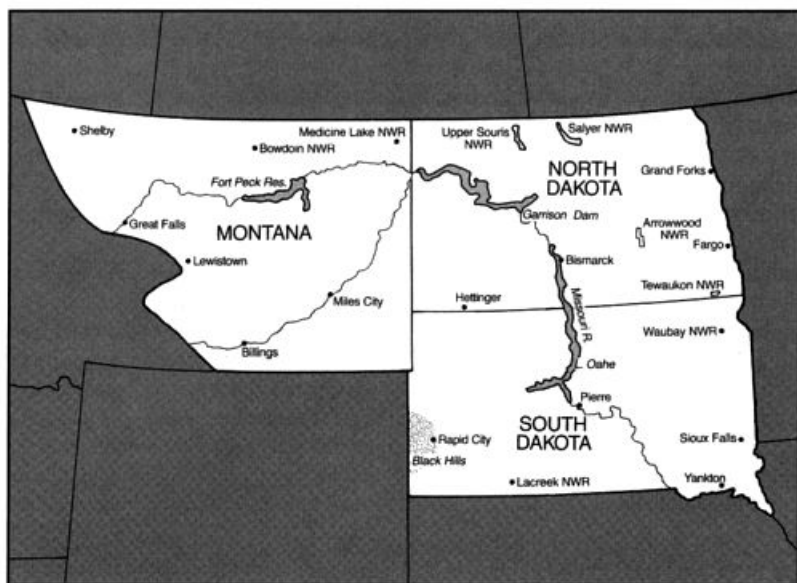


Northern Great Plains



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The first three months of the season were mild and dry over most of the Region. The huge Jasper fire burned thousands of acres in the southern Black Hills of South Dakota in late August. November brought record precipitation and snows in many areas, particularly in northwestern North Dakota and northeastern Montana. An early November blizzard grounded many Lesser Scaup in the Westby, Montana area, and some people were without power for three weeks in northeastern Montana. Many waterfowl flew over the region in early November. With the early mild weather, passerine migration was unspectacular, and warbler numbers were low in many areas. Hawk numbers were notable according to most observers. It was a good season for rarities in South Dakota.

Loons Through Falcons

A **Red-throated Loon** 28 Oct at Angostura Res., *Fall River*, provided the 5th record for South Dakota (†TJ). The only Pacific Loon report came from Eureka Res., MT, the last week of Oct (JN). A good peak of 1500 Western Grebes was noted 14 Oct at

Angostura Res., SD (TJ). A Green Heron was nw. of its usual North Dakota haunts at Sawyer, *Ward*, 16 Sep (REM). Doubling the previous high for the state, 50+ White-faced Ibis were in *Kidder*, ND, in Sep (HD).

Greater White-fronted Geese peaked at 26,000 on Medicine L. N.W.R., MT, 1 Nov (LK, DN). Casual in North Dakota, a Trumpeter Swan was documented 29 Oct at McKenzie Slough, *Burleigh* (CDE, JPL, HCT). A **Eurasian Wigeon** shot 31 Oct in *Brown* furnished the 3rd record for South Dakota (†*fide* DAT). Casual at Medicine L., an American Black Duck was banded 2 Aug (LK); 10 were reported from seven North Dakota counties.

Late fall Cooper's Hawk reports continue to increase in North Dakota and Montana, and Northern Goshawks staged a good movement in Oct/Nov. Swainson's Hawks peaked at 800–1000 over *Hutchinson*, SD, 30 Sep (SK) and 300 were in *Day*, SD, 1 Oct (DRS). A late Ferruginous Hawk was still present at the end of the period sw. of Malta, MT (JG). A first for South Dakota, and raising some debate about origins, an unbanded **Crested Caracara** was seen by many at LaCreek N.W.R. 20 Nov+ (†MA). Eleven Merlins were seen in the course of a 13-day survey of e. Montana in Aug (JC). A strong movement of Gyrfalcons was noted, with 13 reports, most in Nov.

Grouse Through Doves

Numbers of gallinaceous birds were up this fall, with Gray Partridge seemingly on the way to recovery, and Ring-necked Pheasant and Sharp-tailed Grouse reported as abundant in many w. areas of the region. Two Sage Grouse were east of their usual range in *Hettinger*, ND, 2 Aug (LI). A Whooping Crane was early 30 Aug in *Mountrail*, ND (BM).

The latest for the state by 12 days, a Willet was in *Stutsman*, ND, 28 Oct. (CDE, HCT) Casual in South Dakota, a Red Knot was documented in *Hughes* 10–15 Sep (†KM, RDO, DB). Second latest on record for North Dakota, a Dunlin was in *Grand Forks* 14 Nov (EEF). A Buff-breasted Sandpiper 13 Sep at Bowdoin N.W.R. provided the 9th record for Montana (†DP). North Dakota's latest ever was noted in *Grand Forks* 29 Oct (EEF). If accepted, a **Ruff** 7 Sep in *Hughes* would furnish the 3rd South Dakota record (†RDO). A Red Phalarope 4 Oct in *Adams* provided the 13th record for North Dakota (†DAG, CG).

An adult **Mew Gull** at Garrison Dam, ND, 3–4 Nov furnished the 7th record for the state and 5th at the dam (†REM). A Thayer's Gull was early in *Stanley*, SD, 1 Oct (TJ, JSP, RFS), and a new high of 15 was tallied at Garrison Dam, ND, 10 Nov (DNS). Accidental away from the Missouri R. system in the Dakotas, a Black-legged Kittiwake was in *Fall River*, SD, 14–22 Oct (†TJ).

Eurasian Collared-Doves continued at Dickinson, ND, through the period, and the state's 9th was recorded at Mayville, with adults feeding begging young for the first state breeding confirmation (†KE, RMK). North Dakota's first **White-winged Dove** was photographed and seen by many at Bismarck 30 Sep–7 Oct (†CDE ph.).

Owls Through Thrushes

Thirty-six Burrowing Owls at Watford City, ND, 19–20 Aug was an encouraging number for this declining species (REM); a late individual was sw. of Malta, MT, 26 Oct (JG). Fairly regular in South Dakota, three Rufous Hummingbirds were in *Custer* and *Edwards* 6–27 Aug (KH, MZ). A *Selasphorus* hummingbird was videotaped in *Trail*, ND, 16–18 Sep (†SW). There is one previous Rufous record for the state. Lewis's Woodpeckers were unusually numerous at the n. edge of the Black Hills Thirty-five were tallied 14 Oct on a trip in *Meade*, *Lawrence*, and *Butte*, SD (NHBC).

Pending review, a **Hammond's Flycatcher** documented 11 Sep in *Pennington* would furnish a first record for South Dakota (†TJ). Casual in South Dakota, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in *Stanley* 14 Oct provided about the 10th record for the state (†DB). Another casual South Dakota species, a **White-eyed Vireo** was documented 21 Oct in *Hughes* (†RFS, JSP). Pinyon Jays at the n. edge of their range included one in s. *Valley*, MT, 21 Aug (JC), and 16 in *Harding*, SD, 30 Sep (REP). Accidental in South Dakota in recent decades, a Common Raven was noted in *Meade* 11 Nov (†JT, MJ).

A rare resident in the Black Hills, Pygmy Nuthatches were noted 11 Aug in *Custer* (SS), and 24–30 Nov in *Pennington*, SD (TBW). Casual in South Dakota and quite far w., a Carolina Wren was documented in *Custer* 22–23 Aug (†DS). Unusual in w. South Dakota, two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were in Roby Canyon, *Custer*, 22 Aug (DS). The thrush migration in North Dakota and e. Montana was notably unspectacular this fall. A Wood Thrush was late in *Grand Forks*, ND, 24 Oct (DOL).

Warblers Through Tanagers

Late in South Dakota, a Tennessee Warbler was banded 28 Oct in *Brown* (DAT). Also late were Orange-crowned Warblers in *Fargo*, ND, 31 Oct (DPW), and an individual banded the same day in *Brown*, SD (DAT). At least 10 Virginia's Warblers were still in *Custer*, SD, 22 Aug (DS). A Chestnut-sided Warbler was far to the w. in *Pennington*, SD, 15 Sep (JLB). It was a stellar fall for **Townsend's Warblers**, with North Dakota's 6th documented in *Adams* 16 Sep (†CDE, HCT, DAG, CG). In South Dakota the species was documented in *Custer* 22 Aug (†DS), and in *Pennington* 29 Aug (†TBW). These sightings were the 2nd and 3rd for the state.

A Summer Tanager photographed in *Brown*, SD, 18 Nov provided the 3rd fall record for the state and the latest (ph. DAT). The 11th record for Montana, a male Scarlet Tanager was at Bowdoin N.W.R. 10 Aug (†MH). Casual in North Dakota, a Western Tanager was in *Adams* 10 Sep (DAG, CG).

Sparrows Through Finches

Late individuals of numerous sparrow species were noted. Second latest for North Dakota, a Clay-colored Sparrow was in *Bismarck* 29 Oct (CDE). Also late on 29 Oct at *Bismarck* was a Field Sparrow (JPL). Tardy Savannah Sparrows 18 Nov were at *Fargo*, ND (DPW), and in *Brookings*, SD (KIE). Seldom reported in Oct in North Dakota, a Grasshopper

Sparrow was in *Burleigh* 1 Oct (DNS). A Sooty Fox Sparrow was documented in *Grand Forks*, ND, 23 Sep (†EEF). There is one previous record for this form. A lingering Swamp Sparrow was at *Fargo*, ND, 23 Nov (DPW). A White-winged Junco was far e. in *Charles Mix*, SD, 4 Nov (†DS, ETL). The second earliest for North Dakota, two Smith's Longspurs were in *Ward* 16 Sep (REM).

A peak of 15,000 Brewer's Blackbirds was estimated in *Burleigh*, ND, 1 Oct (DNS). A Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch was a little e. of normal haunts in *Stark*, ND, 7 Nov (JPL); five more reports came from Black Hills, SD, counties. A few scattered Red Crossbill sightings came from the Dakotas, and one White-winged Crossbill report was received from North Dakota. Common Redpolls were almost non-existent. A rare breeder in the Black Hills, Evening Grosbeaks were feeding young in *Pennington*, SD, 5 Aug (TBW).

Corrigendum

Delete the Northern Wheatear reported for *Sweetgrass*, MT (*N. Am. Birds* 54:68).

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