

1938

Late Fall and Winter Bird Records, 1930 to 1938, in the Upper Missouri Valley

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LATE FALL AND WINTER BIRD RECORDS, 1930 TO
1938, IN THE UPPER MISSOURI VALLEY

WILFRED D. CRABB

These records are brought together and intended to be a continuation of the winter bird lists of the Upper Missouri Valley, started in 1916 by T. C. Stephens. Dr. Stephens compiled a series of papers during the period of 1916-22,¹ after which time Chas. J. Spiker, then of Sioux City, covered the winter periods from 1922 to 1926.² Wm. Youngworth published another summary of winter records from 1926 to 1930.³ The present paper begins at the end of that period. Other papers of this series have taken into account the physical features of this region. Therefore, the writer has omitted any repetition of what has already been well reviewed.

This paper lists seventy-three species. Winter is considered to include November, December, January, and February of each year. Because of this arbitrary definition of winter some of the records used in this paper, it will be noted, are really those of late migrants and not, in a strict sense, winter birds. But for the sake of consistency, every available record, falling in these four months was taken into consideration in preparing the statement for each species.

The writer has made no effort to include a review of the published literature covering this period, and only such references are included as were readily available.

The writer is indebted for many of these records to Mrs. W. J. Armour who for the period of this paper had many notes each season and who was an especially fruitful source of small bird records; to Mrs. J. A. Dales for her banding and other records; to Mr. Wm. Youngworth, and Mr. Bruce F. Stiles for their notes, which were especially helpful with regard to the larger birds, hawks, and owls; and to Mrs. H. M. Bailey for her notes; and

¹ Bird Records During the Past Winter, 1916-1917, in Northwestern Iowa. By T. C. Stephens. Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., XXIV, 1917, pp. 245-258.

Bird Records of the Past Winter, 1917-1918, in the Upper Missouri Valley. By T. C. Stephens. Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., XXV, 1918, pp. 71-84.

Bird Records of the Past Two Winters, 1918-1920, in the Upper Missouri Valley. By T. C. Stephens. Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., XXVII, 1920, pp. 395-407.

Bird Records of Two Winters, 1920-1922, in the Upper Missouri Valley. By T. C. Stephens. Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., XXXVII, 1930, pp. 357-366.

² Winter Bird Records, 1922 to 1926, in Northwestern Iowa. By Chas. J. Spiker. Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., XXXIII, 1926, pp. 307-313.

³ Late Fall and Winter Bird Records, 1926 to 1930, in the Upper Missouri Valley. By Wm. Youngworth. Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., XXXVIII, 1931, pp. 277-285.

to several others. The writer is also indebted to Dr. T. C. Stephens for his notes, careful reading and correction of the manuscript, helpful advice, and encouragement; and to Miss Leona Keckler for her careful reading, criticism, and typing.

Great Blue Heron. *Ardea herodias*. Wm. Youngworth reported one on Floyd River, Woodbury County, Nov. 21, 1937. This note has been submitted to the Iowa Bird Life.

American Bittern. *Botaurus lentiginosus*. Mrs. W. J. Armour records one seen in Union County, S. Dak., on McCook Lake, Nov. 6, 1937.

Mallard. *Anas platyrhynchos*. This bird is seen in varying numbers every month of the year. They seem to stay as long as there is any open water. Bruce F. Stiles and W. W. Trusell reported 550 on the Missouri River, Woodbury County, Jan. 22, 1938. The duck had been seen by others throughout the winter.

Gadwall. *Chaulelasmus streperus*. Bruce F. Stiles reports one record. He collected two specimens Nov. 9, 1935, on New Lake, Woodbury County.

Pintail. *Dafila acuta tsitsihoa*. Five birds were seen in Woodbury County, Nov. 10, 1937, by the writer.

Green-winged Teal. *Nettion carolinense*. Nov. 2, 1937, two specimens were taken on New Lake, Woodbury County, by Bruce F. Stiles.

Red-head. *Nyroca americana*. There are three November records of this species by Bruce F. Stiles: Nov. 12, 1932, on the Missouri River, Woodbury County, Iowa; Nov. 13, 1932, on the Missouri River, Woodbury County, Iowa. The week of Nov. 8, 1937, one was seen several times on Half Moon Lake in Sioux City, Woodbury County, Iowa.

Lesser Scaup. *Nyroca affinis*. This species has been common in early November. Mrs. J. A. Dales has an interesting record of two birds of this species for Dec. 26, 1937, on the Sioux River at Riverside, Sioux City. There was considerable open water at that time. Mrs. H. M. Bailey has a Feb. 26, 1930, record of one on the Big Sioux River at Riverside.

American Merganser. *Mergus merganser americanus*. Four winter records of this bird. Bruce F. Stiles collected one Nov. 10, 1936, and the writer shot one Nov. 10, 1937, but lost it in a slough in Woodbury County. Mr. Stiles saw two females on the Big Sioux River at Riverside, Woodbury County, Dec. 25, 1936. Mrs. W. J. Armour reported one on McCook Lake, Nov. 11, 1936, Union County, S. Dak. Mrs. H. M. Bailey has a Dec. 21, 1930, record on the Big Sioux River at Riverside.

Hooded Merganser. *Lophodytes cucullatus*. This species migrates too early to come within the scope of this paper. Bruce F. Stiles collected one on New Lake, Woodbury County, Nov. 3, 1935.

Goshawk. *Astur atricapillus*. Wm. Youngworth has five sight records: Dec. 27, 1931, Union County, S. Dak.; Feb. 12, 1933, Union County, S. Dak.; Dec. 1, 1933, Woodbury County, Iowa; Jan. 29, 1937, Woodbury County, Iowa. These birds are probably more numerous than the records show, but are not generally known.

Sharp-shinned Hawk. *Accipiter velox*. An uncommon winter visitor. Mrs. W. J. Armour and Mrs. H. M. Bailey reported one seen at McCook Lake, Feb. 14, 1934, Union County, S. Dak. They are probably more common than this single record would indicate.

Cooper's Hawk. *Accipiter cooperi*. Records of this species are not as common as the author suspects they should be; probably because of some confusion in their identification. Wm. Youngworth reports them Dec. 17, 1931, and Nov. 12, 1932, in Woodbury County, Iowa.

Red-tailed Hawk. *Buteo borealis*. This species is a regular winter resident, but not as common as in the summer. They were reported in varying numbers each winter except that no records were obtained during the winters of 1934-36. I have obtained five November records, five December records, four records for January, and two records for February.

Rough-legged Hawk. *Buteo lagopus s.johannis*. While none of this species has been collected recently, it has been commonly seen here in the period covered by this paper. Twelve records are reported.

Feruginous Rough-leg. *Buteo regalis*. Bruce F. Stiles reports one Mar. 20, 1936, below New Lake in Woodbury County, Iowa.

Bald Eagle. *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* subsp. One bird of this species was shot by hunters in South Dakota across the river from Akron, Iowa, Jan. 5, 1937. This bird was brought to Akron where it was confiscated by W. W. Trusell, Iowa state conservation officer.

Marsh Hawk. *Circus hudsonius*. This species breeds here, and while they are fewer in the winter they are seen quite regularly. I have gathered six records for the November months, two for December, two for February, and none in January.

Prairie Falcon. *Falco mexicanus*. This species was seen five times by Wm. Youngworth during the winter of 1935-36 in Woodbury County. One lit on the roof of the post-office building in Sioux City, Dec. 19, 1932. G. K. Greening, the local meteorologist, caught it. It died the next day. The specimen was given to T. C. Stephens, but it was in too poor a condition to save.

Pigeon Hawk. *Falco columbarius* subsp. Wm. Youngworth reports this bird six times in eight years in Woodbury County. The writer has one record of Nov. 14, 1937, at New Lake, Woodbury County, Iowa.

Sparrow Hawk. *Falco sparverius* subsp. There are four winter records of this summer resident: Mrs. W. J. Armour saw one Dec. 3, 1933, in Woodbury County, S. Dak., a small flock, by Mrs. H. M. Bailey; Dec. 1, 1933, S. Dak. The writer collected one in Sioux County, Dec. 29, 1937, near Hawarden. Wm. Youngworth reports having seen them frequently in February, 1938.

Greater Prairie Chicken. *Tympanuchus cupido americanus*. These birds are seen in diminishing numbers almost every year. These are the sight records for the period of this paper: Nov. 4, 1932, Woodbury County, Iowa, Wm. Youngworth; Nov. 5, 1932, Woodbury County, Wm. Youngworth; Nov. 12, 1932, Union County, S. Dak., Wm. Youngworth; Nov. 19, 1933, Union County, S. Dak., a small flock, by Mrs. H. M. Bailey; Dec. 1, 1933, Woodbury County, three flocks totaling about 200 by Wm. Youngworth; Jan. 19, 1935, Dakota County, Nebr., about fifty birds by Mrs. W. J. Armour; Nov. 29, 1936, Woodbury County, Iowa, one bird, Bruce F. Stiles; Feb. 20, 1937, Union County, S. Dak., nineteen birds, by T. C. Stephens, Bruce R. Stiles, and the writer; Jan. 11, 1937, Union County, S. Dak., two birds, Bruce F. Stiles.

Bob-white. *Colinus virginianus*. Wm. Youngworth reported two small coveys in Union County, S. Dak. One covey was seen Dec. 27, 1931, and

the other Dec. 4, 1932. Mrs. W. J. Armour reported seeing a covey of about sixty in Dakota County, Nebr., Jan. 1, 1936. Several scattered records are reported. Bruce F. Stiles and T. C. Stephens saw five in Woodbury County, Iowa, near Salix, Dec. 25, 1936. W. W. Trusell told me that one small covey wintered at the north end of Brown's Lake, Woodbury County, 1937-38.

Coot. *Fulica americana*. One was seen by Mrs. W. J. Armour, Nov. 6, 1937, in Union County, S. Dak.

Killdeer. *Oxyechus vociferus*. Mrs. W. J. Armour and Mrs. H. M. Bailey have one record of four birds for Dakota County, Nebr., Nov. 18, 1933.

Wilson's Snipe. *Capella delicata*. Bruce F. Stiles shot two on Nov. 3, 1935, in Woodbury County.

Herring Gull. *Larus argentatus* subsp. Two were seen Feb. 14, 1934, by Mrs. W. J. Armour and Mrs. H. M. Bailey at McCook Lake, Union County, S. Dak.

Mourning Dove. *Zenaidura macroura*. A few stragglers of this species seem to stay with us late into the winter when they can get food. Wm. Youngworth has a sight record of one for Woodbury County, November 19, 1932. T. C. Stephens and the writer saw one Nov. 10, 1937, in Clay County, Iowa. The writer and Borden Buchanan of Sioux City have two other late records that are good. Dec. 14, 1937, near Luton in Woodbury County we saw about fifteen birds in a willow thicket and along a gravel road. They were rather wild and attempts to collect a specimen were unsuccessful. Later in the winter on Dec. 29, 1937, while on an exploration trip in Sioux County, Iowa, we saw two birds in Oak Grove State Park.

Screech Owl. *Otus asio* subsp. This small owl is rather uncommon here in winter. Wm. Youngworth records them frequently in the early thirties as does Mrs. W. J. Armour and Mrs. H. M. Bailey. Mrs. J. A. Dales trapped one in a Martin house-trap, and banded it on Jan. 25, 1932.

Great Horned Owl. *Bubo virginianus* subsp. Fortunately for the small game birds and animals of this territory this formerly common owl is becoming rather scarce. They have been reported irregularly over the period covered by this paper. Only one specimen taken has been preserved to the writer's knowledge. Bruce F. Stiles collected one on Nov. 15, 1936, in Woodbury County. The skin is deposited at Morningside College.

Long-eared Owl. *Asio wilsonianus*. This species is very rare. Mrs. W. J. Armour reported seeing one in Riverside Park, Sioux City, on Jan. 2, 1930.

Short-eared Owl. *Asio flammeus* subsp. This species seems to be very scarce here in winter. Only one record is known. Wm. Youngworth saw one Nov. 26, 1933, in Woodbury County.

Belted Kingfisher. *Megasceryle alcyon* subsp. One late winter record by Mrs. W. J. Armour on the Big Sioux River, Dec. 26, 1937. Wm. Youngworth (1931) recorded the species for Dec. 27, 1928, in Woodbury County.

Northern Flicker. *Colaptes auratus luteus*. This bird is reported quite common every year. A flock of about twenty-five wintered in a patch of dog-wood south of Sergeant Bluff, Woodbury County, Iowa, the past winter 1937-38. This flock probably fed on the abundant crop of dog-wood berries at that place, which also wintered flocks of Robins and Starlings.

Red-shafted Flicker. *Colaptes cafer collaris*. Two records are available

of this species; both of them by Wm. Youngworth; Jan. 9, 1930, and Jan. 7, 1934, in Woodbury County.

Red-bellied Woodpecker. *Centurus carolinus*. This fine bird is seen regularly every winter in this territory for the period of this paper. It is rather uncommon; only a few individuals being reported each season. There is at least one record for every winter. They were most common in 1932-33 in Riverside Park. Mrs. W. J. Armour furnishes twelve records of this species over the period of this paper.

Red-headed Woodpecker. *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*. This species seems to stay whenever there is sufficient food and a not too severe winter. The earliest winter record of this species the writer could find was by Mrs. H. M. Bailey for Jan. 15, 1921, in Riverside Park, Sioux City, Iowa. The species was not recorded again until the winter of 1928-29 when several stayed at Riverside Park all winter. Wm. Youngworth has a record of one for Dec. 26, 1932, in Woodbury County. They were common in Riverside Park the winter of 1936-37. One was reported at Brughier's Bridge in Riverside, Sioux City, Nov. 13, 1937. The writer has a late record of two for Woodbury County, Nov. 17, 1937.

Hairy Woodpecker. *Dryobates villosus* subsp. This is one of our regular winter birds, but it is not as common as its cousin the little Downey. Mrs. J. A. Dales banded two in her back yard in early March, 1935.

Downy Woodpecker. *Dryobates pubescens* subsp. This is one of our most common species. They are to be found almost any day one may venture to the woods.

Horned Lark. *Otocoris alpestris*. This species probably is common every winter. It arrives ahead of the snows and keeps moving to new and more open territory when conditions on the open ground make feeding difficult. The writer has collected over forty specimens in the past winter, 1937-38 in an effort to ascertain the subspecies.

Blue Jay. *Cyanocitta cristata*. These are seen in varying numbers every winter. While not as common as in summer yet their presence is not wanting almost any nice winter day in the woods.

Magpie. *Pica pica*. This species has appeared in varying numbers throughout the period covered by these papers. T. C. Stephens (1930) reported them to have made a general movement into the western half of the state in 1921. Wm. Youngworth (1931) reports them in Oct. 31, 1926. They then practically became unheard of until the fall of 1936 when another general movement of the birds into the state from the west attracted attention. They were reported in various numbers all fall and winter of 1936-37 and again in the fall of 1937. W. W. Trusell shot one along the Missouri River in Woodbury County and turned it over to the writer Nov., 1937.

Crow. *Corvus brachyrhynchos*. A very common, regular resident. The woods along the Missouri bottoms accommodate large flocks that roost there every winter.

Chickadee. *Penthestes atricapillus* subsp. A common winter resident. As far as the writer can determine no Long-tailed Chickadees listed by W. W. Bennett⁴ as "Probably more common than Black-capped" have been identified.

⁴ Birds of Sioux City, Iowa. By W. W. Bennett, 1931. Published by the Sioux City Bird Club, p. 12.

Tufted Titmouse. *Baeolophus bicolor*. There are no records for this species in this territory during the last eight years to the writer's knowledge.

White-breasted Nuthatch. *Sitta carolinensis* subsp. Rather common every year.

Red-breasted Nuthatch. *Sitta canadensis*. This species is rare. T. C. Stephens and Bruce F. Stiles record one seen at Riverside, Sioux City, Dec. 25, 1935. Mrs. J. A. Dales records two for the same place on Dec. 26, 1937.

Brown Creeper. *Certhia familiaris*. This species seems to become more and more rare. In the period from 1930 to 1934 they were seen rather often. The last four year period very few records have been made. The last winter 1937-38 only eight birds of this species have been seen by all observers. We can only speculate as to what has happened to this rather valuable woodland bird. They were seen in greatest numbers on Jan. 2, 1930, by Mrs. W. J. Armour. At that time she saw seven birds in Riverside Park, Sioux City.

Brown Thrasher. *Toxostoma rufum*. Two interesting records of this comparatively common summer resident have been made recently. W. R. Felton fed a bird of this species from late November, 1936, until early in the spring of 1937. It was first seen in Mr. Felton's back yard the last week in November. Several places to feed were provided and provisions made to keep the bird in the neighborhood if possible. The bird, according to Mr. Felton, "appeared to be a cripple, one wing slightly roughed and not over one-half of the feathers in its tail." It came to the feeding station even in coldest weather. Oatmeal seemed to be the most desirable food; however, it would eat at almost anything put out for it. It always ate as if it was exceedingly hungry. Mr. Felton mentioned a curious habit of the bird. "It would drive its bill into the ground when attempting to eat, it would stand stiff legged and strike like a hammer." It was not seen after March 5, 1937. W. J. Hayward has a sight record of one seen at the mouth of the Big Sioux River, Woodbury County, Iowa, Dec. 13, 1936. This bird also seemed to have been injured; however, when it was seen it was feeding on the ground in a very vigorous manner.

Robin. *Turdus migratorius* subsp. Robins stay in this territory if they can get food and the weather does not get too severe. Numerous records are to be had for the comparatively mild winters of 1929-30 and 1933-34. The past winter 1937-38 has been an exceedingly favorable one. As many as 200 birds of this species were estimated in a dog-wood patch south of Sergeant Bluff in Woodbury County by Bruce F. Stiles and State Conservation Officer, W. W. Trusell, on Dec. 28, 1937. The writer collected two specimens from this flock on Dec. 31, 1937.

Bluebird. *Sialia sialis* subsp. Like the Robin this species remains where food is available if the winter is not too severe. Mrs. W. J. Armour reports them frequently for January and February, 1930, and twice in February, 1933, in Woodbury County. A number of them wintered with the Robins and Flickers this past winter 1937-38, in a dog-wood patch south of Sergeant Bluff in Woodbury County. The writer has one taken there the first week in January. This specimen had its stomach full of dog-wood **berries**.

Golden-crowned Kinglet. *Regulus satrapa*. This species is almost entirely

absent during the winter months. Mrs. J. A. Dales has a sight record of two for Woodbury County on Dec. 26, 1937. These were seen in Riverside Park, Sioux City, while out with the Sioux City Bird Club. Mrs. W. J. Armour saw two on Jan. 1, 1938, at the same place. These probably were the same pair observed by Mrs. Dales several days before.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet. *Corthylio calendula*. Mrs. W. J. Armour has one record of this species. Nov. 1, 1933, at her home in Sioux City. It probably could not be properly called a winter bird; it was more than likely a straggling migrant.

Bohemian Waxwing. *Bombycilla garrula* subsp. This species has been unrecorded for several years. T. C. Stephens has a record of thirty-five seen on the Morningside College Campus, Sioux City, March 14, 1931, and again on March 18, 1932, at the same place. Mrs. W. J. Armour and Mrs. H. M. Bailey saw thirty birds Jan. 4, 1931, in Dakota County, Nebr. The birds seen on the College Campus were feeding on what is probably high-bush cranberries.

Cedar Waxwing. *Bombycilla cedrorum*. Mrs. W. J. Armour has one record, Feb. 12, 1930, in Woodbury County, and Mrs. H. M. Bailey recorded forty seen Dec. 21, 1930, in Riverside Park, Sioux City. They are usually quite numerous here the next month.

Northern Shrike. *Lanius borealis* subsp. Wm. Youngworth made a skin of one collected Nov. 22, 1935, in Plymouth County, Iowa, Jan. 9, 1934. Mrs. H. M. Bailey has a sight record of one in Riverside Park, Sioux City, for Dec. 21, 1930.

Migrant Shrike. *Lanius ludovicianus* subsp. The writer collected one in Woodbury County, Iowa, Nov. 9, 1937.

Starling. *Sturnus vulgaris*. This introduced species was observed here first in Woodbury County on Oct. 1, 1933, by Wm. Youngworth. They are becoming more and more numerous and are now reported in considerable numbers in eastern Nebraska and eastern South Dakota. Several observers estimated as many as 500 birds in a dog-wood patch south of Sergeant Bluff in Woodbury County this past winter, 1937-38. These birds wintered at this place. The writer saw the flock there no less than four times.

Western Meadowlark. *Sturnella neglecta*. In previous papers of this series a few winter records of Meadowlarks are included. This collection of notes is not without them. One was reported for Woodbury County by W. W. Trusell, Jan. 10, 1937. The writer saw two in Plymouth County, Dec. 14, 1937. Wm. Youngworth told me that one stayed all winter in the vicinity of a coal yard in Sioux City, 1937-38.

Red-wing Blackbird. *Agelaius phoeniceus* subsp. These birds are usually very abundant in early November. As many as 1,000 were seen in one place by the Sioux City Bird Club in Woodbury County, Nov. 7, 1937. Wm. Youngworth has a sight record of one for Jan. 3, 1932, in Woodbury County.

Rusty Blackbird. *Euphagus carolinus*. Only two records are available for this species, but the writer is inclined to believe that they are more common than the records indicate. The records available are Nov. 12, 1932, by Wm. Youngworth and Nov. 19, 1933, by Mrs. W. J. Armour and Mrs. H. M. Bailey. Both records are for Woodbury County, Iowa.

Bronzed Grackle. *Quiscalus quiscula* subsp. This species is still here in early November, but most of them disappear by the middle of the month. However, Mrs. W. J. Armour reports having seen a hundred Dec. 27, 1936, on a ride to McCook Lake, Dakota County, Nebr., from Sioux City. Her notes did not say which side of the Big Sioux River they were on.

Cardinal. *Richmondia cardinalis* subsp. Common all year. A number can always be found in Cardinal Glen near Riverside Park, Sioux City.

Purple Finch. *Carpodacus purpureus* subsp. This species has been rare in the winter months. Mrs. W. J. Armour saw one Jan. 4, 1931, at Blyburg Lake, Union County, S. Dak.

Redpoll. *Acanthis linaria* subsp. Mrs. W. J. Armour and Mrs. H. M. Bailey saw birds of this species frequently in January and February in 1930, in Grandview Park, Sioux City. Wm. Youngworth saw a flock January 23, 1934, in Woodbury County. They can be considered rare.

Pine Siskin. *Spinus pinus*. A rather uncommon winter visitor, but coming very early in the spring. Mrs. J. A. Dales banded one in Sioux City, Jan. 15, 1938. Another was seen at the same place Feb. 27, 1938.

Goldfinch. *Spinus tristis* subsp. A rather common winter resident. They gather in flocks and feed on the buds of the trees in the wooded areas of this territory.

Arctic Towhee. *Pipilo maculatus arcticus*. Only one record is available for this species. T. C. Stephens and Bruce F. Stiles saw one in Woodbury County, Jan. 1, 1938. Mr. Stiles went back later to locate the bird with the intention of collecting it, but it could not be found.

Slate Colored Junco. *Junco hyemalis* subsp. One of our most common winter visitors. The only species probably more numerous is the Crow and they are here all year.

Tree Sparrow. *Spizella arborea* subsp. A very common winter resident.

Harris Sparrow. *Zonotrichia querula*. November records of this species are rather common. Mrs. J. A. Dales has banded a number in November in her back yard in Sioux City. The writer collected one specimen Nov. 5, 1937, in Woodbury County. The latest record is by T. C. Stephens for Dec. 27, 1933. Twelve birds were seen on this occasion, "all in winter plumage and seen under favorable conditions" in South Ravine, Woodbury County, Iowa.

White-throated Sparrow. *Zonotrichia albicollis*. Mrs. W. J. Armour has one record of a bird seen, "very distinctly," in McCook Woods, Union County, S. Dak., Nov. 12, 1936.

Fox Sparrow. *Passerella iliaca* Mrs. W. J. Armour reports two for Union County, S. Dak., which were seen on Nov. 6, 1937. Wm. Youngworth reported one for Nov. 5, 1928.

Song Sparrow. *Melospiza melodia* subsp. This species is very rare here in winter although quite common every spring and fall. Mrs. W. J. Armour saw five Nov. 12, 1936, in Union County, S. Dak. One individual of this species was seen by T. C. Stephens and Bruce F. Stiles at Riverside, Woodbury County, Iowa, Dec. 25, 1936. The writer has a Nov. 5, 1937, record of one.

Longspurs. *Calcarius lapponicus* subsp. Not many records of this species could be found, but that is probably no indication of their frequency or

numbers. They are very numerous at certain times and are almost always to be found in company with the Horned Larks. Of most importance in connection with this species is the account of the wholesale death of thousands of these birds in the towns north and east of Sioux City, on the night of Jan. 5, 1938. The birds apparently were on a general movement and were flying at night, probably, in search of a better feeding ground when they were overtaken by a snow storm. They seemed to be near exhaustion when the sudden change of weather drove them to earth. In the dark they were attracted to the bright lights of the various towns: Merville, Kingsley, Remsen, and Hawarden attracted the greatest numbers. Shortly after landing in the streets of the towns or approximately at the same time snow began to fall and they became excited. Thousands of them killed themselves by flying into buildings, wires, lights, and other obstructions. T. C. Stephens, W. W. Trusell, Bruce F. Stiles, and the writer with the help of others gathered up over 800 of the birds. They are preserved in cold storage. The birds picked up probably are all *lapponicus*, but the determination of the subspecies has not been attempted.

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