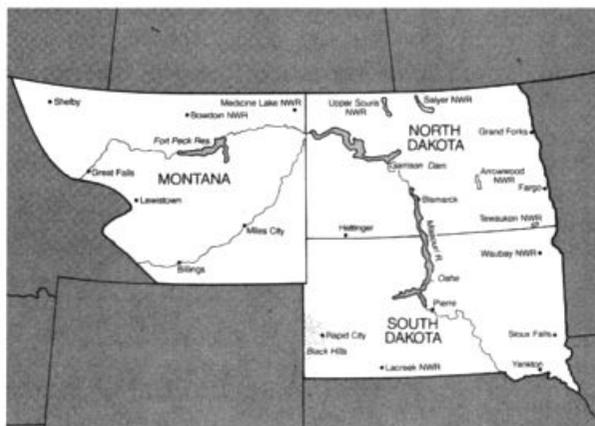


northern great plains region



These Snowy Plovers on June 14, 1998 attempted to nest at Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge, Montana. This was the third record for the Big Sky State. Photograph/Stephen J. Dinsmore



RON E. MARTIN

June started cool and dry, with frost in some areas of North Dakota. By mid-month general rains covered the Region, and the eastern Dakotas again experienced some high water levels. July was hot with low precipitation. Passerine migration extended farther into June than in most years, with several species surpassing previous late dates. Breeding success was good for most species.

LOONS TO HAWKS

The usual non-breeding Com. Loons were noted across the Region, with a peak of 11 on Nelson Res., MT, June 28 (SD, JJ). The increase of Red-necked Grebes in e. North Dakota continued, with 15 broods in Nelson July 31 (EEF). A rare breeder in South Dakota, Clark's Grebes were confirmed nesting in Day July 16 (DRS). In North Dakota, eight were noted July 1 in Burleigh and Emmons (HCT).

Significant new nesting records were recorded in each state, and several vagrants added excitement. North Dakota recorded its first nesting of Golden-crowned Kinglet and the first record of Acorn Woodpecker. Montana had a nesting attempt by Arctic Terns, and South Dakota tallied first nestings of three warblers species: Tennessee, Virginia's, and Hooded.

With the high water levels of the last few years and the resultant flooded trees, Double-crested Cormorants have increased dramatically in the e. Dakotas. Along with the cormorants, large waders continue to increase. New colonies of Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets appear regularly. A new Snowy Egret colony with 7 nests was reported from Pearl L. in Stutsman, ND, June 23 (MO, KC, RB).

A Trumpeter Swan in Grand Forks, ND, sported a collar that indicated the bird was hatched in Iowa 2 years ago (DOL). Unusual in the summer season, a Ross's Goose was tallied at Lower Veseth Res., MT, June 3 (SD, JJ). With good water levels again this year, waterfowl had another productive season. A first for the season in North Dakota, Surf Scoters were found June 21 and July 16-31 in Grand Forks (EEF).

Two Ospreys exhibited mating behavior at Icelandic S.P., ND, June 6, where they have been noted sporadically the last few years (DOL). Only one attempted nesting is documented for the state. North Dakota's first Bald Eagle nest away from the Missouri R. in many years fledged one young at

Devil's L. (USFWS). The Red-shouldered Hawk reported in the spring at Sully's Hill National Game Preserve, ND, was still present June 20 (DOL). Ferruginous Hawks fledged one young July 25 at the e. edge of their range in *Grand Forks*, ND (DOL).

CRANES TO WOODPECKERS

Providing the 3rd recent summer record was a Whooping Crane June 8 in *Stutsman*, ND (GK).

A pair of courting **Snowy Plovers** at Bowdoin N.W.R., MT, June 14, were seen digging nest scrapes, but no nest was ever initiated (SD, JJ). This provided the 3rd record for the species in Montana. A thin scattered breeder in s.w. North Dakota, two Long-billed Curlew broods were in Slope and Billings July 7 (REM). A good peak of 767 Long-billed Curlews was counted July 30 at Nelson Res., MT (SD, JJ). Ruddy Turnstones were late June 8 in Day, SD (DRS), and North Dakota's earliest fall immigrants were noted July 17 in McLean (REM). Unusually far west was an Am. Woodcock July 19 in Ward, ND (REM).

North Dakota's 5th **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was photographed in *Grand Forks* June 2-4 (DOL, EEF). This provided the first summer record and the first away from Garrison Dam. North Dakota's 4th documented nesting of Caspian Tern was furnished by 21 nests found June 21 at L. Williams, *McLean* (REM, MiO). All of the nests failed due to predation. In Montana, 101 Caspian Tern nests were counted on 2 islands in Fort Peck L. June 25 (ER). Up to three **Arctic Terns** were photographed at Bowdoin N.W.R. June 14-July 18. A nest was discovered June 20, but was abandoned by July 10 (SD, JJ, CC). This provided the 3rd record for the species in Montana, the first nesting record for the state, and likely the first inland nesting in the lower 48.

The Burrowing Owl population continues to decline in North Dakota. Very few remain n. and e. of the Missouri R., and reports now indicate the population s.w. of the river is declining also (D&CG). Continuing the trend of the last few years, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were noted in good numbers in North Dakota. North Dakota's first **Acorn Woodpecker** was photographed June 8-9 in Minot (K&MS, REM, RD). Highly unusual, the species seems to have little tendency for vagrancy.

FLYCATCHERS TO PIPITS

At the e. edge of their range, Say's Phoebe were feeding nestlings July 8 in *Cass*, ND (RHO). South Dakota's 9th Scissor-tailed

Flycatcher was videotaped July 14 in *Stanley* (*vide DB*). A Blue Jay nest was found near Ft. Peck, MT, June 6 (CC et al.) A rare nester in Montana, this provided the first nesting record for latilong 10. A Brown Creeper June 15 in *Brookings*, SD, was notable, as their breeding status away from the Black Hills is uncertain (KIE). The first North Dakota nesting of **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was documented June 6 & 20 when adults were seen feeding young birds at Denbigh Experimental Forest (REM, CDE).

Eastern Bluebirds continue their long-term increase, and a pair nested near Ft. Peck at the w. edge of their range in n.e. Montana (CC). Late thrushes included a Gray-cheeked June 5 in *Brown*, SD (DAT), and a Swainson's June 17 in *Grand Forks*, ND (DOL). Two N. Mockingbird reports each were received from South Dakota and Montana, and a nest was located in *Kidder*, ND, June 25 (LI). The state has less than 10 nesting records. A Sprague's Pipit was s.w. of range in *Shannon*, SD, June 24-July 15 (DB), and one was in *Grand Forks*, ND, July 18 & 25, where they are irregular at the extreme e. edge of their range (DOL).

WARBLERS

Late warblers were more numerous than in most years in the Dakota's, with 12 migrant species reported in early June in North Dakota, and 8 species in South Dakota. Blue-winged Warbler was found for the 2nd consecutive June in *Lincoln*, SD (RFS). A female **Tennessee Warbler** with begging young July 24 in *Day*, SD, furnished the first nesting confirmation for that state (DRS). **Virginia's Warblers**, first found last year in *Custer*, SD, were intensely surveyed this summer. Approximately 100 pairs were located in Roby, Redbird, and Boles Canyons, and the state's first nest was located (EL, DS, JSP, KD, KP). With less than 10 summer records, a N. Parula was notable in *Fall River*, SD, July 10 (JSP, RFS). Yellow-rumped "Myrtle" Warblers were feeding young in *Rolette*, ND, June 13, and "Audubon's" were feeding young in *Slope* July 7 (REM). Providing the 2nd summer record in e. South Dakota was a Yellow-rumped Warbler June 23 in *Minnehaha* (MKZ). A Blackburnian Warbler June 11 in *Custer*, SD, furnished the 3rd summer record for the Black Hills area (JSP). The Pine Warbler reported in the spring at Denbigh Experimental Forest, ND, remained to at least June 20 (REM, CDE). North Dakota's earliest fall migrant Bay-breasted Warbler was noted in *Grand Forks* July 2 (DOL). A Prothonotary Warbler was

in *Lincoln*, SD, June 14, where there are few recent summer records (RFS). Casual in South Dakota, a Kentucky Warbler June 20 in *Lincoln* provided the first summer record for the state (RFS). South Dakota's first nesting of **Hooded Warbler** was documented surprisingly far west in the Ft Meade Recreation Area near Sturgis (REP)

TANAGERS TO GOLDFINCHES

The Scarlet Tanager reported in *Meade*, SD, in the spring remained to June 21 (REP) Only one Dickcissel report was received from North Dakota. At the n. edge of their range, a Green-tailed Towhee was observed in *Phillips*, MT, July 6 (SD, JJ). A bit e. of their normal haunts, and out of their preferred Black Sage, several Brewer's Sparrows were present all season near Bowman-Haley Res., ND (D&CG). In North Dakota, Lark Buntings were common only in the extreme s.w. corner of the state. North Dakota's 16th Henslow's Sparrow was in *Burke* June 3-13 (RKM).

A Pine Grosbeak at Pompey's Pillar, *Yellowstone*, MT, June 20 was e. of the normal summer range (DR, RC). Now regular in *Fall River*, SD, 4 July reports of Lesser Goldfinch were tallied (RFS, JSP, RAP, M&KA).

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