

Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and summer resident. Extreme dates: 20 April (NBR 32:73) and 15 October (NBR 32:52). Tout (1897) found it nesting at a schoolhouse in York in the late 1800s. A very early report, 25 February 1977 (NBR 45:35), is considered an error.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*)

Status: Rare spring and uncommon fall migrant, casual summer visitor. Brooking considered it rare at Inland (Swenk 1925). Hastings' residents reported it regularly since the 1930s.
Spring: Extreme dates: 10 April 1954 Adams (NBR 22:59) and 30 May 1968 Adams.
Summer: Two reports: 12 June 1967 Adams (NBR 35:11) and "summer" 1973 Adams (NBR 41:53).
Fall: Extreme dates: 29 July 1968 Adams/Clay (NBR 43:30) and 8 October 1957 (NBR 32:52). High counts: 9 at a rural residence a few miles north of York 1 September 2011 (MRK) and 7 coming to gladiolus flowers in one Hastings yard 16 September 1939 (NBR 8:23).

Broad-tailed Hummingbird (*Selasphorus platycercus*)

Status: Accidental in fall. An adult male was at a Hastings feeder 22–30 August 1987. This record was accepted by NOURC (Grenon 1990). There is an additional report, 21 August 1965 Adams (NBR 33:39).

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*)

Status: Accidental in fall. An adult male was at a Hastings feeder 13 September 1987. This record was accepted by NOURC (Grenon 1990).

Coraciiformes

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

Belted Kingfisher (*Megaceryle alcyon*)

Status: A rare spring migrant, uncommon summer visitor and fall migrant at wetlands; fairly common along watercourses. Both Brooking (Swenk 1925) and Tout (1902) noted it occurred along watercourses.
Winter: Recorded on 15 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970, (range 0 to 6 individuals).

Piciformes

Picadae (Woodpeckers)

Lewis's Woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*)

Status: Accidental in spring and winter.
Spring: The only report is 30 May 1943 Hastings (NBR 11:41)
Winter: The only report is 20 January 1954 Hastings (NBR 22:59).

Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*)

Status: Uncommon to fairly common spring and fall migrant and summer resident, casual winter visitor. This species currently appears to be declining in the region as hedgerows and farmsteads are cleared and converted to agricultural fields.
Winter: Two reports: L. Morris reported that an "immature was coming to Swede Lind's feeder at the end of the year [1984]" (NBR 53:17) and the other report is from Aurora 27 January 1953 (NBR 21:55).

Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*)

Status: Fairly common resident in wooded areas along the larger watercourses that intersperse the RWB. Absent over most of the RWB, rare to uncommon elsewhere.

Williamson's Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*)

Status: Accidental in spring. A male was observed by many at Heartwell Park, Hastings, 24 March 1939 and was well described (Jones 1939b).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant and winter visitor. More than half of the twenty plus reports are during the winter months and several are birds that visited feeders. Extreme dates: 7 October 1938 Hastings (Jones 1939a) and 29 April 1937 Adams (NBR 5:62).

Downy Woodpecker (*Picoides pubescens*)

Status: Fairly common resident.
Winter: Recorded on 16 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970, averaging 10.5 individuals (range 0 to 23).

Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*)

Status: Rare to uncommon resident. Brooking considered it common at Inland in the early 1900s (Swenk 1925).
Winter: Recorded on 15 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970, (range 0 to 13 individuals).

[Black-backed Woodpecker] (*Picoides arcticus*)

Status: Hypothetical in fall. Dahl (Notes) reported the species 5 November 1971 from York, without details. There are no accepted Nebraska records (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*)

Status: Fairly common resident, but more common during spring and fall migration.

Passeriformes

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*)

Status: Casual spring and casual to possibly rare fall migrant.
Spring: Fourteen reports are in the period 5–29 May.
Fall: Four reports are in the period 26 August – 11 September (NBR 35:25).

[Western Wood-pewee] (*Contopus sordidulus*)

Status: Hypothetical in spring. Two reports that lack details: 18 May 1985 Adams (NBR 53:58) and 26–28 May 1973 Adams (NBR 41:55).

Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant; breeds along watercourses that intersperse the RWB. Brooking considered it an uncommon migrant.
Fall: Extreme date: 19 September 1964 Adams (NBR 33:40).

[Yellow-bellied Flycatcher **]** (*Empidonax flaviventris*)
Status: Hypothetical in spring. Two reports: 21 May 1978 Adams (NBR 36:76) and 27 May 1958 Hamilton (NBR 28:59), lack details.

[Acadian Flycatcher **]** (*Empidonax virescens*)
Status: Hypothetical in spring and summer. Brooking had two specimens in his collection that were identified to this species, but were subsequently questioned and believed to be "Traill's" Flycatcher (Swenk 1925). There are also a handful of reports, all lack details.

Alder Flycatcher (*Empidonax alnorum*)
Status: Casual spring migrant, hypothetical in fall.
Spring: There are only seven reports in the period 8–26 May. This species usually arrives in Nebraska mid-May but *Empidonax* flycatcher identification is challenging. Thus, some of these reports may be errors. An early 28 April 1951 Adams (NBR 19:66) report is considered doubtful.
Fall: The only report, 24 August 1977 (NBR 46:29), lacks details.

Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*)
Status: Fairly common spring migrant. Summer and fall status unresolved.
Spring: Extreme date: 1 at Freeman Lake 2 June 1996 (WRS, JGJ). High Count: 16 at Brauning WPA 26 May 2001.
Summer: The species may occasionally breed locally. "Possible" nesting was reported in the McCool Junction and Aurora BBA blocks (Mollhoff 2001). A calling bird at Funk WPA 5 June 2011 (LR, RH) may have been a late migrant. Another calling bird at Greenwing WMA 18 June 2011 (WM), however, suggests local breeding.

Least Flycatcher (*Empidonax minimus*)
Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Reports are from 1–18 May. High count: 18 at Lange WPA 14 May 1999. Earlier reports, such as 23 April 1928 (LOI 31:4), are considered likely errors.
Fall: Reports are from 7 August through 16 September. The latest record, 16 September 2000, was a carefully studied bird at Lange WPA. Additional reports on unexpected dates are considered questionable since none are accompanied by details.

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondii*)
Status: Accidental in fall. A single bird was carefully studied at DLD State Wayside Area, 2 September 1995 and the record was accepted by NOURC (Gubanyi 1996b). The DLD State Wayside Area is located along Highway 6 between Hastings and Inland.

Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*)
Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant, rare summer resident and hypothetical in winter; breeds along watercourses that intersperse, but are not included as part of, the study area.
Spring: Extreme date: 18 March 1945 Hastings (NBR 8:61).
Winter: Dahl (Notes) reported the species 20 January 1974 York; the report lacks details.

Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*)

Status: Rare spring and casual fall migrant, rare summer resident. The RWB is at the periphery of the species' breeding range. Sharpe et al (2001) remarked that occurrence has a tendency to fluctuate in these areas. Brooking considered it uncommon at Inland (Swenk 1925) and collected a nest with four eggs near Hastings in 1920. In 1928, Mrs. A. H. Jones thought that the species "seems to be on the increase in the Hastings vicinity, since this year they have observed 8 of the[m], in different places, while in previous years there have been only 2 pairs known to be present in the vicinity" (LOI 31:4). Nesting was discovered near Hastings in 1923 (Swenk 1925) and again in 1927 (LOI 22:3). This species has been reported with surprising frequency recently, including "summer" reports from Adams County 1964-1967, 1972, 1974. Turner reported this species on numerous occasions from the Holstein and Bladen areas in the 1950s and 1960s (NBR 21:56, 22:60, 26:59, 27:59, 36:10). Nesting was reported from Clay County in 1966 (Sharpe 1966), Hamilton County in 1985 (Bennett 1986) and York County in 1986 (Bennett 1987). Furthermore, it was reported each year from 1984-89 in Polk County. A single bird was found near the entrance to McMurtrey Refuge 14 and 29 May 2000 where there are several old munitions barracks (JGJ). An adult and an immature at Sacramento-Wilcox WMA 26 June 1994 (NBR 62:110) is suggestive of local breeding.

Spring: Extreme date: 20 March 1936 Hastings (NBR 4:45).

Fall: There are two recent September records: one at the feedlot near Sinninger WPA 2 September 1996 and 1 at Harvard WPA 18 September 2001.

Great Crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and rare summer resident.

Summer: Breeds along watercourses that intersperse the RWB, but sightings in the study area are few. A single bird was in a Woodlot in Clay County 11 June 2007 (PD) and another was along the Clay/Fillmore County a mile north of Highway 6 on 12 June 2006 (PD). Another single, perhaps an early migrant, was a Sacramento-Wilcox WMA 30 July 2011 (PD).

Spring: Extreme date: 24 April 1932 Hastings (Rapp 1955).

Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, uncommon summer resident, more common westerly.

Spring: Extreme date: 4 April 1936 Fillmore (NBR 4:89) and 13 April 1930 Hastings (LOI 51:15).

Fall: Turner (1982a) reported the species near Minden 3 October 1981

Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and summer resident. Extreme dates: 10 April 1930 Hastings (LOI 51:15) and 12 October 1965 Adams (NBR 34:54).

Eastern Kingbird

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus)*

Status: Casual spring migrant and summer visitor and summer resident.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, York County, 24 April 2009

Spring: Four reports: a single bird was near Wetland #C79 20 April 2001 (JGJ), another was southeast of Heron WPA 24 April 2009 (JGJ), 28 April 1928 Hastings (LOI 31:4), and 22 May 1967 Adams (NBR 35:11)

Summer: Three reports involve breeding. On 8 August 1943, a defense plant worker told Brookings that he had seen a pair of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers with six young four miles south of Hastings 7 August. On the evening of 8 August, the Brookings relocated the birds and found 2 of the young (Brooking 1943). The second report is a nest discovered 16 August 1959 by Mrs. J. R. Armstrong 3 miles northwest of York (NBR 28:56). The final report took place in 1964 near Harvard (Evans and Wolfe 1965). On 1 June, a pair was observed in a freshly mowed alfalfa field and, after additional observations, a nest was located 19 June. Two "successfully hatched" eggs were found on the ground, but since the nest was located in an Osage orange tree (*Maclura pomifera*), close examination was not possible. The adults were last seen on 26 June and young were never observed. A report 7 miles southwest of Hastings, Adams 2 July 1939 (NBR 7: 33) possibly occurred outside the study area. Reports by Turner (1934, 1944) are believed to be just outside the study area. A female was between Waco and Utica 9 July 2011 (LE).

Laniidae (Shrikes)

Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)

Status: Decreasingly uncommon spring and fall migrant, rare summer resident.

Spring: Extreme date: 8 March 2000 Clay and York Counties (JGJ).

Summer: Formerly more numerous, Brooking considered it very common at Inland (Swenk 1925). Nesting was reported as "confirmed" in the Benedict and Clay Center BBA blocks, "probable" in the Aurora block, and "possible" in several others during the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). It either has been, or is on the verge of being, extirpated as a breeder in eastern sections of the RWB.

Northern Shrike (*Lanius excubitor*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and winter resident.

Summer: A 6 June 1968 Adams (NBR 36:80) report is considered an error.

Winter: Reported on only 2 Hastings CBC 1964–1980, singles in both 1970 and 1971.

Vireonidae (Vireos)

White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*)

Status: Casual spring migrant.

Spring: Brooking collected 1 at Inland 20 May 1917 that is now in the HMM (#2623). There are two additional reports, 19 May 1928 (LOI 33:6) and 31 May 1974 Adams (NBR 42:79).

Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant, formerly more common and bred.
Spring: Reports are from 30 April (NBR 30:67) through 31 May. An earlier report, 20 March 1975, is considered an error.
Summer: Brooking considered it common at Inland (Swenk 1925) and collected a set of eggs near Trumbull (Brooking Notes). Sharpe et al. (2001) considered this species a regular breeder statewide. While breeding certainly occurs in south-central Nebraska, the species is absent from the vast majority of the study area. "Possible" breeding was reported from the Benedict BBA block in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). The only other breeding season reports are "summer" 1976 Adams County (NBR 36:13), 11 June 1952 Aurora (NBR 20:76), 16 July 1973 Adams (NBR 42:35) and a singing bird at Sacramento—Wilcox WMA 30 July 2011 (PD).
Fall: Reports are in the period 26 August through 18 September.

Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*)

Status: Casual spring migrant.
Spring: Five reports: 25 April 1962 Adams (NBR 30:67), 27 April 1967 Adams (NBR 24:73), 19 May 1928 Hastings (LOI 33:6), May 1945 at Aurora (Chapman 1945), and a single bird at Parkview Cemetery, Hastings, 21 May 2010 (PD).

Blue-headed Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 3 May (NBR 48:81) and 21 May (NBR 3:95), both from Adams County. High Count: 2 in Clay County 7 May 2007 (PD).
Fall: Extreme dates: 4 September 1961 Adams (NBR 30:47) and 8 October 2007 (PD), both from Adams County. High Counts: 2 at Hastings on both 12 September 2007 (PD) and 12 September 2008 (PD).

Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and summer resident.
Spring: Extreme date: 23 April 1928 Hastings (LOI 31:4)
Fall: Extreme date: 26 September 1999 at the Geneva Cemetery.

Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Seven reports during the period 12 May (NBR 24:73) –20 May 2011 (PD).
Fall: Two reports: 23 September 1978 Adams (NBR 47:30) and 14 October 1974 Adams/Clay (NBR 43:34). A report of one at Aurora 31 August 1948 (Chapman 1948) was likely a Warbling Vireo based on the description provided.

Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*)

Status: Uncommon spring and rare fall migrant and rare summer resident.
Summer: Brooking considered it common at Inland but he made no remarks specifically of breeding. Tout (1902) found a single nest in the York area around 1900, but he believed that it was not a common breeder. BBA reports include "confirmed" nesting from the Hastings block and it was "observed" in the Benedict block. Breeding birds are most likely to be found along watercourses that intersperse the RWB.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, Magpies)

Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*)
Status: Common resident.
Winter: Recorded on 17 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 4 to 25 individuals).

Pinyon Jay (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*)
Status: Casual in fall.
Fall: Five early reports: Brooking saw a single bird at Hastings 10 October 1926 (LOI 19:3) and one was collected at Hastings 20 October 1926 and is now in the HMM (#2517). Whether these first two reports represent the same bird is not known. A "small flock of seven or eight" was seen northeast of Hastings 16 October 1934 (NBR 3:36). The species was also reported the fall of 1937 near Kenesaw, Adams County (Brooking 1938) and 8-10 were near Osceola mid-November 1930 (LOI 55:1).

Black-billed Magpie (*Pica hudsonia*)
Status: Casual resident. Formerly rare or uncommon, this species has decreased over the past two decades.
Summer: "Probable" nesting was reported from the Aurora BBA block (Mollhoff 2001).
Winter: Recorded on 15 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 16 individuals).

American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
Status: Fairly common breeder, common spring and fall migrant and winter resident. Brooking considered it abundant at Inland (Swenk 1925). Tout (1902), however, believed that York was "near the western limit" of the species' range in Nebraska and further noted "a person may drive a whole day and not see one".
Winter: Immense concentrations were observed in the Holdrege area in the 1980s where as many as 100,000 were estimated to have roosted during January–March of 1982 (Anonymous 1982). Recorded on 17 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 8 to 250 individuals).

Chihuahuan Raven (*Corvus cryptoleucus*)
Status: The occurrence of this species in the study area in the 1940s is enigmatic and is summarized by Sharpe et al. (2001). Brooking (1944) reported three birds were captured from a nest between Wilcox and Axtell 11 June 1944. Brown (1947) reported nesting three miles south of Axtell 13 April 1947.

[Common Raven **]** (*Corvus corax*)
Status: Hypothetical in spring. There are two undocumented modern reports, 21 May 1952 Adams and 21 March 1962 Adams (NBR 30:65). However, this species likely occurred historically in the RWB (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Alaudidae (Larks)

Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*)
Status: Uncommon summer resident, common spring and fall migrant and winter resident. A male (UNSM ZM6431) of the expected race *E. a. enthymia* was collected near Inland 9 May 1915 by C.E. Mickel.
Winter: Recorded on 17 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 6 to 4,810 individuals).

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

Purple Martin (*Progne subis*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and summer resident.
Spring: Extreme dates: 22 March 1942 Hastings (NBR 10:49) and 25 March 1945 Adams (NBR 8:61).
Summer: Tout (1897) noted that a boy collected a set of eggs in York 7 June 1896. Reports by J. E. Wallace that a few were nesting around Inland and Hastings are contradicted by Brooking, who did not report them (Swenk 1925). Martins were apparently in the region in the early 1900s as "Mr. Christiansen of Grafton, whose farmstead is famed as a bird sanctuary, and who has in the neighborhood of 700 pairs of swallows (Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallows, and Purple Martins) nesting upon his farm" (LOI 23:2–3).
Fall: Extreme date: 20 September 1969 Adams (NBR 38:34).

Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and summer resident. Neither Brooking (Notes) nor Tout (1902) mentioned this species.
Summer: Only observed at one (Benedict) BBA block in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). The species currently breeds locally where nestboxes have been placed, such as at Massie WPA. Adults and 2 young were at Shypoke WMA 9 July 2011 (LE).
Fall: Extreme date: 31 October 1984 Adams (NBR 53:12).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme date: 13 April 1936 Hastings (NBR 4:63).

Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant.
Summer: Tout (1902) found a nest in the York area around 1900. Nesting was also reported in York County in 1986 (Bennett 1987). Brooking considered it common along the Little Blue River (Swenk 1925). Small numbers likely breed along watercourses that intersperse, but are just outside of, the study area.

Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*)

Status: Common spring and abundant fall migrant. There is only one breeding record and that involves a "Mr. Christiansen of Grafton, whose farmstead is famed as a bird sanctuary, and who has in the neighborhood of 700 pairs of swallows; Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallows, and Purple Martins nesting upon is farm" (LOI 23:2–3). It was only found in two BBA blocks; "observed" at Wilkins and nesting was considered "possible" at the Mallard Haven block. Favored nesting sites (long river bridges) are essentially absent in the study area and the species may be absent as a breeder. By late July large flocks are often observed at or near wetlands. Flocks often number well into the thousands through August.
Fall: Extreme date: 1 was at Freeman Lake 18 September 1999 (JGJ).

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and summer resident.
Spring: Extreme date: 10 April 1930 Hastings (LOI 50:5).
Fall: High count: 10,000 at Freeman Lake 18 September 1999.

Paridae (Chickadees, Titmice)

Black-capped Chickadee (*Poecile atricapillus*)

Status: Rare to uncommon resident. Fairly common along the watercourses that intersperse the RWB; absent in most of the RWB. This status is similar to what Tout (1902) observed as he mentioned that chickadees "are not found away from streams". The species was observed in Hastings 2001—2002, but not since (PD). Chickadees are surprisingly scarce even at relatively well-developed wooded areas such as the Geneva Cemetery and McMurtrey Woodlot.
Winter: Recorded on 17 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 15 to 102 individuals).

Tufted Titmouse (*Baeolophus bicolor*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant and winter visitor.
Spring: Seven reports are from 5 March 1930 (LOI 49:3) through 28 April.
Fall: Two reports: 19–21 October 1934 Hastings (NBR 3:36) and 22 October 1933 Big Blue River south of Aurora (NBR 2:47)
Winter: Two reports: 11 February 1957 Hamilton (NBR 25:63) and 12 February 1966 York (NBR 35:13).

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*)

Status: Rare to uncommon spring and fall migrant, casual summer visitor.
Spring: Extreme dates: 17 May 1967 Adams (NBR 36:11).
Summer: A single was at a feeder in Hastings 2 June 2011 (PD). Also reported 3 July 1986 Adams.
Fall: Extreme dates: 26 September 1999 at the Geneva Cemetery (JGJ).
Winter: Recorded on 14 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 6 individuals).

White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*)

Status: Uncommon resident. Fairly common along the watercourses that intersperse the RWB; absent in a majority of the study area.
Winter: Recorded on 17 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 2 to 30 individuals).

Pygmy Nuthatch (*Sitta pygmaea*)

Status: Accidental in winter.
Winter: Turner reported the species in Minden 20 January – 20 April 1983 (NBR 51:91).

Certhiidae (Creepers)

Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and winter visitant.
Spring: Extreme date: 31 May 1974 Adams (NBR 42:77).
Winter: Recorded on 16 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 12 individuals).

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*)

Status: Casual fall migrant, accidental in spring and summer.
Spring: One report: 13 May 1972 Adams (NBR 40:80).
Summer: One record: a single bird at Harvard WPA 16 June 2007 (PD).
Fall: Three reports: a single bird was at Smith WPA 24 September 2011, 7 October 1934 Hastings (NBR 3:36) and1 was collected at the HMM 15 October 1963 (Nelson 1963).

Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant and winter visitor.
Spring: Six reports are during the period 14 April 1995 (SJD) –12 May 1945 Adams (NBR 8:62).
Fall: Eight reports are during the period 28 July 1966 Adams (NBR 35:66) and a single in southwest York County 30 November 2003 (LR, RH).
Winter: Three reports: 1 at a feeder in Hastings 17 December 2009 (PhS), 1 January 1958 Hamilton (NBR 26:61), and 8 January 1967 Adams (NBR 24:71),

Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*)

Status: Casual spring migrant and summer visitor, hypothetical summer resident, accidental in winter.
Two reports may have involved breeding. The first involves 1 at "Nash's Grove" near Hastings (NBR 1:101, LOI 56:3). A bird was first seen 30 December 1930 and it was subsequently observed on 1, 7, 10 January and 22 March 1931. On 16 April 1931 a pair was observed and in subsequent days yielded observations of "apparent nest-building". By the end of April the pair apparently deserted the premises (LOI 59:2). A second account that more likely involved nesting was a pair in the yard of Mrs. A. M. Brooking in 1944 (Jones 1944). A single bird was observed 16 May and the "Song Sparrow-like song of the bird was much in evidence, it nearly being continuous" and in "June daily singing and calling were heard". A second bird was finally observed and daily singing and calling were heard through July. The final sighting was on 23 August. There are seven additional spring reports during the period 6 April 1933 Hastings (NBR 1:72) –17 May 1947 Hastings (NBR 15:67) and one other summer report, 5 July 1965 Adams (NBR 34:55).

House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and summer resident.
Fall: Extreme date: 13 October 2000 Lange WPA.

Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant and winter visitor. Eight reports are during the period 16 October 1970 Adams (NBR 34:31) –29 January 1928 Hastings (LOI 29:2). In addition, there are two May reports, 8 May 1976 Adams (NBR 44:47) and "winter" – 30 May 1965 Adams (NBR 33:60).

Palm Warbler

Sedge Wren (*Cistothorus platensis*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant, absent to common summer visitor or summer resident.

Spring: Extreme date: 18 April 1967 York (NBR 35:13).

Summer: Generally rare or absent during early and mid-summer. The only reports are of two singing birds at County Line WPA 18 June 2003 and 2–3 singing birds on the west side of Hastings late May 2009 (PD). Intriguing is that on 25 May 2007, two nests were found at the Hastings locations, but these nests may have been subsequently abandoned (PD). Territorial males and nesting activity has generally been observed later in the season with singing males arriving in mid- to late-July. This generally occurs during wet years, such as in 1999. A few were noted 11 July 1999 (LR, RH; Silcock 1999b), but two weeks later on 25 July, 31 singing males were tallied in the RWB (JGJ). By 7 August 1999, singing birds were present at essentially every large grassland tract, with as many as 60 found that day (JGJ). A similar situation may have occurred in 1987 when Bedell (1987) found 26 at Harvard WPA 17 August 1987, 11 at Hultine WPA 16 August 1987, and 1 at Pintail WMA 2 and 12 August 1987. Clausen (1989) found Sedge Wrens at North Lake Basin WMA, Mallard Haven WPA, Harvard WPA, Krause WPA, and Smith WPA 2–30 August 1989. No birds were found in 2000, 2001, or 2002, all of which were relatively dry summers. Despite a paucity of actual nesting records, it is assumed that nesting does occur in those years when present. The only report where nesting activity was found is from Cink (1973b) who noted "on 17 July 1971, I heard the calls of this species while passing a meadow about four miles south and three miles east of Clay Center, Nebraska (Section 21, T-6N, R-6W, Clay County). Several males were actively defending territories and one bird that I observed appeared to be an immature wren which was giving food calls". While Sedge Wren is considered a skulking species, singing males in July and August are easily detected. Thus it is curious that early observers did not report this species. In fact, there are no reports for the region prior to 1956 (Rapp 1956). Absent during many years during the summer period and becoming increasingly less common westward.

Fall: Extreme date: 4 at Harvard Marsh 16 October 2006 (PD).

Sedge Wren nest, May 2009, Adams County
Photo by Paul Dunbar

Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant, rare to uncommon summer visitor and accidental summer resident.

Summer: The only early breeding record is a nest found by Tout (1902) at a millpond within the city limits of York. Generally absent in early summer (June); singing birds are usually located later in July and August at sites where they were absent earlier. Singing birds at Kenesaw WPA July 2000 and Kissinger Basin WMA 19 July 2003 were not detected earlier in the summer. Cink (1973b) also found it in Clay County 17 July 1973 and it was reported from Glenvil Basin 16 July 1995 (Silcock 1995b), York County 20 July through 7 August 1991 (NBR 60:30) and Adams County 3 August 1975 (NBR 34:25). Earliest recent report in summer is 26 June 2011 at Straightwater WMA (RS). It was "observed" at the Benedict BBA block and nesting was considered "possible" at the McCool Junction block (Mollhoff 2001). It was also reported from Adams County during "summer" 1976 (NBR 44:47). All singing birds observed have been eastern types, although western birds may occur during migration. Information on eastern and western Marsh Wrens in Nebraska can be found in Kroodsma (1988) and Sharpe et al (2001). Extreme dates: 10 April 1976 (NBR 44:47) and 14 October 1973 Adams (NBR 41:33).

Polioptilidae (Gnatcatchers)

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant. This species is increasing in Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001) and the frequency of reports is increasing in the RWB as well.

Spring: There are seventeen spring reports during the period 9 April (PD) –25 May.

Fall: Two reports: 8 September 1950 Hastings (B.M. Jones 1951) and 1 at Sandpiper WMA 17 September 2000 (JGJ).

Regulidae (Kinglets)

Golden-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa*)

Status: Rare to uncommon spring and fall migrant and casual winter resident.

Spring: Extreme date: 7 May 1960 Adams (NBR 28:68).

Winter: Recorded on 9 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 2 to 7 individuals).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant and casual winter visitor.

Spring: Extreme dates: 16 March 1962 Adams (NBR 30:66) and 10 March 1934 Hastings (NBR 2:87).

Fall: Extreme date: 1 near Massie WPA 3 September 2000. High count: 12 at the Geneva Cemetery 26 September 1999 (JGJ).

Winter: Five reports: 12 December 1975 Adams (NBR 34:25), ~16 December 1972 Hastings CBC (count week), 18 December 1971 Hastings CBC, 20 December 1970 Hastings CBC, 13 January 1980 Adams (NBR 48:81), 1 in southeastern Adams County 13 January 2008 (LR, RH).

Turdidae (Thrushes)

Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant and uncommon summer resident and winter resident.

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*)

Status: Casual winter visitor and spring migrant; Accidental in fall.
Spring: Seven reports are during the period 5—25 March and all are from Hastings or Adams County. None of these reports are more recent than 1953.
Winter: Four reports: 2 found by Brooking near Kenesaw 16 December 1923 (Swenk 1925), 8–9 January 1988 Adams (NBR 56:68), 18 January 1928 Hastings (LOI 29:2), 21 January 1928 Hastings (LOI 33:5)

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and winter visitor. All reports have been from Adams County except for one collected 10 miles north of Harvard in Hamilton County 28 November 1903 (Swenk 1925). Most Adams County reports are during the period 10 October though 30 March. Extreme dates: 10 September 1975 (NBR 34:25), 7 May 1967 (NBR 36:12), and 26 May 1942 (NBR 10:50).

Veery (*Catharus fuscescens*)

Status: Casual spring migrant. Besides the twelve reports in the period 6–22 May, a specimen was taken by Brooking at Inland 3 May 1915 (HMM #2043) that is identified as the eastern subspecies *C. f. fuscescens* (Swenk 1925). This is apparently the westernmost documented record for this subspecies in Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Gray-cheeked Thrush (*Catharus minimus*)

Status: Casual or rare spring migrant.
Spring: There are eleven reports in the period 1 May through 5 June. An earlier report, 22 April 1958 Adams (NBR 26:61), is considered to possibly be a misidentified Hermit Thrush, which is much more likely on this date.
Fall: The only fall report, 22 October 1972 Adams (NBR 41:35) is considered to possibly be a misidentified Hermit Thrush, which is much more likely on this date.

Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant, hypothetical in summer.
Spring: Extreme date: 20 April and 13 June. Some late April reports, particularly 12 April 1972 Adams (NBR 40:80), may have actually been misidentified Hermit Thrushes. High count: 3 at Clay Center Cemetery 10 May 1998.
Summer: One report, 28 June 1969 Adams (NBR 39:63).
Fall: Four October reports, 16 October 1967 Adams (NBR 36:63), 22 October 1972 Adams (NBR 41:35), 22 October 1980 Adams (NBR 49:24), and 28 October 2007 Hastings (PD) are likely referable to Hermit Thrush. Also, a specimen collected at Glenvil on the very late date of 3 November 1918 was identified as this species. The specimen is no longer extant, but the date of the report suggests Hermit Thrush.

Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*)

Status: Rare spring and casual fall migrant. Atypically late and early reports of Gray-cheeked and Swainson's Thrushes (see above) are more likely this species.
Spring: Eighteen reports are from 3 April through 1 May. A later report, 28 May 1983 Adams (NBR 51:73), may be an error.
Summer: An undocumented report for the "summer" 1976 Adams (NBR 44:47) is considered doubtful.
Fall: Three reports: 12 October 1974 York (Dahl, Notes), 14 October 1964 Adams (NBR 33:41), and 15 October 1984 Adams (NBR 53:13).

Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*)

Status: Formerly an uncommon spring and casual fall migrant and summer resident, now considered casual. Reports were regular during the 1930s through the early 1970s, but there have been few since then.

Spring: There are about twenty-one May reports, most from mid-May. A report by Dahl (Notes) 17 May 1983 from York County is one of the few reports since the 1970s. Extreme date: 25 April 1928 Hastings (LOI 31:4).

Summer: There are two reports of nesting. Tout (1902) found a nest in the York area around 1900. A second report involved a nest under construction in a maple tree in a Hastings yard in 1934. The nest subsequently was blown out of the tree during a storm, although it was believed that the young had already fledged (Jones 1934). However, nesting in an urban setting seems unlikely. Reports of "possible" nesting from the Greenwing and Wilkins BBA blocks (Mollhoff 2001) are considered questionable. The reports may have actually involved Brown Thrashers. Other summer reports include: 9 May through 15 June 1964 Adams (NBR 32:76), 12 June through "summer" 1976 Adams (NBR 44:47), "summer"-3 August 1975 Adams (NBR 34:25), 10 June 1975 Clay (NBR 43:59), "summer" — 15 Jul 1973 Adams (NBR 42:34).

Fall: There are four reports: 12 September 1934 Hastings (NBR 3:36), 21 September 1937 Hastings (NBR 6:18), 21 September 1963 Adams (NBR 32:54), and 28 September 1928 Hastings (LOI 34:2-3).

American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and summer resident, uncommon to fairly common winter resident.

Winter: Recorded on 15 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 150 individuals). High count: Morris (1976) reported 500 in his yard in York County 10 December 1975.

Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*)

Status: Accidental in fall.

Fall: The only record is a bird considered "quite gorgeous" and whose belly and abdomen color was described as "really dark orange" in York 2 November–December 1984 York (Dahl, Notes). While the description is minimal, the record fits the occurrence pattern of this species in Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Mimidae (Mockingbirds, Thrashers)

Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, uncommon summer resident and accidental in winter. Arrives in May and departs in late September. Extreme dates: 16 April 1928 Hastings (LOI 31:4) and 30 September 1928 (LOI 34:3).

Winter: A single bird was in a Hastings yard 19 January 2004 (PD).

Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant and summer visitor; casual summer resident and winter visitor.

Summer: Tout (1897) found a nest in York in 1897 and Brooking discovered nesting at Inland in 1915 (Swenk 1925). There are no other breeding reports.

Winter: Two reports: 1 January 1956 Adams (NBR 24:71) and 1 January 1960 Adams (NBR 3:68).

Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and summer resident, casual winter visitor.
Winter: Nine reports during the period 15–31 December. These birds were presumably tardy migrants and eventually expired. One bird apparently overwintered in Aurora during the winter 1957–58 (NBR 26:50),

Sturnidae (Starlings)

European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

Status: Common resident. First report was a flock of 50 near Utica 4 August 1935 (Chapman 1935).
Winter: Recorded on 17 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 100 to 1650 individuals).

Motacillidae (Pipits)

American Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Reports are from 1 April through 23 May. The late date consisted of a single bird at County Line WPA 23 May 1997 (JGJ). Also late are reports from both Adams and Clay Counties 19 May 1973 (NBR 41:58).
Fall: High count: "thousands" at the "nearby lagoon", Hastings, 6 October 1928 (LOI 34:3).

Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*)

Status: Casual spring migrant and fall migrant, but assumed to be a rare regular migrant. The low number of reports is likely a result of the skulking tendencies of the species. Dunbar, who has found the species on several occasions, noted "you have to do a lot of walking to flush them up". H. Turner reported this species on several occasions during migration in the Kearney and Franklin area from the late 1930s to the early 1980s.
Spring: Twelve reports during the period 1–27 April. Extreme dates: 1 April 1971 Adams (NBR 39:53) and two birds three miles south of Geneva 27 April 1995 (SJD).
Fall: Ten reports during the period 21 September (NBR 36:64) –16 October (PD). Other reports outside this period are a single at Funk WPA 5 September 1999 (NBR 69:88) and 8 November 1967 (NBR 36:64). High count: 16 at Prairie Dog WMA 24 September 2011 (LE) and 11 northwest of Hastings 21 October 2006 (PD).

Bombycillidae (Waxwings)

Bohemian Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant and winter visitor. Thirteen reports are from 5 November –9 April. Two other reports are respectively early and late, 14 September 1973 Adams (NBR 42:35) and 26 May 1951 Adams (NBR 19:71). Brooking claimed it was common every few winters around Inland in the early 1900s (Swenk 1925) and Tout (1902) considered it as an "irregular winter visitant". This species may have been more common than Cedar Waxwings formerly (see below). High count: 50 at Hastings 5 February 1931 (LOI 57:2).

Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*)

Status: Rare to uncommon migrant and winter visitor, casual summer visitor. Perhaps even less common, formerly. Interesting are Tout's (1897) remarks regarding a waxwing taken during the winter 1896–97, he stated that "I doubt if it was a Cedar Waxwing, but probably a Bohemian".
Summer: Reports are few and include 15 June 1968 Adams (NBR 36:80) and 19 June 1983 Adams (NBR 51:74). There are no breeding records.
Winter: Recorded on 12 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 100 individuals). High count: 150 in a Hastings yard 12 February 2007.

Calcariidae (Longspurs and Snow Buntings)

Lapland Longspur (*Calcarius lapponicus*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and winter resident.
Fall: High count: 2,000 in the Hastings vicinity 19 October 1930 (LOI 54:1).
Winter: Recorded on 14 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 2,000 individuals).

Chestnut-collared Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*)

Status: Casual spring migrant and winter visitor, accidental in fall.
Spring: Three reports: 15 March 1945 Adams (NBR 8:64), 22 March 1936 Adams (NBR 4:66) and two birds in breeding plumage were in a short-cropped alfalfa field in west-central Clay County 14 April 2008 (PD).
Fall: A first-winter bird was in Adams County 25 September 2006 (PD).
Winter: Two reports: 4 January 1955 Hamilton (NBR 23:82) and 8 January 1958 Adams (NBR 26:67).

McCown's Longspur (*Rhynchophanes mccownii*)

Status: Accidental in spring and fall; hypothetical in winter.
Spring: There is one record from what is now known as Ayr Lake. The following excerpt is from NBR (4:46).

> *"At the Stromer Lagoon, four miles south of Hastings, on March 26 [1936], Mesdames Fuller, A.H. and A.M. Jones, and Woodworth noted the McCown Longspur in company of American Common Pipits and Horned Larks. The observation was made after a night of wind and dust and the birds seemed exhausted and kept close to the clumps of grass scattered here and there on the burned, plowed ground. Mrs. A.H. Jones reports that she had an unusual close-up view of the McCown.s Longspur, a species she had never seen before, but of which she felt certain of the identification, after a clear view of the black breast crescent and chestnut shoulder patch".*

Fall: A single bird was photographed at Harvard WPA 20 October 2006 (PD).
Winter: One report: 10 January 1952 Aurora (NBR 20:83).

McCown's Longspur, Harvard WPA, 20 October 2006
Photo by Paul Dunbar

Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*)

Status: Casual fall migrant and winter visitor.
Winter: Seven reports: a single bird at Harvard WPA 11 November 2007 (PD), December 2005 Clay (PD), 24 December 1975 Adams (NBR 34:29), 8 were found in Adams and Clay Counties 14 January 2011 (PD), February 2004 Adams (PD) and 20 February 1974 Adams (NBR 42:86). A total of 158 were found in Polk, Hamilton, York and Seward Counties 20 January 2011.

Parulidae (Wood Warblers)

Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapilla*)
Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant, casual in late summer.
Spring: Reports are from 7–14 May. High count: 5 at the Geneva Cemetery 14 May 2000.
Summer: Two reports, 13 July 1975 Adams (NBR 34:26) and 10 July 1973 Adams (NBR 42:37), are considered early fall migrants.
Fall: Reports are from 29 August through 3 September.

Worm-eating Warbler (*Helmitheros vermivorum*)
Status: Accidental in spring. A single was at Lange WPA 1 May 1999 (JGJ). There is also one additional report without details from York in May 1973 (Dahl, Notes).

Louisiana Waterthrush (*Parkesia motacilla*)
Status: Accidental in spring. There are no fewer than twelve spring reports in the period 6–24 May, with only one report that is judged to be reliable. Morris recognized the species' rarity and noted that the one he observed 6 May 1984 (52:65) was the first he had ever seen in the area (NBR 52:56). The volume of unsubstantiated reports, for what would conceivably be a rare species, suggests confusion with the more common Northern Waterthrush.

Northern Waterthrush (*Parkesia noveboracensis*)
Status: Uncommon spring migrant. All reports are during the period 26 April (JGJ) to18 May (PD). The 26 April sighting was of an individual observed foraging on matted cattails at Rolland WPA in 1997.

Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*)
Status: Casual spring migrant. Two reports: A male at the Geneva Cemetery 14 May 1999 (SJD, JGJ) and 17 May 1954 Adams (NBR 22:64).

Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora cyanoptera*)
Status: Casual spring migrant. Two reports: 15 May 1967 Adams (NBR 35:15) and 19 May 1962 Adams (NBR 30:68).

Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*)
Status: Uncommon spring and rare fall migrant.
Spring: Reports are during the period 1–15 May.
Fall: Extreme date: 31 August 1977 Adams (NBR 46:31) and 3 October 1969 Adams (NBR 38:35).

Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*)
Status: Accidental in spring and fall. The only reports are 12 May 1956 Adams (NBR 24:73) and 4–12 September 1973 Adams (NBR 42:37).

[Swainson's Warbler **]** (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*)
Status: Hypothetical in spring. The only report is of a bird observed in a bush in an Aurora Park 16 May 1956 (Swanson 1957). The bird observed was described as follows: "The breast was plain and dirty white. The back, olive-brown. The crown was warm brown and there was a line above the eye. Both of the wings and the beak were longish". Although an adequate description of this species, the record is generally not accepted (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Tennessee Warbler (*Oreothlypis peregrina*)
Status: Uncommon spring and rare to uncommon fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme dates: 29 April 1956 Adams (NBR 24:73),
Fall: Extreme dates: 12 October 1973 Adams (NBR 42:36) and 20 October 1980 Adams (NBR 49:25).

Orange-crowned Warbler (*Oreothlypis celata*)
Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme date: 15 April 1952 Hastings (NBR 20:77). High count: six at Lange WPA woodlot 6 May 1999 (JGJ).
Fall: There is an earlier observation of two birds at Field Station 2 September 2000 (JGJ). These birds were very yellow and considering the date, it is possible the birds were of the western subspecies *O. c. orestera*. High count: 26 at the Geneva Cemetery 26 September 1999.

Nashville Warbler (*Oreothlypis ruficapilla*)
Status: Uncommon spring and fairly common fall migrant.
Spring: High count: four at the Geneva Cemetery 15 May 1999. The only two specimens taken by Brooking also represent extreme dates; HMM #1688 was taken 23 April 1915 and HMM #2601 was taken 9 June 1917 (Swenk 1925).
Fall: Extreme date: 22 August and 26 September. High count: 8 at Lange WPA 16 September 2000.

Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*)
Status: Accidental in spring. One report: 24 May 1955 Hamilton (NBR 23:78).

MacGillivray's Warbler (*Geothlypis tolmiei*)
Status: Casual spring migrant, accidental in fall.
Spring: There are six reports, and while the circumstances of only one observation are known, five of the six reports fall in a very short period, 15–17 May. Reports: 7 May 1940 Hastings (NBR 8:81), a male at the Clay Center Cemetery 15 May 1999 (JP, JGJ), 15 May 1965 Adams (NBR 33:62), 16 May 1964 Adams (NBR 32:78), 1 seen by A.M. Brooking and the rest of the Hastings Bird Club 17 May 1924 Hastings (Swenk 1925), 17 May 1939 Adams (NBR 7:33).
Fall: One record. A single *Geothlypis* warbler believed to be this species was observed at Sandpiper WMA 2 September 2000. The bird possessed a complete gray hood and a broken eye ring the call note was also suggestive of this species. There is an additional report, 5 October 1961 Adams (NBR 30:47).

Mourning Warbler (*Geothlypis philadelphia*)
Status: Rare spring and casual fall migrant, accidental in summer.
Spring: Except for an early report, 27 April 1929 Hastings (LOI 42:3), there are twenty reports from 12–27 May.
Summer: A report, 15 June 1975 Clay (NBR 43:62), is considered a late spring migrant. Late dates for the state are in early to mid-June (Sharpe et al. 2001).
Fall: Three reports: 30 August 2003 Field Station, 4 September 1963 Adams (NBR 32:55), and 30 September 1969 Adams (NBR 38:36). A fourth report, 17 October 1972, is rather late for this species and may be an error.

Kentucky Warbler (*Geothlypis formosus*)
Status: Casual spring migrant. Two reports: 15 May 1951 Adams (NBR 19:74) and 16 May 1950 Adams (NBR18:78-79).

Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
Status: Common spring and fall migrant and breeder. Extreme date: 30 Apr 2000 Massie WPA.

Hooded Warbler (*Setophaga citrina*)
Status: Casual spring migrant, accidental in fall.
Spring: Three reports: a male at the Geneva Cemetery 6 May 1999 (JGJ), 17 May 1976 Adams, and a male at Parkview Cemetery 7 May 2007 (PD).
Fall: One report: 10 September 1975 Adams (NBR 34:27).

American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*)
Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme date: 22 April 1984 Adams (Sharpe et al. 2001)
Fall: Extreme date: 2 July 1975 Adams (NBR 34:27) and 1 near Harvard WPA 1 October 2000 (JGJ).

Cape May Warbler (*Setophaga tigrina*)
Status: Casual spring migrant. Six reports are during the period 10 May 1981 Adams (NBR 49:51) –22 May 1936 Hastings (NBR 3:95).

Cerulean Warbler (*Setophaga cerulea*)
Status: Casual spring and fall migrant.
Spring: A single male was in a Hastings yard 10 May 2007 (PD). Three other reports: 25 April 1928 Hastings, 26 April 1951 Adams (NBR 19:73), and 6 May 1954 Adams (NBR 22:65).
Fall: Two reports: 2 September 1973 Adams (NBR 42:37) and 3 September 1975 Adams (NBR 34:26).

Northern Parula (*Setophaga americana*)
Status: Casual spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Five reports: 28 April 1974 Adams (NBR 42:80), a female at Lange WPA 6 May 1999 (JGJ), 1 in Hastings 7 May 2011 (PD), 9 May 1946 Hastings (Jones 1946), 28 May 1974 Adams (NBR 42:80)
Fall: Three reports: 1 August 1973 Adams (NBR 42:36), 4 September 1973 Adams (NBR 42:36), 15 September 1975 Adams (NBR 34:26).

Magnolia Warbler (*Setophaga magnolia*)

Status: Rare spring migrant and accidental in fall.
Spring: Twenty-two reports are from 7–23 May. Brooking collected a male (HMM #2028) 16 May 1915 and a female (HMM #2028) 29 May 1923 at Inland (Swenk 1925). High count: 4 at the Geneva Cemetery 15 May 1999.
Fall: One report: 24 September 1961 Adams (NBR 30:47).

Bay-breasted Warbler (*Setophaga castanea*)

Status: Casual spring and hypothetical fall migrant.
Spring: Twelve reports during the period 28 April 1930 Hastings (LOI 42:3) – 22 May 1966 York (NBR 35:16).
Fall: There are four fall reports of Blackpoll Warbler that may actually have been this species (see Blackpoll Warbler).

Blackburnian Warbler (*Setophaga fusca*)

Status: Rare spring and casual fall migrant.
Spring: Thirteen reports are from 6–21 May. Brooking collected a specimen (#2650) at Inland 18 May 1917 (Swenk 1925)
Fall: Two recent records: a female at the McMurtrey Woodlot 22 August 1999 (JGJ) and an immature at Prairie Marsh WMA 2 September 2000 (JGJ).

Yellow Warbler (*Setophaga petechia*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant, uncommon summer resident.
Spring: High counts: 24 at the Geneva Cemetery 7 May 2000. Extreme date: 20 April 1926 Hastings (LOI 18:3).
Summer: Brooking (Notes) reported it as common breeder at Inland. However, recent breeding records are few. It nested in Hamilton County in 1973 (Bennett 1974). Nesting was “confirmed” at the Clay Center BBA block and considered “probable” at the Aurora block (Mollhoff 2001). At least small numbers breed presumably along watercourses and locally at specific sites.
Fall: Extreme date: 26 September 1999 Geneva Cemetery.

Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Setophaga pensylvanica*)

Status: Rare spring migrant, accidental in summer.
Spring: Fifteen reports are from 10–22 May, one of which was a specimen (HMM #2480) taken by Brooking at Inland 18 May 1916 (Swenk 1925). High count: 5 at the Geneva Cemetery 16 May 1999 (JGJ).
Summer: A singing male was at Hastings 18 June 2005 (PD).

Blackpoll Warbler (*Setophaga striata*)

Status: Uncommon spring and hypothetical fall migrant.
Spring: Reports are during the period 29 April (LOI 51:11) –16 May. Brooking considered it common at Inland (Swenk 1925). A 22 April 1933 Hastings report is rather early for this species and may have been a misidentified Black-and-white Warbler. High count: 6 at the Geneva Cemetery 16 May 1999.
Fall: There are at least four reports, none recent, in the period 4 September through 10 October. These are considered hypothetical due to possible confusion with the similar Bay-breasted Warbler. The latter, although as yet unrecorded in the RWB in fall, is generally far more common in Nebraska during this season than is the Blackpoll Warbler (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Setophaga caerulescens*)
Status: Accidental in spring and fall.
Spring: One report: 17 May 1978 Adams (NBR 46:80).
Fall: One report: a female was found at the Geneva Cemetery 13 September 2009 (WRS).

Palm Warbler (*Setophaga palmarum*)
Status: Rare spring migrant and accidental in fall.
Spring: Twenty-five reports are in the period 29 April through 15 May (LOI 18:3). Two of these reports are specimens taken by Brooking at Inland. The first, a male (#2021), was taken 3 May 1915 and the second, a female (#2021-A), was taken 9 May 1920 (Swenk 1925). Brooking collected five additional specimens during a single day 13 May 1923 (Swenk 1925).
Fall: One record: 1 was near Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA 25 September 1999.

Pine Warbler (*Setophaga pinus*)
Status: Accidental in spring. Morris found 1 in a shelterbelt in his yard 2-8 May 1984 and noted, "It was very tame, and at times would get closer than [he] could focus his binoculars. All of the identifying marks could be seen in good light." (NBR 52:56, 64).

Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*)

"Myrtle" Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata coronata*)
Status: Common spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme date: 9 April 1935 Hastings (NBR 3:94).
Fall: Extreme date: 29 November 1980 Adams (NBR 49:26). High count: "more than 100" in the spray pool at Waterworks Park" in Hastings 6 October 1934 (NBR 3:36)

"Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*)
Status: Casual spring migrant. Three reports: 15 April 1930 Hastings (LOI 51:13), 21 April 1927 Hastings (LOI 23:9), and 13 May 1972 Adams (NBR 40:81).

Yellow-throated Warbler (*Setophaga dominica*)
Status: Accidental in spring. One at the Geneva Cemetery 14 May 1999 (JGJ, SJD) is the only record. There are at least a dozen other reports, many of which are from June and likely the result of name confusion with Common Yellowthroat.

Prairie Warbler (*Setophaga discolor*)
Status: Accidental in spring. One report: 12 May 1962 Hastings (NBR 30:54).

[Black-throated Gray Warbler **]** (*Setophaga nigrescens*)
Status: Hypothetical in spring. One report that lacks details: 11 May 1971 Adams (NBR 39:54).

[Townsend's Warbler **]** (*Setophaga townsendi*)
Status: Hypothetical in spring. One report that lacks details: 11 May 1971 Adams (NBR 39:54).

Black-throated Green Warbler (*Setophaga virens*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant.
Spring: Twenty reports are from 25 April 1937 Adams (NBR 5:63) through 29 May. Two specimens were taken by Brooking at Inland, the first (#2629) on 24 May 1917 and the second (#2021-A) on 12 May 1918 (Swenk 1925). High count: 2 at the Geneva Cemetery 14–15 May 1999.
Fall: Generally casual, except in 1936 when it was particularly numerous (NBR 5:18):

> *"There was an unusual migration of Northern Black-throated Green Warblers through that locality [Hastings] the past September [1936]. Mrs. F.L Youngblood noted them first on September 18. Two were picked up dead on the courthouse steps on September 21 by Eileen Rowe. A number of them were seen on September 22 by Mrs. A.H. Jones".*

There was an additional 1936 report, 3 October 1936 Hasting (NBR 5:18). There are only eight other fall reports, six of which are from October. Latest reports are 16 October 1937 Hastings (NBR 6:18), 18 October 1970 Adams (NBR 34:32) and a single bird in a Hastings yard 25 October 2003 (PD).

Canada Warbler (*Cardellina canadensis*)

Status: Casual spring migrant and accidental in fall.
Spring: Four reports: a male at the Geneva Cemetery 14 May 1999 (SJD, JGJ), a male at the York City Park 21 May 2011, a male at Streeter Park, Aurora, 21 May 2011, and 21 May 1936 Hastings (NBR 3:95)
Fall: One record: a male at the McMurtrey Woodlot 19 August 2000.

Wilson's Warbler (*Cardellina pusilla*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fairly common fall migrant.
Spring: Extreme date: 24 April 1962 Adams (NBR 30:68). A very early report, 14 April 1976 Adams (NBR 44:49), is considered questionable. High count: 3 at Lange WPA 14 May 1999.
Fall: Reports are from 22 August through 1 October. There is a later report, 12 October 1966 Adams (NBR 35:68). High count: 23 in the Clay and Fillmore Counties 2-3 September 2000.

Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant, formerly more common. Swenk (1940) speculated both the eastern subspecies, *I. v. virens,* and western subspecies, *I. v. auricollis,* occurred in the Hastings vicinity. The former breeding south of the study area along the Little Blue River and the latter as a migrant throughout the area, Brooking (Notes) considered the species rare at Inland and collected a specimen (HMM #2634-A) 18 May 1920 that belongs to the western subspecies (Swenk 1940). Another (UNSM ZM6912) was collected near Brickton (location unknown), Adams County 10 May 1919 by C.E. Mickel. It is likely that all recent reports are of *I. v. auricollis* since *I. v. virens* no longer breeds and rarely occurs in Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001). Chats were recorded somewhat regularly in the 1920s and 1930s in the Hastings area (Swenk 1940), but recent reports are few.
Spring: Six recent reports: 10-12 May 1972 Adams (NBR 41:61), a single at the McMurtrey Woodlot 15 May 1999 (JGJ), a single at the Harvard Cemetery 15 May 1999 (JGJ), 1 at Crystal Lake 13 May 2008 (PD), one near Roseland 19 May 2008 (PD) and a single bird at Parkview Cemetery, Hastings, 24 May 2008 (PD).
Summer: There is one recent report: 13 May through "summer" 1976 Adams (NBR 44:49).
Fall: Three recent reports: 16 July–28 September 1973 Adams (NBR 42:37), a single at Smartweed WMA 3 September 2000 (JGJ), and 6 October 1963 Adams (NBR 32:55).

Emberizidae (Towhess, New World Sparrows)

Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant
Spring: High count: 27 at McMurtrey Woodlot 4 May 2001 (JGJ).
Fall: High count: 12 at Sandpiper WMA 14 Oct 2000 (JGJ).

Eastern Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant, perhaps more common. There are only about seven recent reports. Determining this species' status is complicated because it was formerly considered a race of the Rufous-sided Towhee and not reported separately. Brooking did make the distinction and considered it uncommon at Inland (Swenk 1925). It is likely that this former subspecies is at least a rare but regular migrant as it breeds to the south in the Republican River drainage (Sharpe et al. 2001).
Spring: Extreme dates: Single birds each in Clay and Adams Counties 7 April 2008 and another at the McMurtrey Woodlot 15 May 1999 (JGJ)
Fall: Extreme dates: Single birds in Hastings 14 October 2008 (PD) and at Sandpiper WMA 14 October 2000 (JGJ).

American Tree Sparrow (*Spizella arborea*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and winter resident.
Winter: Recorded on 17 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 5 to 385 individuals).

Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and summer resident, accidental in winter
Fall: Extreme date: 30 November 1967 Adams (NBR 36:66).
Winter: Two reports: 28 January 1968 Adams (NBR 36:84) and a single in a Hastings yard 3 January 2010 (PD).

Clay-colored Sparrow (*Spizella pallida*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and a casual winter visitor. .
Spring: Extreme dates: 1 singing at Field Station 27 May 2002 and 1 June 1976 Adams (NBR 44:51).
Fall: Extreme date: 3 September 2000 Field Station.
Winter: A single bird was photographed just north of Hastings 3 January 2010 (PD). Other reports are from Adams County include 18 December 1961 and 1 January 1962 (NBR 30:72).

Field Sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant. With the exception of peak migration periods this species is scarce away from watercourses where breeding may occur in appropriate habitat. There are no breeding records for the RWB. It was reported from only one BBA block (Benedict; Mollhoff 2001).
Fall: Extreme date: 22 November 1967 Adams (NBR 36:66)
Winter: Four reports: one was reported as over-wintering in Aurora during the winter 1951–52 (Swanson 1953), 26 December and 5 February 1966 Adams County (NBR 35:70), 20 January 1990 Polk (NBR 58:80), 20 were reported from the Hastings CBC in 1977 (NBR 46:11). None of these reports are accompanied by details.

Vesper Sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*)
Status: Fairly common to common spring and fall migrant, casual, albeit increasing, summer visitor.
Spring: Extreme dates: 9 March 1967 Adams (NBR 36:17)
Summer: There are a small number of recent summer reports including 22 July 2000 near Wetland #F11 and 3 June 2001 near Wetland #C229, two singing near Goehner, Seward County, 17 June 2005 (JGJ) and two other in this same area 15 August 2010 (JGJ). In addition, several singing birds were observed in the northern and eastern portion of the region during mid- to late May 2004 and 2005. Singing birds were found in soybean fields that had standing wheat or corn stubble from the previous growing season. The Vesper Sparrow has apparently adapted to nesting in row crops (Kent and Dinsmore 1996, Sharpe et al. 2001). It appears to be slowly increasing; however, breeding is yet confirmed from the RWB.
Fall: High count: 94 in Adams County 25 September 2006 (PD).

Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*)
Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, rare summer visitor.
Summer: There are no breeding records, although nesting was considered probable at the Benedict and McCool Junction BBA blocks and it was reported from Adams County 30 June 1988. A 1965 nesting report from Adams County (NBR 34:43) mentioned in Ducey (1988) is outside the study area. A single in Fillmore County was in a soybean field with corn stubble from the previous growing season (LE) and two were found at Funk WPA 27 June 2003 (LE).
Fall: Extreme date: 6 November 1966 Adams (NBR 35:70).


Western Meadowlark

Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*)

Status: Currently a casual spring and fall migrant, formerly more common and occasionally bred. The region has likely always been at the eastern edge of the species' range and its occurrence appears to have been linked to wet-dry cycles. Brooking (Notes) noted it as a common breeder at Inland in 1896 and 1917, but in "other years not [common]". Swenk (1925), however, claimed that Brooking only reported it as a common migrant. Tout (1902) supports Brooking's 1896 breeding report as he found it in the York area during that same year and perhaps most accurately describes the species former status:

> *"The Lark Bunting is an irregular summer resident and breeder, being observed most abundantly in 1896. Skipping a year or two occasionally, it seems to follow the seasons, becoming rare in rainy or wet years and quite common during years of drouth."*

In 1927, Lark Buntings were numerous in the Hastings area during May (LOI 23:3) and "were abundant migrants east of the 98th meridian, common east of the 97th meridian and were seen east of the 96th meridian" during spring migration (LOI 23:5). "Large numbers" were found north of Beaver Crossing 23 June 1932 (Gates 1942).

Lark Buntings were reported regularly, albeit not every year, during middle portion of the 20th century. Most reports were during May, apparent spring migrants. There were several years when summering was reported and many of reports occurred 1965–76. It was reported as occurring in "summer" in Adams County in all years in this period except 1966 and 1970. "Summer" reports from Clay County were from 1965, 1974, and 1975 and include a report that "the Eldon Percivals, from Sutton, [Clay] County, had many Lark Buntings nest in their Milo stubble" in 1965 (NBR 34:41). This is the only nesting report since Brooking's 1917 report. However, in 1975 the species was observed at various locales in eastern Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001).

There has been a marked decrease in occurrence in recent years, with very few reports since 1976. Morris found the species in York County 25 May 1986 (NBR 54:61) and noted "hadn't seen [Lark Buntings] in years" (NBR 54:64). The species was reported 30 May 1993 Polk (NBR 61:131). One of two summer reports since 1976 is from Adams County 12 May through 30 June 1988 (NBR 56:74). Circumstances and location of this report are unknown and it may have occurred outside the study area. The other is a report of "probable breeding" from the Greenwing BBA block (Mollhoff 2001).

Reports in the past two decades are few and include a male near Massie WPA 16 May 1999 (SJD, BP, LP; Silcock 1999a) and another at Pintail WMA 12 May 2004 (JGJ). Also on 12 May 2004, 4 were near Harvard WPA (JGJ) and 4 were 5 miles southeast of Geneva 19 May 2009. A single was in York County 4 April 2007 (LE). Recent fall records include a single near Deep Well WMA in late August 2009 (JGJ) and in Clay County 23-25 September 2011 (PD).

Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*)


Savannah Sparrow

Status: Common to abundant spring and fall migrant, accidental in winter.
Summer: A report 14 July 1985 Polk is considered a likely error.
Fall: Extreme date: 5 November 2000. High count: 145 in Adams County 25 September 2006 (PD).
Winter: A single bird was at North Lake Basin WMA 13 February 2012 (LE).

Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, uncommon summer resident.
Summer: Brooking considered it to be common in the area (Swenk 1925), now occurs somewhat locally. Specific breeding records are few. Numerous fledglings were noted at Hultine WPA in 1999 in spite of intensive grazing. "Confirmed" nesting was reported from the Benedict and Clay Center BBA blocks, and nesting was considered "probable" at the Wilkins and Aurora blocks (Mollhoff 2001). The Hruska MARC likely harbors a large proportion of the birds that spend the summer and breed in the RWB.
Fall: Extreme date: 6 November 1965 Adams (NBR 34:57).

Baird's Sparrow (*Ammodramus bairdii*)

Status: Casual spring migrant and accidental in fall; possibly more common.
Spring: Three reliable records: 1 at Kissinger Basin WMA 24 April 1999 (JGJ), 1 remained on and along a minimum maintenance road south of Heron WPA 26 April through 10 May 1998 (JGJ, JS) and 1 was collected at Juniata 19 May 1935 and is now HMM #14237 (NBR 3:85). Brooking apparently had an individual that he identified to this species in his yard 26 April 1930 (LOI 50:5). The two modern records by the author were birds found in short, cool-season grass near a wetland. There are very few reliable Nebraska records (Sharpe et al. 2001).
Fall: One report, 23 September 1969 Adams (NBR 38:38).

Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowii*)

Status: Casual spring migrant and summer visitor.
Spring: Two reports: 12 May 1962 Hamilton (NBR 30:71) and 14 May 1949 Adams (NBR 17:15).
Summer: Five records, all since 1999 and all but one from Harvard WPA. Singing males were at Lange WPA 12 June 2005 (JGJ), Harvard WPA 19 June 2005 (JGJ), at least 8 singing at the northeast corner of Harvard WPA 23 June 2007 (PD), and at Harvard WPA 17 July 2000 and 25 July 1999 (JGJ).


Henslow's Sparrow, Harvard WPA, 23 June 2007
Photo by Paul Dunbar

Le Conte's Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*)

Status: Rare spring and fairly common fall migrant
Spring: Five reports are in the period 29 April (LOI 23:10) through 22 May (NBR 40:84). An additional early report involved 1 at Field Station 5 March 2000 (JGJ).
Fall: Reports are during the period 18 September–25 October. High count: 168 at Harvard WPA 17 October 2009 (PD, BF).

Nelson's Sparrow (*Ammodramus nelsoni*)

Status: Casual fall migrant.
Fall: Five reports: 9 at Harvard WPA 16 October 1996 (SJD), 1 at Theesen WPA 13 October 2003, 1 at Harvard WPA 17 October 2009 (PD), 2 at Pintail WMA 21 October 1997 (JGJ, WRS), and 4 at North Hultine WPA 7 November 1999 (JGJ).

Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*)

Status: Rare spring and rare fall migrant, casual winter visitor; also reported in summer.
Spring: Extreme dates: 10 May 1980 Adams (NBR 48:86) and 19 May 1990 Polk (NBR 58:80).
Summer: Two reports: 7 June 1975 Clay (NBR 43:66) and 7 July 1973 Adams (NBR 42:41).
Fall: Records are during the short period 13–21 October.
Winter: Two reports: 21 January 1979 Adams (NBR 47:54) and 31 January 1973 Adams (NBR 41:64).

Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant, fairly common summer resident, rare winter visitor.
Summer: Breeding in much of Nebraska is a recent development (Sharpe et al. 2001). It has been present in summer since the author first began visiting the area in the mid-1990s. It was also found at most BBA blocks in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). An agitated adult with a newly fledged juvenile was at Krause WPA 24 June 2001.
Winter: Recorded on 13 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 20 individuals).

Lincoln's Sparrow (*Melospiza lincolnii*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant.
Fall: Extreme date: 16 September 2000 Region (several). High count: 17 at Field Station 5 October 2001.

Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, casual summer resident.
Summer: Summering birds were found regularly at Funk WPA during the 1990s, with as many as 20 found 5 July 1999 (Sharpe et al. 2001). Drought during the early and mid-2000s may have made habitat to become unsuitable. The only other recent summer reports are from Harvard WPA where a singing bird was found 21 and 26 July 2009 (PD).
Fall: Extreme date: 26 October 1996 Nelson WPA (Silcock and Jorgensen 1996b).

LeConte's Sparrow, photo by Paul Dunbar

White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant, accidental winter and summer visitor.
Summer: One report: 22 June 1974 Adams (NBR 42:86)
Winter: While likely occurring more often, there are only two reports, 18 December 1976 Adams (NBR 42:86) and five in a Hastings yard 3 January 2011 (PD).

Harris's Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*):

Status: Common spring and fall migrant, uncommon winter resident, and casual summer visitor.
Summer: Two reports: 15 June 1975 Clay (NBR 43:66) and 10 June 1976 Adams (NBR 44:51).
Winter: Recorded on 16 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 630 individuals).

White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant, rare winter resident and casual summer visitor. The eastern race, *Z. l. leucophrys* and the western race, *Z. l. gambelii* both occur during migration.
Summer: Two reports, 15 June 1975 Clay (NBR 43:66) and 7 July 1974 Adams (NBR 42:41).
Winter: Reported on 2 Hastings CBCs 1964–1980, 6 in 1965 and 2 in 1970.

Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and winter resident. "Slate-colored" Junco (includes *J. h. hyemalis* and *J. h. cismontanus*) is the most common form, but small numbers of the "Oregon" Junco (includes *J. h. montanus* and *J. h. mearnsi*) also occurs. The "White-winged" Junco (*J. h. aikeni*) was reported 22 February 1935 at Hastings (NBR 3:65).
Winter: Recorded on 17 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 25 to 160 individuals).

Cardinalidae (Cardinals, Grosbeaks, New World Buntings, and Allies)

Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*)

Status: Rare spring migrant, casual summer visitor, and accidental summer resident. Tout (1897) considered this species "not common".
Spring: Eighteen spring reports are from 4–24 May.
Summer: Tout (1897) reported that Eunice Coy found a pair nesting in a grove on "East Hill" in York County. There are two other summer reports, 15 June 1947 Hastings (NBR 15:68) and 19 June 1975 Clay (NBR 43:63).

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*)

Status: Accidental in fall. One report: 18 August 1968 Adams (NBR 37:27).

Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*)

Status: Fairly common resident.
Winter: Recorded on 17 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 9 to 36 individuals).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and summer resident.
Summer: Current breeding status is not well known but presumably breeds along watercourses that intersperse the RWB. Brooking considered it a fairly common breeder in the Inland area (Swenk 1936). In recent decades breeding has been reported in Adams County in 1973 (Bennett 1974) and 1976 (Bennett 1977). Breeding was also "confirmed" at the Hastings BBA block and considered "probable" at the Benedict and Henderson blocks (Mollhoff 2001).

Bobolink

Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*)

Status: Formerly an uncommon spring migrant and summer resident, now a casual spring migrant.
Summer: The western portion of the study area is at the eastern edge of the species' breeding range and abundance has fluctuated over the years. Prior to 1914 the species was either rare or absent, but "within a decade from 1914 to 1924 the Black-headed Grosbeak increased steadily in commonness in the Hastings vicinity, so that by the latter year it could be called a common and regular breeder throughout the region" (Swenk 1936). Brooking considered it a common breeder at Inland (Swenk 1925) and located nests in both 1914 and 1915 (Swenk 1936). Breeding took place in Adams County during the mid-portion of the 20th Century and it was reported in "summer" 1964 and 1965. Adams County reports were regular until about 1970. Sharpe et al (2001) noted there recently was an early expansion followed by a retraction in this species' range in Nebraska. There are only three reports since 1990, a male at Lange WPA 15 May 2000, two at a feeder in Hasting 7 May 2003 (PD), and another at Parkview Cemetery, Hastings, 17 May 2006 (PD). Tout (1902) had only a few reports during ten years in the York area. Brooking collected a hybrid male *Pheucticus* grosbeak at Inland 17 May 1916 that is now housed at UNSM and is ZM7077 in the collection.

Blue Grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and summer resident:
Summer: It was reported as a "probable" breeder from the Aurora, Henderson, McCool Junction, and Benedict BBA blocks, but was not reported from any blocks in Clay and Fillmore Counties (Mollhoff 2001). BBA results agree with observations made by the author during the 1990s, that the species is more common in northern sections of the region and much less common or absent in southern sections. Extreme dates: 8 May 1962 Adams (NBR 30:70) and 5 October 1930 Hastings (LOI 54:1).

Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*)

Status: Rare spring migrant.
Spring: Reported more frequently during the early and mid-portion of the 20th Century. Extreme date: 30 April (NBR 6:41) and 4 June (NBR 3:95). High counts: 8 at Hastings 24 May 1938 (NBR 6:33) and 4 males and 2 females at Highland Park, Hastings 19 May through 4 June 1935 (NBR 3:95). Only eleven reports are since 1985, all during the period 15–24 May and all from Adams and Clay Counties. Recent high count is 3 at Parkview Cemetery, Hastings, 15 May 2011 (PD).

Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and summer resident.
Spring: Breeding occurs along larger watercourses that intersperse, but are not part of, the study area. BBA reports include "confirmed" nesting from the Hastings block, "probable" from the Aurora block, and "possible" from the Benedict block.
Fall: Extreme date: 14 September 1934 Aurora (NBR 3:37).

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*)

Status: Accidental in spring. One report: 19 May 1962 Parkview Cemetery, Hastings (NBR 30:70).

Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and summer resident; accidental in winter.
Winter: A lone bird was observed 12 December 1925 at Hastings and was very well-described (LOI 12:2).

Icteridae (Blackbirds, Orioles)

Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*)

Status: Uncommon spring and fall migrant and summer resident.
Summer: Brooking (Notes) considered it a common breeder at Inland. Tout (1902) had only one nesting record and believed that it was not a common breeder. Now it is likely less common and rather local. Small numbers have been found at high quality grassland tracts at certain WPAs or WMAs. Mallard Haven, Freeman Lake, Hansen, Harms, Harvard, Rauscher WPAs are all locales where singing males have been recently observed in summer. "Confirmed" nesting was reported from the Greenwing BBA block and nesting was considered "probable" at the Wilkins block and "possible" at the Benedict block in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). Extreme dates: 30 April 2000 and 21 September 2003.
Fall: High count: 87 at Waco WPA 29 August 1999.

Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)

Status: Abundant spring and fall migrant, common summer resident, and uncommon winter visitor. Six specimens in the UNSM collection from the region are identified as *A. p. phoenicus* and *A. p. fortis*. Swenk (1925) indicated the specimens collected in the Inland area possessed characters of both subspecies and Sharpe et al. (2001) concluded that most Red-winged Blackbirds in Nebraska are likely intergrades.
Spring: High count: 18,000 at Sandpiper WMA 22 February 1999.
Winter: Recorded on 14 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 51 individuals).

Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*)

Status: Casual spring migrant and summer visitor or resident. Sharpe et al. (2001) stated this species breeds commonly in an area "approximately bounded by Thurston, Colfax, Polk, Hall and Thayer cos", an area that encompasses most of the eastern portion of the RWB. However, the species appears to be rare any in the RWB. The author has only six records from five locales in eastern sections, all but one from spring. The only summer record was a single male at Harvard WPA 17 June 2001. "Possible" breeding, likely singing males, was reported from the Wilkins, Mallard Haven, and Smartweed BBA blocks in the 1980s (Mollhoff 2001). Rather far west was a single at Funk WPA 14 April 2012 (LE). In areas where both Eastern and Western Meadowlarks are present in Nebraska the two species are segregated by habitat, with Eastern preferring moister lowlands (Sharpe et al. 2001, Mollhoff 2001). Eastern Meadowlark numbers at many places in Nebraska may appear high during wet years (Mollhoff 2001). It should be noted that during the BBA years there was apparently above normal precipitation (Mollhoff 2001). Early observers do not mention this species. Early reports, without details, include 22 April 1928 Hastings (LOI 31:4), 21 March 1931 Hastings (LOI 57:2), and 20 March 1932 Hastings (LOI 65:5).

Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*)

Status: Common to abundant spring and fall migrant, fairly common summer and winter resident.
Winter: Recorded on 17 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 5 to 324 individuals). All meadowlarks reported on the Hastings CBC are considered to be Westerns.

Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)

Status: Common spring migrant, uncommon summer resident and summer visitor, uncommon fall migrant, and casual winter visitor.

Summer: Formerly more common. Brooking considered it a common breeder at Harvard WPA (Swenk 1925) and Tout (1902) found it nesting at the wetland at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA. Tout (1897) also reported, "Walter Garner, living near Bradshaw, took three sets of Yellow-headed Blackbird eggs". Nesting was reported as "confirmed" from the Benedict, Mallard Haven WPA, Clay Center, Harvard and Theesen BBA blocks and as "probable" from Aurora and Wilkins blocks (Mollhoff 2001). Breeding now occurs at larger wetlands with emergent vegetation in those years when adequate water is present. Sediment removal at wetlands appears to benefit this species.

Winter: Four reports: 2 probable late fall migrants at Grafton 2 December 2001, 28 December 1967 Hastings CBC, ~28 December 1970 Hastings CBC (count week), and 1 January 1967 Adams (NBR 40:89).

Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant and winter visitor, hypothetical in summer. There are about thirty reports in the period 30 September through 11 May, over half during December and January, when this species is expected in low numbers as a winter visitor in south-central Nebraska. However, this species is decreasing over much of its range, thus its frequency of occurrence may be decreasing in the RWB as well. Dunbar only has three records, a single bird at the Fairmont Sewage Lagoons 23 October 2010, 5 at Harvard 6 November 2007, and a single at Hastings 30 March 2012.

Summer: Several June reports are considered doubtful and more likely misidentified Common Grackles.

Winter: Recorded on 9 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 200 individuals).

Great-tailed Grackles

Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*)

Status: Fairly common spring and uncommon fall migrant, accidental summer resident, and accidental winter visitor. As Rosche (1994) noted in western Nebraska, this species tends not to flock with other blackbirds and, in spring, seems particularly fond of grassland burns and to a lesser extent plowed fields.
Spring: Reliable reports are during the period 14 March (LE) – 22 April. Additional reports are from 17 March through 19 May. High Count: 300 in a field near Mallard Haven WPA 22 April 2000 (JGJ).
Summer: There are several summer and breeding reports, but the only accepted record is from Tout (1902):

> *"June 7, 1896, I found a blackbird's nest containing two eggs in a low elm tree near at a pond west of York. Both the bird and the eggs were so unusual that after waiting two days, and the nest apparently deserted, I took the eggs and blew them. They have been identified by good authority as those of the Brewer's Blackbird. I have since identified the bird as a migrant but have never heard of their breeding here except that one time."*

The "good authority" was apparently I. S. Trostler (Ducey 1988). Tout (1897) described the eggs in his journal, "the ground color is so obscured by the heavy markings of brown that one would take them to be almost a solid color". Tout (1897) also provides measurement for the two eggs, one measuring 0.78 x 1.05 inches (16.69 x 22.47 mm) and the other 0.82 x 1.08 inches (17.55 x 23.11 mm). The description and measurements are consistent with Brewer's Blackbird (Bent 1958, Harrison 1975). In 1896 there was an incursion of Lark Buntings in the RWB, a species that breeds in similar habitats and areas as the Brewer's Blackbird. Thus, there may have been displacement of these typical "high plains" species to the east in that year. Other summer reports are recent and include Adams County 14 May through 30 June 1983 (NBR 51:77). It was also observed at a single BBA block in York County and two blocks in Clay County during the late 1980s. One of the Clay County reports included "probable" breeding at the Greenwing WMA Block (Mollhoff 2001). All of these recent reports lack details and possibly may have been observations of Common Grackle.
Fall: Reports are during the period 12 October –5 November. High counts: 175 at both Sinninger WPA 21 October 2000 (JGJ) and East Harvard Basin 5 November 2000 (JGJ).
Winter: There are four reports, all lacking details: 180 at the Hastings CBC 18 December 1976 (NBR 35:28), 1 January Adams 1958 Adams (NBR 26:65), 9 January 1967 York (NBR 35:18), 26 February 1956 Adams (NBR 24:76).

Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*)

Status: Abundant spring and fall migrant, common summer resident, and rare winter visitor.
Winter: Recorded on 15 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 27 individuals).

Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant, uncommon resident.
Summer: The first record and breeding record for the RWB was in 1977 when 10–15 pairs were found nesting in spruce trees at the Hastings Ammunition Depot (NBR 45:18,35). In 1978, 100+ birds were found at this site (NBR 46:22). The first report away from that site was at Hansen WPA 25 June 1979 (Longfellow 1979). A few years later in 1985, Garthwright (1985) found several breeding among Black-crowned Night-Herons at Weis WPA 23 June 1985. Currently breed at large wetlands when adequate water is present. Sites where breeding has occurred include Funk WPA, Kissinger Basin WMA, Weis WPA, Bulrush WMA, Smith WPA, North Lake Basin WMA, and Mallard Haven WPA.
Fall: High Count: 150 near Kissinger Basin WMA WMA 2 August 2003.
Winter: One late winter report, 28 at Sandpiper WMA 22 February 1999, may represent early spring migrants.

Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and summer resident, and rare winter visitor.
Winter: Recorded on 3 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 30 individuals).

Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*)

Status: Fairly common spring and fall migrant and summer resident.
Fall: Extreme date: 2 October 2006 Adams (PD).

Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*)

Status: Accidental in spring. One record: 13 May 1939 Hastings (NBR 7:33).

Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*)

Status: Common spring and fall migrant and summer resident.
Fall: High count: 19 at Lange WPA 19 May 2000.

Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*)

Status: Accidental spring migrant. A single was reported at Hastings by W.E. Eigsti and B. Nelson 31 May 1951 (NBR 19:75). No details were provided.

Fringillidae (Finches)

Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*)

Status: Casual winter visitor. There are seven reports, but none in the last thirty-five years, in the period 30 October through 28 April. Both extreme dates were recorded during the winter of 1932–33, which was a major invasion year in Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001). Reports: 4 at Hastings 30 October 1932 – 2 January 1933 (Jones 1933, Brooking 1933b), 8 – 18 November 1925 Hastings (LOI 8:3), 12 November 1932 Aurora (Chapman 1933), 26 – 27 November 1938 Adams (Jones 1940), 7 December 1969 Adams (NBR 38:37), 8 December 1975 Adams (NBR 34:28), and 12 December 1954 Hastings (NBR 23:58).

Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*)

Status: Rare spring and fall migrant and winter visitor. There are over twenty-five reports but only one, 18 January through 10 May 1986 Adams (NBR 56:62), is from the last twenty-five years. All other reports are from 14 November through 13 May.
Winter: Recorded on 4 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 19 individuals).

Cassin's Finch (*Carpodacus cassinii*)

Status: Hypothetical in winter. One report that lacks details: 8 January 1958 Adams (NBR 26:65).

House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*)

Status: Fairly common resident. The spread of the House Finch across Nebraska is documented by Sharpe et al (2001). First reported in the study area 28 December 1968 Adams and breeding likely occurred in the early 1980s.

Red Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*)

Status: Casual spring and fall migrant, winter and summer visitor. Brooking considered it uncommon at Inland (Swenk 1925) and Tout (1902) an irregular winter visitor. Thirteen reports are from 5 November through 19 May (PD). There are three summer reports, 14 June 1951 Hastings (NBR 19:78), 26–29 July 1966 Adams (NBR 35: 69), and 27 July 1969 Adams (NBR 38:38). High count: 40 at backyard feeders in Hastings 12 February 2008 (PD).

White-winged Crossbill (*Loxia leucoptera*)

Status: Accidental in spring and fall. Only reports are 22 October 1981 York (Dahl, Notes) and May 1955 Adams (NBR 23:80).

Common Redpoll (*Acanthis flammea*)

Status: Casual winter visitor. Fourteen reports are in the period 16 November–13 March. Extreme dates: 1 at a feeder in Hastings 27 April 2011 (PD) and 15 May 1971 Adams (NBR 39:55). High count: "about fifty" near Hastings 16 November 1934 (NBR 3:37).

Pine Siskin (*Spinus pinus*)

Status: Rare to uncommon winter resident, spring and fall migrant, casual summer resident and summer visitor.

Summer: Breeding apparently occurred in 1928 when Mrs. A. H. Jones observed, and later rescued from an eave pipe, a nestling in her yard (LOI 31:4). Pine Siskins were recorded nesting in the Hastings City Park during April 1930 (LOI 50:5). Adults were observed feeding young by the tree in which the nest was located was uprooted by a tornado 8 May 1930 (LOI 51:11) Nesting occurred in a spruce tree at Hastings in 1938 (Rowe 1938) and again in Hastings in 1939 (Jones 1939d). Up to five birds and one nest were found in a Colorado blue spruce tree in Parkview Cemetery 19 May 2008 (PD). Also reported 15 June 1976 Adams (NBR 44:50).

Common Redpoll, 28 April 2011Photo by Paul Dunbar

Winter: Recorded on 11 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964-1970 (range 0 to 50 individuals).

American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*)

Status: Fairly common resident.

Winter: Recorded on 16 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 0 to 113 individuals).

Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*)
Status: Casual spring and fall migrant and winter visitor. There are over twenty reports, although none from the last twenty years. Most reports are during the winter months, but departure of many of these wintering birds has been late in spring and include: 10 April 1939 Hastings (NBR 7:33), 16–28 April 1933 Hastings (NBR 1:61), 25 April 1972 Adams (NBR 40:83), 1 May 1964 Adams (NBR 32:79), 9 May 1951 Adams (NBR 19:77), May 1962 Adams (NBR 30:70), 18 May 1967 Adams (NBR 35:19). More exceptional is a report from Adams County 17 March through 10 June 1974 (NBR 42:84). Earliest fall reports are 12 September 1975 Adams (NBR 34:28) and 25 September 1968 Adams (NBR 37:28).

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)
Status: Common introduced resident.
Winter: Recorded on 17 of 17 Hastings CBCs 1964–1970 (range 153 to 2,300 individuals).

Stilt Sandpiper

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APPENDIX A. GAZETTEER

Sites	County	Ownership	Weblink
Atlanta WPA	Phelps	Public	Weblink
Ayr Lake WMA	Adams	Public	Weblink
Bluewing WMA	Clay	Public	Weblink
Brauning WPA	Fillmore	Public	Weblink
Clay Center Cemetery	Clay	Private	Weblink
Cottonwood WPA	Phelps	Public	Weblink
County Line WPA	Fillmore/York	Public	Weblink
Crystal Lake SRA	Adams	Public	Weblink
Eckhardt WPA	Clay	Public	Weblink
Fairmont Sewage Lagoons	Fillmore	Private	Weblink
Field Station	Clay	Private	Weblink
Freeman Lake	York	Public/Private	Weblink
Funk WPA	Phelps	Public	Weblink
Geneva Cemetery	Fillmore	Private	Weblink
Gleason WPA	Kearney	Public	Weblink
Hansen WPA	Clay	Public	Weblink
Harms WPA	Clay	Public	Weblink
Harvard Cemetery	Clay	Private	Weblink
Harvard Sewage Lagoons	Clay	Private	Weblink
Harvard WPA	Clay	Public	Weblink
Hastings Basin	Adams	Private	Weblink
Heron WPA	York	Public	Weblink
Hultine WPA	Clay	Public	Weblink
Hupp WMA	Thayer	Public	Weblink
Jensen WPA	Kearney	Public	Weblink
Kirpatrick Basin North WMA	York	Public	Weblink
Kirpatrick Basin South WMA	York	Public	Weblink
Kissinger Basin WMA	Clay	Public	Weblink
Krause WPA	Fillmore	Public	Weblink
Lake Hastings	Adams	Public	Weblink
Lake Seldom	Phelps	Public	Weblink
Lange WPA	Clay	Public	Weblink
Mallard Haven WPA	Fillmore	Public	Weblink
Massie WPA	Clay	Public	Weblink
McMurtrey Woodlot	Clay	Public	Weblink
Moger WPA	Clay	Public	Weblink
North Lake Basin WMA	Seward	Public	Weblink
Parkview Cemetery	Adams	Private	Weblink
Pintail WMA	Hamilton	Public	Weblink
Prairie Marsh WMA	Thayer	Public	Weblink
Q2 Basin	York	Private	Weblink
Rauscher WPA	Fillmore	Public	Weblink
Real WPA	Fillmore	Public	Weblink
Recharge Lake	York	Public	Weblink

Buff-breasted Sandpipers

Renquist WMA	York	Public	Weblink
Rolland WPA	Fillmore	Public	Weblink
Sacramento-Wilcox WMA	Phelps	Public	Weblink
Sandpiper WMA	Fillmore	Public	Weblink
Seward #5	Seward	Private	Weblink
Sinninger #Y22	York	Public/Private	Weblink
Smartweed WMA	Nuckolls	Public	Weblink
Smith WPA	Clay	Public	Weblink
Sora WMA	Fillmore	Public	Weblink
Spikerush WMA	York	Public	Weblink
Straightwater WMA	Seward	Public	Weblink
Streeter Park, Aurora	Hamilton	Public	Weblink
Tamora Basin WPA	Seward	Public	Weblink
Theesen Basin WPA	Clay	Public	Weblink
Trumbull Basin	Clay	Private	Weblink
Waco WPA	York	Public	Weblink
Weis WPA	Fillmore	Public	Weblink
Whitefront WMA	Clay	Public	Weblink
Wilkins WPA	Fillmore	Public	Weblink

Buff-breasted Sandpipers