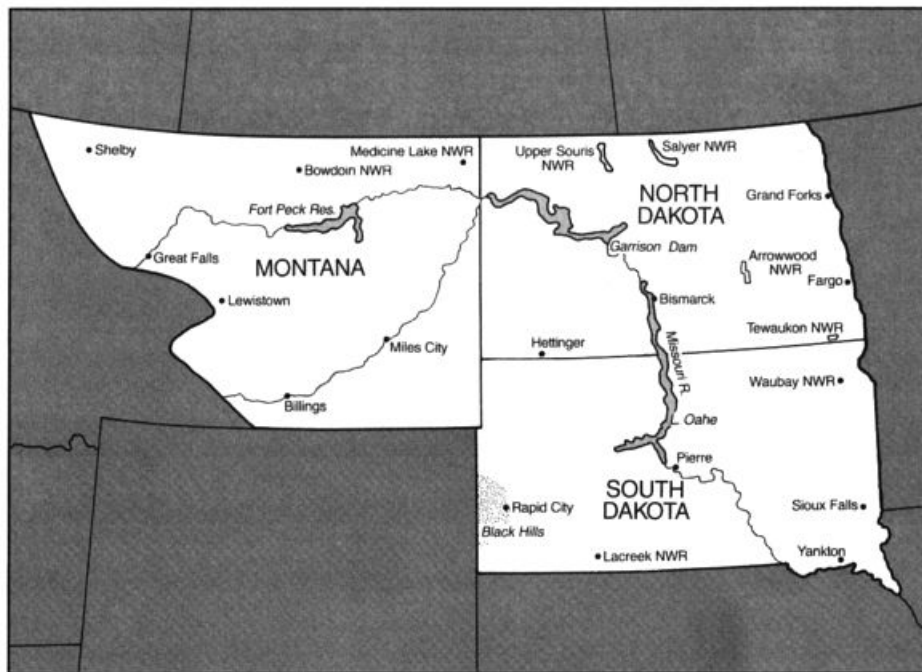


Northern Great Plains



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The season was characterized by extreme variation in precipitation levels. Eastern Montana was quite dry and had roughly average temperatures. Continuing the trend from the previous winter and spring, the Dakotas started out with dry conditions. In mid-June, the rains and heat came to most areas north of Interstate 94 in North Dakota, with torrential rains in some areas of northeastern North Dakota. South of Interstate 94, North Dakota was very dry, as was most of South Dakota. In western South Dakota, the drought was severe.

Waterfowl production was down significantly from recent years, and broods were late. Good shorebird concentrations were noted in some areas. Several unusual species appeared in southwestern South Dakota, perhaps related to the drought and fires in the western states and the recent fires in the Black Hills. Numerous notable nesting confirmations were tallied in North Dakota.

Abbreviation: N. G. P. (National Game Preserve). Species marked with a "p. a." are

subject to review by the appropriate state records committee.

GREBES THROUGH FALCONS

Red-necked Grebes continue to expand their range in North Dakota. A single in Williston 23 Jun provided the first county record for *Williams* (REM). Almost doubling the number of nesting confirmations for North Dakota, five pairs of Clark's Grebes with young were noted in *Kidder* 7 Jul (REM). American White Pelican numbers included 16,500 nesting pairs at Chase L., ND (TK) and 3579 nests at Medicine L., MT (EM).

A pair of Least Bitterns feeding young at L. Bertha, *Cass* furnished about the 6th nesting record for North Dakota (DPW). The largest Great Egret colony on record for North Dakota, 275 nests were counted in *Sargent* 10 Jun (DNS). A pair of Green Herons was nest-building 6 Jul in *Ransom*, ND (JPL). There are still fewer than 10 confirmations for this now uncommon breeder. On the increase in the summer season, Ross's Geese were noted 8 Jun in *Cass* (JPL) and 13 Jun in *Bottineau*, ND (KJ, AJ). A Common Goldeneye in *Pennington*, SD 5 Jun was very late (JLB).

Two fledgling Ospreys begging below Baldhill Dam, *Barnes*, ND 25 Jul provided the

first successful, and long anticipated, nesting for the state (BS, p. a.). According to local Corps of Engineers staff, a pair also nested in the area last year (ST). Merlins continue to nest successfully in the larger cities of North Dakota, with single nests in Dickinson and Minot and up to five nests in Grand Forks (EEF). An ad. Peregrine Falcon summered at McKenzie Slough, *Burleigh*, ND (DNS), and six other reports were tallied from North Dakota and Montana.

RAILS THROUGH DOVES

Virginia Rails were unusually common this summer, with double-digit counts possible most evenings. Eighteen young were counted in a short distance in *Burleigh*, ND 7 Jul (REM). Piping Plover numbers were down, with the U.S. Alkali Lakes Core Area hosting the lowest number since 1989 (JI). A single Piping Plover at Freezeout L., MT 17 Jul was very unusual in that area (MS). Five Red Knot reports from North Dakota and Montana were above average. An American Woodcock with a young bird in *Pembina*, ND 5 Jul furnished one of only a handful of nesting confirmations for the state (JP).

The first Jul report for South Dakota, a Herring Gull was in *Hughes* 12 Jul (KM, p. a.) Thirty Caspian Tern nests at Chase L., *Stutsman*, ND provided the 3rd documented nesting area in the state for this expanding species (TK). Furnishing the 2nd confirmation for North Dakota, a **Eurasian Collared-Dove** nest was found 29 Jun in Grand Forks, ND (DOL, p. a.). Elsewhere, Eurasian Collared-Doves continued at *Malta*, MT (SJD) and in *Logan*, ND (CDE, HCT). A single was noted in a new area in *Burke*, ND 23 Jun (FT, p. a.).

OWLS THROUGH VIREOS

Now very rare e. of the Missouri R., three Burrowing Owl broods were seen in *Emmons*, ND 29 Jul (CDE, HCT). In South Dakota, a Burrowing Owl was noted in *Brown* 15 Jul (SLS). Only the 2nd report for South Dakota, a pair of **Flammulated Owls** was present from early Jun to mid-Jul in *Lawrence* (BG, p. a.). Well above average, five Rufous Hummingbird reports from the Black Hills spanned 13 Jun—21 Jul. Continuing the trend from the spring season, 4 Broad-tailed Hummingbirds were tallied in the Black Hills in the same time period. Providing the 6th report for South Dakota, a **Calliope Hummingbird** was in *Pennington* 13 Jul (RDO, KM, p. a.). Furnishing the 4th nesting record for North Dakota, Red-bellied Woodpeckers were feeding young in *Ransom*

5 Jul (JPL). Well nw. of their range, a single Red-bellied was at Minot, ND 3 Jun (REM). A Pileated Woodpecker nest with young at Turtle R. S. P., ND 23 Jun provided one of only a few nesting records for the state (DOL).

An Eastern Wood-Pewee at the N. Unit of Theodore Roosevelt N.P. 23 Jun was well w. of usual haunts and a first for the park (JH, JL). Migrant Alder Flycatchers noted w. of their usual corridor included a single 3 Jun in Custer, SD (AP, p. a.) and 4 in Miles City, MT on the same date (CP). A first for Montana, a **Yellow-throated Vireo** was seen by many in Columbus from 16 Jun—Jul (DT, HC, BM, GM, p. a.). Recordings and photographs were obtained. If accepted, a Philadelphia Vireo 6 Jul in Meade, SD would provide the first state record for that month (DGP, p. a.).

CORVIDS THROUGH WARBLERS

Two Common Ravens were in the Turtle Mts. of North Dakota 16 Jun, where nesting is suspected but still unconfirmed (REM). The first documented nesting for North Dakota, a **Brown Creeper** nest with young was photographed at Sully's Hill N. G. P. 30 Jun (REM, p. a.). Elsewhere in North Dakota, a Brown Creeper was singing at J. Clark Salyer N.W.R. 23 Jun (FT). Unusually far nw., a Wood Thrush was territorial at Minot, ND 8-24 Jun (REM). A pair of Northern Mockingbirds located 2 Jul in Richland, ND was seen building a nest 6 Jul (DNS, REM). This provided about the 7th nesting record for the state.

The 2nd report for Montana, a **Golden-winged Warbler** was noted 2 Jun in Phillips (SJD, p. a.). Early Jun reports of Tennessee Warblers were numerous across North Dakota and Montana. A Tennessee Warbler in Lincoln, SD 27 Jun furnished about the 12th summer report for the state (REP, p. a.). A Nashville Warbler 26 Jun in McHenry, ND was in appropriate breeding habitat (RR). The only nesting records are from the ne. corner of the state. Very unusual in e. South Dakota in summer, a Northern Parula was in Lincoln 14 Jun (RD, LJ, p. a.), and a Chestnut-sided Warbler was in Lincoln 22 Jun (RDO, KM, p. a.). A Black-throated Green Warbler was late and far west in Meade, SD 5 Jun (REP, p. a.). Providing the 6th report for North Dakota, a **Kentucky Warbler** was at Fargo 9 Jun (DPW, p. a.). A Hooded Warbler in Meade, SD 29 Jun was in an area where the species has nested in the past (REP, p. a.).

TANAGERS THROUGH GOLDFINCHES

Providing about the 13th record for

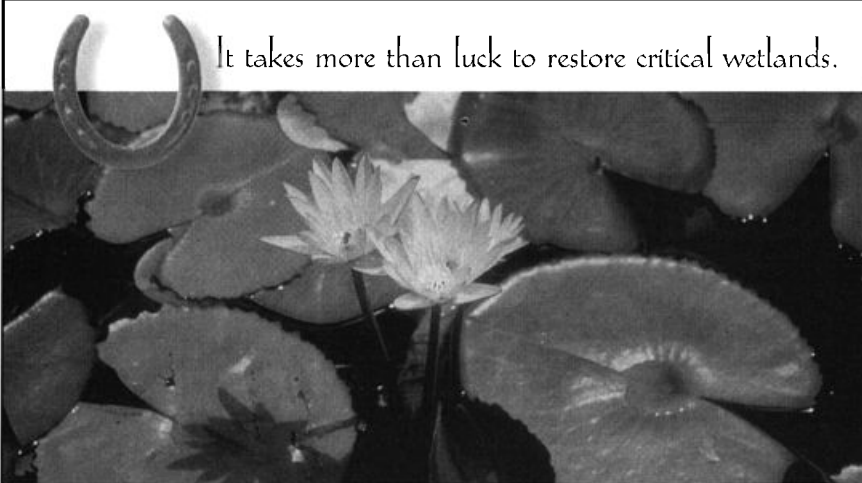
Montana, a Scarlet Tanager was in Medicine L. 14 Jun (JL, EM, SS, p. a.). An Eastern Towhee noted 6 Jun and again 24-31 Jul in Grand Forks, ND was unusual, as no breeding records exist for that county (EEF). A Brewer's Sparrow was e. of known breeding areas in Hettinger, ND 5 Jun (LDI). Henslow's Sparrows were noted in North Dakota in Eddy 22 Jun and Kidder 27 Jun (LDI, p. a.). The 2nd report for South Dakota, a **Cassin's Sparrow** was found in Fall River 5 Jul (JSP, p. a.). Subsequently, there were reports of 2-3 individuals in the same area through 12 Jul.

A Blue Grosbeak was singing in Emmons, ND 7 Jul in the same area where birds were noted last summer (REM). Dickcissels made a strong showing in North Dakota, and several individuals singing near Bridger, MT 22 Jun provided about the 18th record for the state (Y.V.A.S., p. a.). An Eastern Meadowlark in Beadle, SD 25 Jun—7 Jul was ne. of the species's usual range (RGR, p. a.). White-winged Crossbills in Phillips, MT 10 Jun (SJD) and Lawrence, SD 13 Jul were in areas where nesting is possible but not confirmed.

A black-backed **Lesser Goldfinch** near Laurel, MT 2 Jun would provide the 3rd record for the state if accepted (HM, p. a.).

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