

BIRDS OF THE RED RIVER VALLEY OF NORTHEASTERN
NORTH DAKOTA

BY H. V. WILLIAMS

In writing up the list of birds of this region I wish to first bring to the attention of the reader a few facts of a general nature. My father, W. H. Williams, came to this state in 1882, and settled on what was known as the Big Slough, between Glasston and Bowesmont. It extended from a few miles south of St. Thomas, and the over-flow emptied into the Tongue River near Neche. It varied from a hundred yards in width to a mile in places, and contained a rank growth of coarse slough grass; in the deeper water cattails and other tall rushes grew. There was a channel through the center, with large patches of open water here and there.

This proved to be a veritable paradise for game, and it was also in the line of migration of water fowl both spring and fall. There was no timber in the immediate vicinity, so that woodland birds were seldom seen.

My father, being an ardent bird student, had ample opportunity to study the bird life of that region; and, being a taxidermist, he collected and mounted many of the birds which he found. In 1899 he moved to Grafton where he opened a taxidermy shop. He collected and mounted birds here until about 1910, when I started to do the collecting and he took care of the shop work. No definite records or data were kept until 1900. Notations as to abundance previous to this time are made from memory. I have used my father's records up to 1910 and 1912, while after that time they are from my own collecting and observations.

The present paper is based upon records of specimens taken within a rather limited area, especially from 1900 onward; such an area may be said to be included in a circle made by a twenty mile radius from Grafton as a center. But I believe the list includes practically every species that may be found anywhere in the Red River Valley of North Dakota. I have included no records of specimens taken outside of the Valley proper. It was in 1900 that my father began building up a collection of local birds, and more accurate data were kept from this time on. The bulk of this collection is now in the Biological Station at Devils Lake, North Dakota, having been placed there in 1924.

These specimens have been collected in the following localities: in the Big Slough; on the Park River, a tributary of the Red, which passes through Grafton, and is bordered by a narrow fringe of timber;

on Salt Lake and North Salt Lake, two alkali lakes near here; on Minto Lake, about fourteen miles south of us; and on the Red River itself, although very little work has been done on the Red River proper.

I have spent fifteen years working in this one locality and believe that I have taken about every species that occurs here, and also a number of stragglers that have come through.

[The following list contains 267 named forms.—Ed.]

Western Grebe—*Aechmophorus occidentalis*. I have no exact date for this record, but a bird was caught alive and brought to W. H. Williams to be mounted, in the early part of May, 1910. It had alighted on a patch of ice and could not get up again. Have not seen or taken one here since, so it must be considered a rare straggler this far east.

Horned Grebe—*Colymbus auritus*. A common resident of our sloughs and ponds, nesting in this locality frequently. A specimen in our collection dated Grafton, May 4, 1918. Earliest arrival, April 15. Bred in countless numbers on the big sloughs in Pembina County in large colonies from 1882, when first observed, until the time the slough was drained, about 1910.

Eared Grebe—*Colymbus nigricollis californicus*. A frequent visitor during spring and fall migrations, but I do not believe they nest in this locality. Record: Grafton, May 10, 1912. Earliest arrival, April 30. Never were very plentiful in this part of the State even back in the early eighties.

Pied-billed Grebe—*Podilymbus podiceps*. A common visitor during migrations both spring and fall, with an occasional pair nesting here. A specimen in the collection dated June 2, 1920. Earliest arrival, April 14. A quite common resident in the big slough and small lakes as far back as 1882.

Loon—*Gavia immer*. A fairly common visitor in both spring and fall migrations, but none stop to nest in the immediate vicinity. A mounted specimen dated Grafton, April 23, 1921. One killed October 2, 1923. Earliest arrival, April 16. The loons never were plentiful in this district. Never known to breed here even in the early days.

Herring Gull—*Larus argentatus*. A rather common migrant both spring and fall. No birds breed in this locality. A mounted specimen in our collection dated Grafton, April 24, 1923. Earliest arrival, April 6. Very common spring migrants; most commonly seen flying against a strong north wind; none nested, 1882.

Ring-billed Gull—*Larus delawarensis*. A common migrant in spring and fall, and I have seen birds during breeding season although no nests have been located yet. A mounted specimen dated Grafton, April 29, 1923. Earliest arrival, April 4. A common migrant back in 1882, but none nested.

Franklin's Gull—*Larus franklini*. A very common migrant both spring and fall. I have seen flocks of several hundred leaving a lake at one time to feed, or resting on the water in a great raft. Have a specimen dated Grafton, May 1, 1922. Earliest arrival, April 22. Migrated in countless numbers as far back as 1882, but none nested.

Forster's Tern—*Sterna forsteri*. Not a common migrant although in some years they are more plentiful than in others. Have a specimen dated Grafton, May 3, 1923. Earliest arrival, May 3. Very common breeder in 1882-1910 on the big sloughs.

Black Tern—*Chlidonias nigra surinamensis*. A very common migrant and summer resident, being found in almost every slough or body of water where they nest. Have a mounted specimen dated Grafton, July 8, 1923. Earliest arrival April 28. Nested in great colonies from 1882 until the big slough was drained.

Gannet—*Moris bassana*. W. H. Williams shot and wounded a bird that got away from him, and which he identified as a Gannet, early in the spring of 1882. He was close enough to get a good view of the bird and the description tallies exactly with the specimen.

Double-crested Cormorant—*Phalacrocorax auritus auritus*. A common migrant in spring and fall, being seen in flocks, from six to fifty birds. None nest here. Records: Grafton, May 9 and May 21, 1924. Mounted bird, Grafton, April 26, 1921. Earliest arrival, April 24. About as plentiful as a migrant in 1882 as today. None nested.

White Pelican—*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*. A fairly common migrant a few years ago, but very few have been seen in the last four or five years. Record: mounted specimen, Grafton, May 15, 1904. A common migrant on the big slough, but it very seldom stopped there. One killed in 1882. About as common today as then.

American Merganser—*Mergus americanus*. A rare spring migrant but more plentiful in the fall. None nest here. Records: mounted specimen, Minto, April 16, 1904; Grafton, May 21, 1924. Earliest arrival, April 18. Not a common migrant and none nested back as far as 1882.

Red-breasted Merganser—*Mergus serrator*. A rare migrant in this locality, both spring and fall. Sometimes several years will elapse

between appearances. Have a mounted specimen dated Grafton, April 27, 1924. Earliest arrival, April 8. Very rare on the big slough in the early days.

Hooded Merganser—*Lophodytes cucullatus*. Cannot be called common; in fact they are almost rare now, although I have found them during the nesting season, so presume they nest along our stream. A mounted bird dated Grafton, May 4, 1917. Earliest arrival, May 2. Rare migrant in the valley as far back as 1882.

Mallard—*Anas platyrhynchos*. A very common migrant and resident, arriving early in the spring and staying as long as open water is to be found. I have killed them here after January 1, in an open hole in the river. They were very thin and small although well colored. A mounted specimen dated Grafton, October 16, 1911. Earliest arrival, March 25. Nested in great numbers throughout the region and migrated in countless thousands throughout the eighties. Nested everywhere.

Black Duck—*Anas rubripes*. A rare duck in this locality, as very few have been taken. Have a mounted specimen dated Grafton, April 10, 1909. Two were seen September 1, 1924. Earliest arrival, April 10. Very rare in the eighties on the big slough. Probably more common now than at that time.

Gadwall—*Chaulelasmus streperus*. A fairly common resident, nesting near sloughs and lakes. Record: mounted specimen Grafton, April 20, 1903. Earliest arrival, April 20. Very common breeder throughout the district in the eighties, and nested quite commonly.

Baldpate—*Mareca americana*. Considered a fairly common migrant, although not nesting here except rarely. Record: mounted specimen October 29, 1912. Earliest arrival April 18. Also a common breeder in the eighties.

Green-winged Teal—*Nettion carolinense*. A common resident through the breeding season. A mounted specimen dated Grafton, May 4, 1910. Earliest arrival, April 19. Considered quite rare throughout the big slough in the eighties, although some nested.

Blue-winged Teal—*Querquedula discors*. One of the most common breeding ducks in this vicinity. Nearly every little slough has its pair of these birds and the early fall shooting consists mostly of this variety. Have a mounted specimen dated Grafton, April 1, 1912. Earliest arrival, April 1. Nested in countless thousands in and around the big slough in the eighties.

Shoveller—*Spatula clypeata*. The Shoveller must also be considered one of our common summer residents, nesting in quite large numbers. Have a mounted bird dated April 13, 1912. Earliest arrival, April 13. Also very plentiful and nested in large numbers in every little pond or slough throughout this district in the eighties.

Pintail—*Dafila acuta*. I believe the Pintail can be called the most common nesting duck in this locality. Being a typical prairie bird, it finds its typical habitat here in the valley. There are more Pintails shot in the early season than any other variety. My records show one dated Grafton, April 20, 1903. Earliest arrival, March 25. Very common, as was the Shoveller, in the early eighties.

Wood Duck—*Aix sponsa*. This beautiful duck is becoming rarer every year, and it has been several years since I have taken or seen one of these gorgeous birds in this vicinity. I never knew them to nest here and only found them during spring and fall migrations. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton, May 8, 1908. Earliest arrival, May 8. A very common breeder along the small streams in the eighties.

Redhead—*Marila americana*. A very common duck during the migrations, being found on deep water lakes in large numbers. A few remain to nest but are not at all plentiful. A record from the collection dated Grafton, April 25, 1924. Earliest arrival, April 18. Very common from 1882 until the slough was drained.

Canvas-back—*Marila valisineria*. Another very common migrant both spring and fall, with a few remaining to nest, as with the Redheads. The most highly prized duck shot, but in this locality which lacks the celery beds, I think the difference is mostly imagined. I have a mounted bird dated Grafton, April 26, 1902. Earliest arrival, April 18. Considered rare and not found nesting on the big slough. An occasional bird killed among migrants in the early eighties.

Scaup Duck—*Marila marila*. A rare visitant at this locality and only in the spring have I seen them. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton, April 15, 1909. Earliest arrival, April 15. Not plentiful and not known to breed in the big slough in the eighties.

Lesser Scaup Duck—*Marila affinis*. A common migrant in spring and fall and also quite a number nest in the small lakes near here. A mounted bird dated May 10, 1913. Earliest arrival, April 16. More common among migrators than the former but none seemed to stay to breed on the slough in the eighties.

Ring-necked Duck—*Marila collaris*. A few years ago this was considered a rare bird, but in the last few years they have become

quite numerous in spring and fall migrations, especially in the fall. My first record is from a mounted bird dated Minto, April 20, 1903-October 20, 1923. Earliest arrival, April 20. Very rare in the eighties. They seem to be more plentiful now.

Golden-eye—*Glaucionetta clangula americana*. A rare migrant both spring and fall, not over a dozen birds being seen in any season. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton, April 8, 1910. Earliest arrival, April 8. Rare on the slough in the eighties and not common now.

Barrow's Golden-eye—*Glaucionetta islandica*. This record I got from a young bird student, Don Loos, who said he picked up a partly decayed duck that resembled a Golden-eye except for the white crescent at the base of the bill instead of the round spot. This white crescent is what attracted his attention, as he had seen the other Golden-eye and noticed a difference. This bird was found at Minto Lake in the early part of October, 1922.

Buffle-head—*Charitonetta albeola*. Cannot be called a common migrant in the spring, but is quite common in the fall flight. I have one killed at Grafton, April 14, 1903. Earliest arrival, April 14. A rare migrant in the eighties. More common now.

White-winged Scoter—*Oidemia deglandi*. A rare migrant in the fall and very rarely ever seen in the spring. I have a record of one killed September 30, 1920. Earliest arrival May 10. A rare migrant in the eighties.

Ruddy Duck—*Erismatura jamaicensis*. An uncommon migrant in the fall flight. A few are taken every fall but never saw one here in the spring. I have record of two dated Grafton, October 11, 1924. Common breeder in this district in the early days. Not known to nest here now.

Snow Goose—*Chen hyperboreus hyperboreus*. Quite a common migrant. Usually seen flying with the flocks of Blue Geese in the spring and fall. Very seldom seen in flocks by themselves. Have one mounted that is dated Grafton, May 7, 1922. Earliest arrival, April 2. A common migrant in the eighties. None nested.

Greater Snow Goose—*Chen hyperboreus nivalis*. Probably as common a migrant as the Lesser Snow Goose, flying in company with the Blue Geese and Lesser Snow Geese. Our migrations of geese seem to be decreasing each year and the flight is moving west. About fifteen years ago I have seen countless thousands of geese in flight and whole quarter sections of plowing that appeared covered as with snow. Have

one dated Grafton, April 13, 1907. Earliest arrival, April 13. Very few nested in the early eighties.

Blue Goose—*Chen caerulescens*. This is the most common migrant of the smaller geese in this locality, flying in flocks from fifty to three hundred, but always with a few Snow Geese mingled in the flocks. These birds did not appear in any great numbers that I noticed until about 1906. Have one of the first ones brought to my attention dated Grafton, March 30, 1906. Earliest arrival, March 30. Not fully recognized until after 1900, although the flocks of Snow Geese of early days contained large numbers of dark colored and indiscriminately spotted and mottled birds that were not true Blue Geese.

White-fronted Goose—*Anser albifrons gambeli*. I would consider this a rare migrant, having seen very few during migrations at any time. They usually fly alone and not mixed with other geese. Have one dated Grafton, April 8, 1908. Earliest arrival, April 8. Quite rare in the eighties. Began to increase in numbers about 1896.

Canada Goose—*Branta canadensis canadensis*. Probably the most common and most sought for goose we have today. The height of every young hunter's ambition is to kill a "Honker". They are very common here during migrations, both spring and fall, but none have been known to nest here in the late years. Have a mounted one dated Glasston, April 18, 1906. Earliest arrival March 12. The Canada Goose nested in large numbers up to 1886 when they started to diminish as the country settled up. As the settlers move in the "Honkers" move to less settled districts.

Hutchin's Goose—*Branta canadensis hutchinsi*. Likely as common a migrant as the true Canada Goose and often mistaken for that bird. I have a record of one dated Grafton, April 8, 1922. Earliest arrival, April 8. Rare in the eighties, as practically all were the big Canada Geese.

Cackling Goose—*Branta canadensis minima*. A rare migrant at any time. Can remember of only one being killed here about the year 1905. No record of any since. Also rare until about 1898 when they started to appear.

Whistling Swan—*Cygnus columbianus*. A few swans are usually seen in every spring migration, ranging in numbers from three to fifty birds in a flock, but scarcely more than two or three flocks in a season. Have a record of two killed April 10, 1919, at Grafton. Earliest arrival, April 3. Very rare throughout the eighties, and in fact until 1900.

Wood Ibis—*Mycteria americana*. A straggler was killed and mounted from Glasston, North Dakota, in the spring of 1900.

Bittern—*Botaurus lentiginosus*. A very common bird in our sloughs and lakes nesting in numbers wherever favorable nesting ground is available. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton, October 27, 1920. Earliest arrival, April 23. Nested in exceedingly large numbers on the big slough and all other suitable places from 1882.

Least Bittern—*Ixobrychus exilis*. This bird must be considered a straggler in this district. I have no definite record, but W. H. Williams reports seeing one in the late eighties at Glasston, North Dakota. The second known record for this region is an adult male seen at Grafton, August 4, 1925.

Great Blue Heron—*Ardea herodias herodias*. A rare migrant in the spring, but fairly common in fall migrations along our streams and lakes. It appears early in the fall, usually the adult and young, but I do not know of them nesting. Have a record of one dated Grafton, August 13, 1912. Earliest arrival, April 27. Not found in the big slough but fairly common along the Red River and its tributaries from 1882 on.

Green Heron—*Butorides virescens*. Another bird that is undoubtedly a straggler. I had one reported in June, 1917, along the river here but could not locate it, but am sure of the record from the description. Have a mounted one taken at Glasston, May 2, 1905. A rare straggler at all times.

Black-crowned Night Heron—*Nycticorax nycticorax naevius*. An uncommon migrant in the spring but more common in the fall. I am sure of a small colony nesting near Minto, North Dakota, but have not located it as yet. Have a record dated Grafton, September 16, 1922. A few were usually seen every season throughout the eighties, and later.

Whooping Crane—*Grus americana*. A rare migrant now that used to be quite common in the early eighties. At the present rate of decrease it looks as if this great bird is to follow the Passenger Pigeon from its old haunts. W. H. Williams killed one at Glasston in April, 1899, and there is a record of one killed April 12, 1912. Five birds were seen near here in April, 1923. Earliest arrival, April 12. A few were seen every year until about 1900. One was killed by W. H. Williams on the big slough in 1899.

Little Brown Crane—*Grus canadensis*. A rare straggler through here. Have one record dated Grafton, September 30, 1920. None were taken on the big slough from 1882 on.

Sandhill Crane—*Grus mexicana*. At one time this was a common migrant and breeder on the prairies of this locality, but of late it has become very rare. The only one I ever saw stop here was on April 23, 1924. It was alone and allowed me to approach within fifty yards before it showed any signs of uneasiness. It remained around this locality about a week before it disappeared. It was very plentiful in the early eighties and nested in the big slough up to 1884. A large colony of eight or ten was found in a small slough in 1883.

Virginia Rail—*Rallus virginianus*. Not a common resident of our sloughs and marshes, but an occasional bird can be seen, especially in the spring migration. Am not sure that they nest here, but believe so. Have one record dated Grafton, June 3, 1910; and two killed May 23, 1923. Earliest arrival about April 30. Not plentiful in the big slough; found only occasionally in the early eighties.

Sora Rail—*Porzana carolina*. A very common migrant and also resident of our sloughs and marshes. A great little bird to run rather than fly, and in darting through the grass it gives one the impression that it is running on the water when in fact it steps from blade to blade of grass or any little obstruction available. Have a specimen dated Grafton, April 28. Earliest arrival, April 23. Very plentiful at all times up to the drainage of the big slough. Still plentiful in smaller sloughs.

Yellow Rail—*Coturnicops noveboracensis*. A rare straggler and I have no definite record except one that was killed at Glasston, North Dakota, in 1882, by W. H. Williams. This was the only bird ever taken in this region.

Coot—*Fulica americana*. A very common migrant and breeder in this locality, being found nesting in large numbers in sloughs and marshes. Have one mounted that was killed at Grafton, May 8, 1924. Earliest arrival, April 26. Exceedingly numerous in 1882 in the big slough, breeding there in great numbers.

Northern Phalarope—*Lobipes lobatus*. A rather common migrant in both spring and fall, although they do not nest here. Have seen large numbers of them with other small shore birds busily feeding on the edge of a small lake. They are good swimmers and sometimes will be seen quite a distance from shore. My records show one dated Grafton, May 20, 1913, and six killed August 4, 1923. Earliest arrival, May 14. Very plentiful from 1882 until the drainage of the big slough.

Wilson's Phalarope—*Steganopus tricolor*. A common breeder in this district, being found in sloughs where there is some open water

available. Nests are placed on dry land a short distance from the water. The female, as in the other phalaropes, carries the bright colors, while the male incubates the eggs and seems to care for the young. Have one killed at Grafton, May 4, 1910. Earliest arrival, May 4. Very plentiful from 1882 on.

Black-necked Stilt—*Himantopus mexicanus*. A very rare straggler. I saw one bird during the spring migration of 1905. It flew past me quite close and from the markings, which were very distinct, there was no chance of mistaking it.

Wilson's Snipe—*Callinago delicata*. A common migrant in spring and fall in this locality, but now they are not noticed during breeding season. Have one mounted dated Grafton, May 3, 1904. Earliest arrival, April 19. Bred in large numbers from 1882 on.

Long-billed Dowitcher—*Lymnodromus griscus scolopaceus*. This species can be called common during both spring and fall migrations, and is easily distinguished by its long bill and habits so different from the Wilson Snipe, the only bird with which it might be confused. They were very common in the spring of 1925 during migration, about May 16. Have records of birds taken May 16, July 8, August 14, and September 9, all in 1923. A mounted bird dated Grafton, May 2, 1902. Earliest arrival, May 2. Not common in the early days, but apparently more common now.

Stilt Sandpiper—*Micropalama himantopus*. A very common migrant, especially in the spring. On May 29, 1924, I saw a flock of between 200 and 250 stilts in one flock. I have records of birds taken July 14, August 4, and August 18, 1923, and May 29, 1924, at Grafton. Earliest arrival, May 28. They were not common anywhere here in the eighties, but a few seen during migration.

Knot—*Calidris canutus*. A rare migrant in this locality. Have taken very few of these birds. I have the following records of birds taken: August 18, 1923, and August 25, 1923, at Grafton. Earliest fall arrival, August 18.

Pectoral Sandpiper—*Pisobia maculata*. Another common migrant in our locality. I have the following records: May 17, 1909; May 16, 1923; September 16, 1917, and May 18, 1924, at Grafton. Earliest arrival, May 16. Fairly common in the early eighties, and quite common now.

Baird's Sandpiper—*Pisobia bairdi*. One of the most common migrants in this district, especially in the spring. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton, June 3, 1919. Common in the eighties.

Least Sandpiper—*Pisobia minutilla*. A very common migrant, usually found in company with the other small sandpipers. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton, August 17, 1913. Earliest arrival, May 3. Very common on the big slough in 1882 and later.

Red-backed Sandpiper—*Pelidna alpina sakhalina*. A fairly common migrant, especially in the spring, usually found in small groups mingling with other sandpipers. Have the following records from birds taken May 16, 1910; May 28, 1923; May 26, and May 29, 1924, at Grafton. Earliest arrival, May 16.

Semipalmated Sandpiper—*Ereunetes pusillus*. Probably the most common of the small sandpipers during migrations and, in fact, they are here most of the season, though I do not think they nest here. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton, May 13, 1911. Earliest arrival, May 13. As common as the Least Sandpiper from 1882 on.

Sanderling—*Crocethia alba*. A fairly common migrant in spring and fall migrations, usually in company of other sandpipers. Have records of birds taken Grafton, May 28, 1913; July 19, 1923; July 31, 1923, and June 2, 1924. Earliest, April 28. Large numbers from 1882 on.

Marbled Godwit—*Limosa fedoa*. Cannot be called a common migrant, although a few are usually seen every spring and a pair nested near a slough south of here. Have often found them in company with Hudsonian Godwits wherever they are found. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton, June 1, 1908, also the following records of birds taken: (4) June 4, 1923; (6) June 21, 1923; (1) April 24, 1924; (2) August 5, 1924; (3) May 18, 1924. Earliest arrival, April 23. Quite plentiful through the eighties, when it nested in the big slough.

Hudsonian Godwit—*Limosa haemastica*. A fairly common migrant, as a few are usually seen every spring migration, although they do not appear during the fall flight. A beautiful bird that seems to be losing ground from year to year. I have a mounted bird dated Grafton, May 7, 1911, and the following records of birds taken: (2) May 18, 1923; (4) May 21, 1923; (2) June 11, 1923; (9) May 18, 1923; (6) May 25, 1924. Earliest arrival, May 7. Quite rare throughout the eighties, and possibly more plentiful than now.

Greater Yellow-legs—*Totanus melanoleucus*. I would call this a rare migrant, as they are only occasionally seen, and very few at any time. Probably more common in the fall than spring. I have records from mounted birds dated Grafton, April 30, 1909; April 19, 1914,

also records of birds taken August 14, 1923; October 8, 1924. Earliest arrival, April 19. Very plentiful from 1882 on. More prevalent than the Lesser Yellow-legs in the early eighties.

Yellow-legs — *Totanus flavipes*. A very common migrant both spring and fall, being found in large numbers in nearly every slough or lake shore. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton, May 10, 1912, also records dated April 30, 1913; April 19, 1914. Earliest arrival, April 13. Not common in early eighties, but became more numerous as the Greater Yellow-legs diminished in numbers.

Solitary Sandpiper — *Tringa solitaria solitaria*. A common migrant and also quite a number undoubtedly nest here, as they can be found at any time during the summer months along our streams especially. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton, June 9, 1912; August 14, 1914, and August 7, 1923. Earliest arrival May 3. Very numerous in the early days. Began to diminish about 1886.

Western Willet—*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus inornatus*. A rare migrant in this locality and usually found singly or in pairs, never more together. I have collected very few of these birds during my work. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton May 4, 1905, also records from birds taken (1) May 4, 1913; (1) June 11, 1923; (1) May 27, 1924; (1) August 5, 1924. Earliest arrival, May 2.

Upland Plover—*Bartramia longicauda*. A fairly common migrant in spring and fall, and also are found nesting. I have found both eggs and young birds. They are becoming more scarce every year. I have a mounted bird dated Grafton, June 6, 1909, and birds taken June 19, 1914; May 28, 1923. Juvenile records July 3, 1923, August 4, 1923, May 26, 1924. Earliest arrival, May 9.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper — *Tryngites subruficollis*. A very rare migrant, being seen only in August in the fall migration. I collected two on August 14, 1923, and one on August 26, 1924. Earliest arrival, August 14.

Spotted Sandpiper—*Actitis macularia*. A common summer resident, breeding quite commonly throughout this region. The collection contains one taken here. Earliest arrival, May 9.

American Black-bellied Plover—*Squatarola squatarola cynosurae*. A common migrant found in the fall, usually seen in small groups, but have seen as high as sixty birds in a flock feeding on the shores of a lake. They are wary and hard to approach. I have one mounted dated Grafton, September 27, 1906, and others taken August 9, 1923, October 28, 1923, and October 3, 1924. Earliest arrival, May 25.

Golden Plover—*Pluvialis dominica dominica*. A rare migrant in the spring but quite common in the fall flight travelling in flocks of a dozen to fifty birds. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton, September 7, 1907, and birds taken September 28, 1923, and October 3, 1924. Earliest arrival, April 30. Exceedingly numerous in the early eighties, being found in flocks of several hundred but gradually decreased in numbers until they about disappeared; have increased again in last few years.

Killdeer—*Oxyechus vociferus*. A well known early arrival in the spring migration and a common breeder in this region, being found in the near vicinity of every little water hole on the prairies. A very noisy and welcome arrival in the early spring. A mounted bird dated Grafton, April 28, 1904. Earliest arrival, March 18. Nested in large numbers everywhere from 1882 on.

Semipalmated Plover—*Aegialitis semipalmata*. Cannot be called a common migrant, although a few are usually seen in both spring and fall migrations. Usually found in small flocks, never over a dozen and most often seen back from the water's edge a short distance, chasing insects. Two taken August 4, 1923, and one May 26, 1924. Earliest arrival, May 11.

Ruddy Turnstone—*Arenaria interpres morinella*. A rare straggler that was only seen once in this locality when a flock of twelve was found at Minto Lake on May 26, 1923, and two were collected and sent to the University of Michigan. Earliest arrival, May 26. Quite common in early eighties, but had gradually disappeared from this region until 1923.

Gray Ruffed Grouse—*Bonasa umbellus umbelloides*. A fairly common resident that is just holding its own, and not becoming any more plentiful although we have had a closed season here for several years past. An occasional red-phased bird is found, but the gray phase predominates. Two specimens in the collection were taken October 31, 1915. Five were taken October 9, 1922. One was taken January 1, 1923. Four were taken October 7, 1923. All were sent to the University of Michigan. Fairly common along the Red River from 1882 on.

Prairie Chicken—*Tympanuchus americanus americanus*. This is our principal upland game bird, furnishing the principal sport during the hunting season. During the years when the hunting dog was used the chicken decreased in numbers quite noticeably until they became very scarce. Added to the dog was the increase in the acreage of land put under cultivation, causing the destruction of most of their nesting

ground; but since the dog was prohibited and with the increase in the growing of alfalfa and like crops, this grand bird has made great strides toward increasing and is now rapidly coming back to former numbers. In 1916 and 1917 I trapped live grouse for the United States Department of Agriculture and found that nearly eighty per cent of our birds were non-breeding males, a condition that was alarming. In 1918, I think, the State Legislature passed the law prohibiting the use of so-called bird dogs and limiting the bag to five birds a day, and this fact alone meant the salvation of the Pinnated Grouse, which had no show whatever against the combination of dog and magazine shotgun. Have two mounted in the collection dated Grafton April 13, 1913. Heard in 1882 but were not seen until 1883, when the first one was killed. Became more common every year from then on.

Prairie Sharp-tailed Grouse—*Pedioecetes phasianellus campestris*. A common resident about fifteen miles west of us, where it becomes more common than the Pinnated Grouse. In our immediate vicinity it is seen only during the winter months. Have mounted birds in the collection dated Grafton, December 18, 1912. One killed April 6, 1924. One killed January 1, 1923. Four killed February 15, 1923. Some of these were the Columbian Sharptail which occurs here only in winter. They were sent to the University of Michigan. Very common in 1882, but appeared to diminish in numbers or move out as the Pinnated Grouse moved in.

Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse—*Pedioecetes phasianellus columbianus*. A rare winter visitor in this immediate vicinity, but is quite common during winter in the Pembina Mountain region. A mounted specimen in the collection is dated Grafton.

Passenger Pigeon—*Ectopistes migratorius*. Extinct. Have a record from W. H. Williams of a Passenger Pigeon killed at Glasston in the spring of 1882. Last one killed on the big slough in 1882 by W. H. Williams. It was at least ten miles from any timber and appeared exhausted when shot as it allowed a very close approach.

Mourning Dove—*Zenaidura macrura carolinensis*. A very common summer resident, nesting in large numbers during the summer. Specimen in the collection dated Grafton, July 25, 1904. Earliest arrival, April 13. Fairly common where there was timber from 1882 onward.

Turkey Vulture—*Cathartes aura septentrionalis*. A rare migrant being seen only rarely during spring and fall migrations. I have a mounted specimen taken at Ardoch, North Dakota, October 4, 1914,

and two records dated Grafton, April 20, 1902, and May 22, 1921. Earliest arrival, April 25. Occasionally seen during migrations from 1882 onward.

Marsh Hawk—*Circus hudsonius*. A common migrant and summer resident in this locality, found nesting in sloughs where their nests are built in the tall grass. An early arrival in the spring. A pair mounted in the collection dated Grafton, May 11, 1908. In 1917 the first arrival was March 21, and last one seen was September 18. In 1921 was March 23, last seen September 21. In 1922 was March 30. In 1923 was March 21, and last seen October 24. In 1924 was March 25. All these first arrivals were male birds, the females not appearing until two or three weeks later. Very common breeder throughout the district from 1882 onward.

Sharp-shinned Hawk—*Accipiter velox*. A fairly common migrant and usually a few pairs nesting in this region. A mounted specimen in the collection dated Grafton, May 8, 1912. One April 25, 1913, and another September 7, 1923. A very destructive hawk to smaller birds. Earliest arrival, April 4.

Cooper's Hawk—*Accipiter cooperi*. A common migrant, which frequently nests. A very destructive hawk and not always confining itself to smaller birds. A mounted bird in the collection dated Grafton, June 6, 1911; other records, May 1, and May 9, 1923; April 20, and May 5, 1924; and August 31, 1924. These specimens sent to the University of Michigan. Earliest arrival, April 4.

Goshawk—*Astur atricapillus atricapillus*. An exceedingly destructive hawk that is only a winter visitor and not common at any time. We had a large number here during the fall and winter of 1907, but only an occasional one since. Have a mounted bird dated Grafton, April 9, 1907, and one sent to the University of Michigan taken January 21, 1917. Have seen none here since. Earliest arrival, January 21.

Kriders' Hawk—*Buteo borealis krideri*. A rather rare breeder in this district, and would not call it a common migrant, although they may be more common in migration than supposed, as it is rather difficult to distinguish. Have a specimen in the collection that was taken September 6, 1909, that nested here. Have seen others that were identified as Krider's during migration. Earliest arrival, March 21.

Western Redtail—*Buteo borealis calurus*. Probably the most common of our Redtails both in migration and found nesting. They are likely the eastern form principally, as noted in "Bird Life of North Dakota", by N. A. Wood, page 38. Have never taken a melanistic

Redtail nesting here or found a dark phase in any nest. Melanistic forms all appear to come from north of us as they are seen only during migrations. Earliest arrival, March 19. Very numerous during migrations on the big slough from 1882 onward.

Harlan's Hawk—*Buteo borealis harlani*. A rather rare migrant in this locality both in spring and fall, most commonly found in the melanistic phase and a bird that is hard to identify unless in the hand. I got my first record May 1, 1916. It is in the Museum of the University of Michigan. Since that time I have the following records from here: October 19, 1923; a mounted bird taken October 19, 1923; two taken October 14, 1923; two September 30, 1924; two October 28, 1924, and one October 29, 1924, in light phase. These birds are all in the University of Michigan except the mounted bird. These large hawks pass through here and their flight lasts but a few days, at least it is for only a few days they are taken and after that we find nothing but ordinary and melanistic Redtails. Am in receipt of a letter from Mr. P. A. Taverner of Ottawa, Canada, an ornithologist from the Victoria Memorial Museum, who states that the appearance of Harlan's Hawk nesting is only erratic south of the Yukon Territory, and he has lately received word that they are quite common in the Atlin country, bordering on the Yukon. Undoubtedly their breeding ground is in this far north country. Earliest arrival, March 26.

Swainson's Hawk—*Buteo swainsoni*. Most commonly seen in the melanistic, or dark, phase, but uncommon in this district now where they were quite common years ago. Have not found them nesting here in the last fifteen years. I have taken these birds in both phases during migration but only two of these in the light phase. A mounted bird (dark phase) in the collection taken at Grafton, April 3, 1906, and a light phase bird taken May 11, 1924. Other migration records are March 21, 1917; March 30, 1919; March 26, 1920; March 24, 1921; March 13, 1921; March 24, 1922; March 21, 1923; April 5, 1925.

Broad-winged Hawk—*Buteo platypterus*. A very common migrant and summer resident, found nesting quite commonly throughout the timber regions. A mounted specimen in the collection taken at Grafton, April 15, 1910. Several others in the University of Michigan Museum dated April 24, 1913; September 8, 1923; April 24, 1924. Earliest arrival, March 31.

American Rough-legged Hawk—*Archibuteo lagopus sancti-johannis*. A fairly common migrant during spring and fall migrations. These birds are often taken in the dark, almost black, phase, as well

as in the light phase. An early arrival in the spring, usually first part of April, and one of the last varieties to leave in the fall. They do not nest here. A mounted bird in the collection taken at Grafton, November 1, 1909, also two others taken October 2, 1920, and October 20, 1920. Earliest arrival, March 12.

Ferruginous Rough-leg—*Archibuteo ferrugineus*. A rare migrant here and I know of one pair nesting in this vicinity in 1915. I have a mounted specimen taken at Grafton, October 1, 1920, and one in the University of Michigan Museum taken October 3, 1920.

Golden Eagle—*Aquila chrysaetos*. A rare migrant through here, usually one or two are seen each season. I shot at one in 1916, and also shot at one in September, 1923. Saw one on November 27, 1924, but so far have not been able to bring one down.

Bald Eagle—*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*. *leucocephalus* The Bald Eagle occurs about as rarely as the Golden Eagle, and one seldom sees a mature bird. I remember of seeing two during spring migrations years ago. I shot one in the fall of 1914, and another was killed here in September, 1923. Saw one October 10, 1924, near here.

Gray Gyr Falcon—*Falco rusticolus rusticolus*. Have seen only one of these birds in this locality, and it is mounted and in the collection, taken October 7, 1908. This bird must be considered a rare straggler this far south. Seen early in the spring during migration but not common in 1882.

Prairie Falcon—*Falco mexicanus*. A rare migrant through this locality having seen only three that I could identify as this species. One was seen May 2, 1923, and another seen October 2, 1924. I sent one to Dr. Walter Koelz, of the University of Michigan, taken at Grafton, May 16, 1923. Earliest arrival, May 16. Rare in the early days.

Duck Hawk—*Falco peregrinus anatum*. I have only one record of this hawk taken in this locality. It was killed at Glasston, October 2, 1904. It is now in the collection of C. A. Hale of Grand Forks, North Dakota.

Pigeon Hawk—*Falco columbarius columbarius*. A rare hawk in this locality in migration; have very rarely seen a bird, well along in the breeding season, that makes me believe that it nests here erratically. A mounted bird in the collection taken at Grafton, May 8, 1912, also one sent to University of Michigan, taken September 16, 1914. Earliest arrival, April 24. Fairly common during migration in the early eighties.

[To be continued]