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Contributions to the Ornithology of the Upper Mississippi Valley - Pt. I. An Unpublished List by J. H. Paarmann on the Birds of Davenport, Iowa, and Vicinity

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**Contributions to the Ornithology of the Upper
Mississippi Valley — Pt. I. An Unpub-
lished List by J. H. Paarmann on
the Birds of Davenport, Iowa,
and Vicinity**

By JAMES HODGES

Recently the University of South Carolina press published an outstanding volume on the avifauna of that state. In years past other states have published similar works concerning their respective avifaunas. But alas, Iowa, or the entire middle western region for that matter, have remained in the background. This is not apparently because of the lack of interest in its bird life, or relative abundance of observers; but simply a matter of circumstances that can be rectified only with the passing of years. The 1907 list of *The Birds of Iowa* by R. M. Anderson is outdated in some respects while the 1934 list of Philip DuMont is now a rare collectors item; rare enough indeed so that the majority of students are unable to obtain copies. The only other source of information is to page through the issues of *Iowa Bird Life* and one can receive an idea of the changes and additions to our Iowa avifauna.

Another factor that should be emphasized, as it has been neglected in the past, is the wealth of historical material buried in the archives in various institutions, or the journals of some who were avid students at one time or another but have since passed on, but have left voluminous records. These records can usually be secured from relatives who are glad to see them put to use.

I intend to start a series of papers, of which this is the first, containing what will be called *Contributions To The Ornithology Of The Upper Mississippi Valley*. These papers shall be of two types; either unpublished lists of importance or recent changes and additions to the avifauna of this vicinity.

During 1903 a two page pamphlet appeared from the offices of the Davenport Academy of Sciences by the then Curator and Director, J. H. Paarmann, on the *BIRDS OF DAVENPORT AND VICINITY*. Though this work was far from being complete it was nevertheless informative and of great use to the students of bird life of that time, but in the light of today's knowledge it seems rather incomplete. But while I was going through the personal scrapbook of the late Mr. Paarmann I came upon a revision of the 1903 list which he had completed in MS form in 1925. In a comparison of

these 1903 and 1925 lists it is obvious that the knowledge of Paarmann regarding the bird life of this Scott County, Iowa, and vicinity had improved. Paarmann was not an ornithologist in the strict sense of the word but instead an all around naturalist, interested in everything in the world of nature.

The purpose of this paper is not to give an extensive resumé of the local avifauna of Scott County, Iowa but to make known for the first time the contents of this unpublished list and make any comments that might be deemed appropriate.

In order to conserve space and to avoid repetition of what is already known the species that he lists in this unpublished 1925 MS. that are of unusual interest or bear further comment will be listed. It is regretted that the relative abundance of each species was not listed, as the list gives the birds status only.

WHIP-POOR-WILL. Summer resident. (Probably more common than it is now due to the destruction of timber.)

CLIFF SWALLOW. Summer resident. (This bird is now quite rare as a summer resident.)

BEWICK WREN. Rare Straggler. (It can now be observed during migrations with a nesting record now and then.)

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER. Summer resident. (It is unfortunate that he did not list nesting dates as this species is a rare breeder.)

AMERICAN PIPIT. Migrating through in April.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING. Winter residents.

NORTHERN SHRIKE. Winter residents.

BELL'S VIREO. Summer resident.

LOUISIANA WATER-THRUSH. Summer resident.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT. Summer resident.

WESTERN MEADOWLARK. The western meadowlark is common in western Iowa and may perhaps venture this far east. (This species is one of the western birds that has invaded this area during the last few years. Apparently they were accidental during Paarmann's time.)

ORCHARD ORIOLE. Summer resident.

RUSTY BLACKBIRD. Migrating through in March.

SCARLET Tanager. Summer resident.

BLUE GROSBEEK. Observed at Walcott, Iowa on May 10-12, 1926 by Mrs. J. H. Paarmann. (This is an out of the ordinary record. However, I doubt very much if it could be confused with any other species. This remains the only record of this species for this area.)

EVENING GROSBEEK. Winter residents remaining until about the middle of April.

REDPOLL. Winter residents.

PINE SISKIN. Winter residents.

AMERICAN CROSSBILL. Winter residents remaining until about the middle of April.

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW. Summer resident.

LECONTE'S SPARROW. Migrating through in March.

VESPER SPARROW. Summer resident.

LARK SPARROW. Summer resident.

SMITH'S LONGSPUR. Migrating through in April.

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