The status of cranes in Nebraska.—Since there is sound evidence that most cranes which migrate northward west of the Mississippi River cross Nebraska, their present day occurrence in the state should be accurately summarized. Reference to Haecker, Moser, and Swenk (1945. "Check-list of the birds of Nebraska." Nebr. Orn. Union, p. 11) suggests that these birds are of rare occurrence. However at the present time Sandhill Cranes in spring migration congregate in extremely large numbers in the central portion of the Platte River Valley. This note attempts to present correctly the status of the cranes (Gruidae) in Nebraska.

Whooping Crane.—At present it is difficult to evaluate the exact status of the Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*) in Nebraska because of its extreme rarity. Allen (1952. "The Whooping Crane." Natl. Aud. Soc.) in his excellent monograph on the species admirably presented all of the data for Nebraska up to 1950. Since then there have been published one or two sight records per year. In the spring of 1953 more Whooping Cranes were seen in Nebraska than were reported in the previous two years. Most of these birds which spend any time feeding in Nebraska are almost certain to be reported, because most of the residents of the Platte Valley of Nebraska have been told to be on the alert for large white cranes and to report them immediately to federal or state game officers. Thus, it is known fairly accurately when Whooping Cranes do appear in Nebraska. Haecker *et al.* (*loc. cit.*) state that the Whooping Crane is: "A rare but rather regular migrant through central Nebraska." At present we must consider the Whooping Crane an extremely rare migrant.

Sandhill Cranes.—Probably the largest annual concentration of Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis tabida*) in North America occurs in the Platte Valley of Nebraska, in that portion of the valley bounded on the east by Wood River in Hall County and on the west by Sutherland in Lincoln County. The cranes start appearing there early in March and reach their maximum numbers about the first of April. They remain in large numbers for approximately one week and from the second week of April on they seem to diminish in numbers, although small flocks are occasionally seen during the first part of May. During the past five years I have seen flocks estimated at 15,000 to 20,000 in the area between Newark and Elm Creek in Buffalo County. Walkinshaw (1949. "The Sandhill Cranes." Cranbrook Inst. Sci., p. 119) quotes Kubichek who observed and photographed a concentration of more than 100,000 cranes near Hershey, Lincoln County during the spring of 1943. Breckenridge (1945. *Flicker,* 17:79–81) reported seeing a flock of 20,000 (*Grus c. canadensis*) in this same area. The identification was based on the fact that, of the ten birds he was able to collect in this area, all proved to be Little Brown Cranes. Since it is impossible to separate the Little Brown Crane from the Sandhill Crane in the field, it is impossible to say which subspecies is the most abundant. From the little collecting done it appears that the Little Brown concentrates in the western portion of the Platte River Valley roughly in the area between North Platte and Sutherland, while the Sandhill concentrates in the eastern end of the range, that is, in the Newark-Elm Creek area. However, it appears that at all times the flocks contain both subspecies. It is interesting that most of the specimens collected 20 years or more ago seem to represent the Sandhill, while most recent specimens seem to be predominantly Little Browns. Haecker *et al.* (*loc. cit.*) state that the Little Brown Crane is a common spring migrant in the central portion of the Platte River Valley of Nebraska. They say of the Sandhill Crane: "Formerly a common migrant throughout the state and a breeder in the sandhills area. Now an uncommon migrant and probably no longer nests within the state." At present this subspecies should be considered a common spring migrant in the same area as the Little Brown Crane.

Knowledge of the fall migration of all forms of cranes is very slight in Nebraska, mainly because large concentrations seldom occur in the fall and the birds fly at extreme heights. The report of the Committee on Bird Protection of the American Ornithologists' Union (1944. *Auk*, 61:632–633) states that during the 1942 fall migration 11,000 cranes were seen at Crescent Lake Migratory Bird Refuge in Garden County. This report suggests that the fall migration does not follow the same routes as the spring migration. During fall the birds seem to be widely dispersed, as there are numerous reports of individuals or small groups of three and four visiting farm ponds and other small bodies of water throughout the state.

There is very little possibility that Sandhill Cranes breed in Nebraska at present. There have been no positive breeding records since the 1880's. However, it should be pointed out that there are suitable breeding areas for these birds in the sandhill lake region and there are now extremely few bird students working in this area. As it is very evident that the Sandhill Crane is increasing in abundance, there is an excellent possibility that it will once again nest in Nebraska.—WILLIAM F. RAPP, JR., *430 Ivy Avenue, Crete, Nebraska, August 17, 1953.*

The Lark Bunting in Utah.—The occurrence of 51 (4 collected and 47 observed) new Utah records of Lark Buntings (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) for the years 1951–1953 has prompted us to compile all available information, in an effort to determine the status of this species in the state. Woodbury, *et al.* (1949. *Bull. Univ. Utah*, 39:33) give the status of the Lark Bunting in Utah as a "Sparse summer resident and migrant through the western half of the state (not known Colorado Basin), probably breeding in open plains-like desert or cultivated fields, known from May 15 to October 11." Since then, Killpack (1951. *Condor*, 53:99) has reported collecting and observing this species in the Uintah Basin. Additional records for the Uintah Basin and other parts of Utah are reported here. The earliest date is May 6, and the latest corresponds to that given by Woodbury.

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Specimens referred to are in collections of the University of Utah Museum of Zoology (UUMZ); Brigham Young University (BYU); Utah State Agricultural College (USAC); and Weber College (WC).

The first record of a Lark Bunting in Utah was a specimen collected by J. H. Simpson (1876. "Rept. Expl. Great Basin, Territory of Utah," 1859. Gov't Print. Office, Appendix K, p. 379) from an unknown locality about 1859. Since then, records for this species have varied noticeably over the years. This variation might reflect population fluctuations, changes in migration routes, or lack of observational data. Between 1859 and 1939, Lark Buntings were reported only four times. Sixty-one buntings were recorded in the period 1940 through 1942. Only one bird was noted from 1943 to 1949, but this may have been due in part to lack of observers in the field because of the war. Sixty Lark Bunting records occurred between 1950 and 1953.