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An Epitomized Compilation of a Bird Census Now in Progress in the Area of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa

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An Epitomized Compilation of a Bird Census Now in Progress in the Area of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa

ARCHIE EUWER

The object of this problem is to obtain accurate data on the species of birds to be found in this region, and the number of each species. Each week as many hours as possible are spent in the field collecting information. Due to unavoidable circumstances the total number of hours afield varies considerably each week. This census *is not* intended to be a complete survey of the birds in this area, rather it is a preliminary study and its purpose is to serve as an incentive for future students of biology to pursue this problem so that eventually an accurate picture of the avifauna of this vicinity will have been compiled, and information will be available to those who want it in order that they may know what birds are found here, when they are found, and in what numbers they are present. So far as I have been able to learn no extensive work of this nature has ever been attempted in Mt. Pleasant.

This problem was designed to take an entire school year for completion. The data assembled in this report was begun on the 25th of September and ended the 10th of April. In the meantime, however, the field trips are being continued and will be terminated about the last week in May.

The material in this compilation has been gleaned from the eighty (80) field trips already completed. The total length of time expended on these excursions is 142 hours, 32 minutes; the average for each is approximately one hour and forty-seven minutes. Time afield varied from one-half hour to three hours. To have an absolutely scientifically accurate picture of the avifauna in a given area it would be necessary to devote a fixed amount of time to this territory. By varying the amount of time spent for purposes of identification I realize that a thorough count in my territory has not been obtained; I accept and acknowledge this.

Three main areas comprise the localities visited. Because of their variation in vegetation they became a part of my routine route. These areas are Cole's Pond, Saunders' Park, and the Rock Quarry. During extended trips of one hour or more in length all these localities are thoroughly checked. On trips of less than one hour only Cole's Pond and surrounding territory is covered.

The types of territory visited are diverse. Cole's Pond, a large body of water a block long and seventy yards wide, is surrounded by a well-grazed pasture, and is fed by a small creek entering at its northern end. In this pasture are many trees of climax growth. Across the railroad tracks to the south are two fields: one is choked with tall grass and weeds, the other is a pastured area with a creek and plenty of lush grass.

By following the "K" Line, a deserted set of railroad tracks, about three-quarters of a mile south one arrives at Saunders' Park. Along

the tracks is the usual growth of weeds and brush. Saunders' Park, in many respects, is a typical small town park. The northern three-fourths is composed of well-groomed lawns and climax trees, the southern fourth is a mass of tangles and brushy undergrowth, intermingled with lawns. By following the creek south about two blocks one reaches the Rock Quarry and surrounding timber. Beside the rocky ledges, there are large areas of scrubby growth and climax communities, with small streams.

Altogether on these eighty field trips sixty (60) different species of birds were encountered and identified. The most produced on any single trip totaled thirty (30). The total number for all my trips is 16,046. English Sparrows comprise more than one-third of this number. In this order Bronzed Grackles, Juncos, Starlings, Robins, Cardinals, and Blue Jays also compose a large part of the remaining total.

While all these species were identified with all possible sincerity and honesty, there naturally are some which fall in the questionable category. Included in this list are: Harlan's Hawk, Alder Flycatcher, Bobolink, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Pine-woods Sparrow, and Wood Pewee. All these species occur or are known to have occurred in this territory, but owing to the fact that they were noted during the fall and late fall I consider the validness of their inclusion in this list as questionable.

No great rarities have been encountered. However, birds such as Bewick's Wren, Winter Wren, Wilson's Snipe, and the Swamp Sparrow are very interesting and stimulating.

Attached is a list of the species identified, their A.O.U. Numbers, and the number of each recorded. This list represents the total tabulation of my eighty sojourns afield.

IOWA WESLEYAN COLLEGE,
MT. PLEASANT, IOWA.

A.O.U. Number	Species	Number Recorded
6	Pied-billed Grebe	23
132	Mallard Duck	1
230	Wilson's Snipe	18
273	Killdeer	37
316	Mourning Dove	361
331	Marsh Hawk	2
337	Red-tailed Hawk	9
337d	Harlan's Hawk	1
360	Sparrow Hawk	2
368	Barred Owl	8
375	Horned Owl	4
390	Belted Kingfisher	30
393	Hairy Woodpecker	19
394	Downy Woodpecker	142

A.O.U Number	Species	Number Recorded
402	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	18
409	Red-bellied Woodpecker	82
412	Flicker	152
420	Nighthawk	40
423	Chimney Swift	42
456	Phoebe	8
461	Wood Pewee	2
466	Alder Flycatcher	1
477	Blue Jay	495
488	Crow	317
493	Starling	1,069
494	Bobolink	1
495	Cowbird	130
498	Red-winged Blackbird	24
501	Meadowlark	191
509	Rusty Blackbird	24
511	Bronzed Grackle	1,857
517	Purple Finch	34
529	Goldfinch	286
558	White-throated Sparrow	106
559	Tree Sparrow	229
560	Chipping Sparrow	4
563	Field Sparrow	13
567	Slate-colored Junct	1,209
575	Pine-woods Sparrow	1
581	Song Sparrow	75
584	Swamp Sparrow	1
585	Fox Sparrow	66
587	Towhee	3
593	Cardinal	501
595	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1
611	Purple Martin	8
655	Myrtle Warbler	21
699.2	English Sparrow	6,612
719	Bewick's Wren	3
721	House Wren	6
722	Winter Wren	7
726	Brown Creeper	27
727	White breasted Nuthatch	163
731	Tufted Titmouse	187
735	Black-capped Chickadee	459
748	Golden-crowned Kinglet	19
749	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	17
759	Hermit Thrush	2
761	Robin	706
766	Eastern Bluebird	51
	TOTAL	16,046