Winter Bird Records of Chickasaw and Adjacent Counties

Chas. J. Spiker
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ADJACENT COUNTIES

CHAS. J. SPIKER

The data here given were obtained between October, 1920, and
January, 1925, and concern only the birds present during the win­
ter months. For the most part, the author makes little attempt
to designate subspecies, thinking this a difficult matter to get from
field observation, and he prefers to hold rather closely to binomial
nomenclature. All records for which no county is given are from
Chickasaw County, and in only a few instances are any data given
for territory not directly adjoining Chickasaw County, those be­
ing for Delaware County at the Devil's Backbone State Park. I
visited this park on December 23, 1923, and found some forms
there which I thought should be included in this list, being in the
same general region.

The winters during which these observations were made have
been ordinary northeast Iowa winters, with the exception of the
last two. The winter of 1923-24 was exceptionally mild and
warm up to the first of January, which will account for some of
the birds found in the Devil's Backbone Park at Christmas time.
Streams had not yet frozen over and there had been no snow.
The past winter, 1924-25, was unusually severe.

The writer was in the region covered by this paper the whole
of the winters of 1920-21 and 1921-22, and since that time only
for about ten days each during the Christmas and Easter holiday
periods.

The following list contains forty-one named forms:

Mallard — *Anas platyrhynchos*. Five birds observed December
23, 1923, on the little brook flowing through Devil's Backbone
Park.

Canada Goose — *Branta canadensis*. A flock of thirty-five flew
over Devil's Backbone Park, December 23, 1923.

Wilson's Snipe — *Gallinago delicata*. Observed among mound
springs two miles north of New Hampton, November 15, 1920,
November 13, 1921, and December 25, 1922. One individual seen
at each time.

Bob-white — *Colinus virginianus*. Fairly common resident,
seeming most numerous in the western part of the county.
Prairie Chicken — *Tympanuchus americanus*. Winter resident, varying in abundance each year. A flock of fifty spent the past winter (1924-25) in a cornfield a mile north of New Hampton. I have one summer record, an individual seen August 20, 1922, between Calmar and Decorah, Winneshiek County.

Ring-necked Pheasant — *Phasianus torquatus*. These birds, introduced about eight years ago, are becoming numerous all through this region.

Marsh Hawk — *Circus hudsonius*. Resident the year round, but less common in winter.

Sharp-shinned Hawk — *Accipiter velox*. One winter record, February 15, 1921.

Cooper's Hawk — *Accipiter cooperi*. One late fall record, November 21, 1920.

Red-tailed Hawk — *Buteo borealis*. Resident the year round, most common along the Wapsipinicon and Little Cedar rivers.

Broad-winged Hawk — *Buteo platypterus*. Seen at Devil's Backbone Park, December 23, 1923.

Short-eared Owl — *Asio flammeus*. Along West Fork of the Wapsipinicon River, December 26, 1921. Also found at Sherman Nurseries, Charles City, January 1, 1922. On March 29, 1923, the writer found a flock of eight in a clump of evergreens in Grace-lawn Cemetery, New Hampton.

Barred Owl — *Strix varia*. Two winter records, December 5, 1920, and January 1, 1923.

Screech Owl — *Otus asio*. Common resident the year round, the gray phase apparently the more common.

Horned Owl — *Bubo virginianus*. Rare resident. Occasionally seen in Bigelow's Woods near New Hampton.

Snowy Owl — *Nyctea nyctea*. One taken November 15, 1920, by F. J. Bongartz near Charles City, Floyd County.

Belted Kingfisher — *Ceryle alcyon*. An individual was found February 1, 1922, along the Little Cedar River near the village of Chickasaw; one December 23, 1923, in Devil’s Backbone Park; one December 25, 1923, along the Wapsipinicon River in Bremer County. C. D. Gleim of Arlington, Fayette County, tells me of one that spent most of the winter of 1920-21 along Brush Creek, near Arlington.

Hairy Woodpecker — *Dryobates villosus*. Common resident the year round.

Downy Woodpecker — *Dryobates pubescens medianus*. Common resident the year round.
Red-headed Woodpecker — Melanerpes erythrocephalus. One seen at North Pond near New Hampton, January 1, 1924, and another two miles west of New Hampton on December 26, 1924.

Red-bellied Woodpecker — Centurus carolinus. A rather rare bird for this region although occasionally seen along the Wapsipinicon River in Bremer County. I have but one record for Chickasaw County, December 23, 1924.

Flicker — Colaptes auratus. Two on December 23, 1923, in Devil’s Backbone Park.

Prairie Horned Lark — Otocoris alpestris praticola. Resident the year round. On February 26, 1922, and while there was yet some snow in sheltered spots, I found a nest containing one egg.

Blue Jay — Cyanocitta cristata. A common resident the year round.

Crow — Corvus brachyrhynchos. A common resident the year round.

Evening Grosbeak — Hesperiphona vespertina. On January 10, 1922, a flock of about a dozen of these birds was discovered in the C. G. Bigelow yard, New Hampton, feeding on the seeds of the box-elders. They remained in the town for about two weeks, and during their stay were always to be found where the winged seeds were left clinging to the box-elders. At this same time, a flock appeared in Osage, Mitchell County.

Purple Finch — Carpodacus purpureus. An occasional winter visitor. Dates, October 1, 1921, Bremer County; December 23, 1923, Devil’s Backbone Park; and December 27, 1923, Chickasaw County.

Crossbill — Loxia curvirostra minor. December 25 and 31, 1922. These are the first dates, but the birds remained in considerable numbers in this region until about the first of March, 1923.

Redpoll — Acanthis linaria. A bird rather erratic in its movements, being very common for a winter, and then not seen again for several years in any considerable numbers. It was very common during the winter of 1920-21, and was seen again in some numbers the winter following. Latest date of spring departure, March 14, 1922.

Goldfinch — Astragalinus tristis. Common resident the year round.

Pine Finch — Spinus pinus. One individual with a flock of goldfinches and purple finches in Devil’s Backbone Park, December 23, 1923.
Tree Sparrow — *Spizella monticola*. Common winter resident. Earliest date of fall arrival, October 30, 1921; latest date of spring departure, April 18, 1921.

Slate-colored Junco — *Junco hyemalis*. Common winter resident. Earliest date of fall arrival, October 1, 1920, same date 1921; latest date of spring departure, May 3, 1921.

Cardinal — *Cardinalis cardinalis*. Rare resident. The only place I know the birds are found the year round is along the Little Cedar River. Occasional individuals are found in Bigelow’s Woods, northeast of New Hampton.

Bohemian Waxwing — *Bombycilla garrula*. A flock of thirty-two observed March 25, 1923, one mile north of New Hampton. During the month of January, 1922, a flock of about fifteen spent a fortnight in the town of New Hampton at the same time that the Evening Grosbeaks were there.

Northern Shrike — *Lanius borealis*. I saw one on October 22, 1921, along the Wapsipinicon River six miles southwest of New Hampton, and on March 25, 1922, saw one along the Little Cedar River at Chickasaw.

Brown Creeper — *Certhia familiaris americana*. Common winter resident. Earliest date of fall arrival, September 28, 1921; latest date of spring departure, April 17, 1921.

White-breasted Nuthatch — *Sitta carolinensis*. Common resident, much more common in winter than in summer.

Red-breasted Nuthatch — *Sitta canadensis*. Rare winter visitor. I saw one feeding at suet in the C. D. Gleim yard in Arlington, Fayette County, November 6, 1921.

Chickadee — *Penthestes atricapillus*. Common resident, more abundant in winter.

Golden-crowned Kinglet — *Regulus satrapa*. Saw a flock of six along the East Fork of the Wapsipinicon on December 31, 1922; also a flock of five on December 23, 1923, in Devil’s Backbone Park.

NEW HAMPTON, IOWA