

camera and binocular (which I wish now I would have anyway) for fear that the moisture would ruin the film and since the fog was so close, I don't think a person could focus properly anyhow. The area around their place is perfect Red-tailed country with its open fields and scattered woods. The thought of actually sighting a Swainson's Hawk had crossed my mind a great deal lately because I had seen many Red-taileds migrating through, over a hundred of them just the day before. I could only identify about half as being Red-taileds, the rest as unknown buteos. Though I really didn't expect to see a Swainson's today, the thought was still there in the back of my mind. The three of us were walking along quietly, so not to startle any bird in the area; nothing! On the way back we were... well... pretty discouraged; all we had seen were a couple of House Sparrows, so unless you're some kind of nut, you'll have to agree that this was not the sort of outing that dreams are made of! Then through the fog (it was like those fantastic birding experiences "Big-shot" birders have, the kind you wish you would have — only better) we saw a perched hawk. My heart pounded with excitement, the adrenalin flowed. Could it be? I mean... ah... a... no it couldn't be, could it? We crept closer to get a better look through the fog. Obviously it hadn't detected our presence yet. Then, only a few feet away, it stood in all its

glory, every single detail of the bird's feathers was now quite clear, an adult Swainson's Hawk. It had a ruffled, wild, windblown look, even though there was no wind. Its head was turned away from us, but you could plainly see the dark brown breast patch so typical of the Swainson's; a picture right out of a field guide. "Don't go!" I thought; I wondered if this ever happened to Janssen or Eckert. Then it slowly turned its head to look directly at us; a chill ran down my back and it wasn't the fog. With its head in view, it was easy to see the white patch above the bill and on the throat. Then with one more look around and wave of a wing, it disappeared into the fog, just as mysteriously as it had greeted us. But before it was out of sight, it displayed itself in flight. You know, I couldn't sleep a wink that night. All I kept thinking — could this be just an odd coincidence that seeing the Swainson's happened to fall on Easter, or was it something more than that? Whatever the answer, I can't wait until Christmas — imagine the possibilities!
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Editors Note: This was not only an unusual observation for Paul Hetland, but it also represents the earliest spring migration date for the northern half of the state and is one of the few records for Todd County.

Proceedings of the Minnesota Ornithological Records Committee

Kim R. Eckert

The following records were voted on, January-June 1989, and found to be Acceptable:

- House Finch, 6/28-12/13/88, Faribault, Rice Co. (vote 7-0).
- Iceland Gull, 12/18-23/88, St. Paul, Ramsey Co. (vote 7-0).
- Black-legged Kittiwake, 12/3-5/88, Black Dog L., Dakota Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 61:45-46).
- Indigo Bunting, 11/26-27/88, near Buf-

- falo, Wright Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 61:43).
- Lesser Black-backed Gull, 11/30-12/9/88, Black Dog L., Dakota Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 61:45).
- Ross' Goose, 11/22/88, Rochester, Olmsted Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 61:50).
- Great Black-backed Gull, 12/2-11/88, Black Dog L., Dakota Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 61:39).
- Black-headed Grosbeak, 11/18-26/88, Ait-

kin, Aitkin Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:47-48).
—Iceland Gull, 12/5/88, Black Dog L., Dakota Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:48-49).
—House Finch, 12/28/88-1/15/89, Fergus Falls, Otter Tail Co. (vote 7-0).
—Ross' Goose, 4/2/89, Carey L., Cottonwood Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:89-90).
—Kentucky Warbler, 5/28/88, Nerstrand Woods S.P., Rice Co. (vote 7-0).
—Kentucky Warbler, 8/20/88, Lebanon Hills Park, Dakota Co. (vote 5-2).
—Brambling, 12/26/88-4/6/89, East Grand Forks, Polk Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:56-58).
—Boreal Owl, 2/18/89, Minneapolis, Hennepin Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:85-87).
—Ross' Goose, 3/30-31/89, near Spring Valley, Fillmore Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:88-89).
—Black-legged Kittiwake, 4/20/89, Bemidji, Beltrami Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:84-85).
—Ross' Goose, 4/17/89, L. Byllesby, Goodhue/Dakota Co. (vote 6-1; **The Loon** 61:88).
—Ross' Goose, 4/30/89, Rice Lake S.P., Steele-Dodge Co. (vote 7-0).
—Tricolored Heron, 5/4-7/89, Bloomington, Hennepin Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:82).
—Lesser Black-backed Gull, 5/6/89, near Minnesota City, Winona Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:83-84).
—Black-headed Grosbeak, 5/6/89, O.L. Kipp S.P., Winona Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:84).
—Western Tanager, 5/7-11/89, Rochester, Olmsted Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:91).
—Prairie Warbler, 5/13/89, Elm Creek Park Reserve, Hennepin Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:82-83).
—Laughing Gull, 5/27/89, Whitwater WMA, Winona-Wabasha Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:152-153).
—Laughing Gull, 5/28/89, Duluth, St. Louis Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:93).
—House Finch, 5/12/89, Duluth, St. Louis Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:151).
—Ross' Goose, 5/20-25/89, Thief Lake WMA, Marshall Co. (vote 7-0).
—White-eyed Vireo, 5/13/89, near Rochester, Olmsted Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:94).
—Ferruginous Hawk, 5/10/89, near Eden, Dodge Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:92).
—Lazuli Bunting, 5/14/89, near Detroit

Lakes, Becker Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:141).
—Clark's Grebe, 5/22/89, Moorhead, Clay Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:150-151).
—White-eyed Vireo, 5/28/89, near Moorhead, Clay Co. (vote 7-0; **The Loon** 61:148-149).

The following records were voted on January-June 1989, and found to be Unacceptable:
—Osprey, 12/17/88, near Lanesboro, Fillmore Co. (vote 0-7). The sketchy description gave no definite or useful field marks, with the identification based almost entirely on shape, but other raptors can have an Osprey-like shape at times. Also the observer reported he had only limited experience, and he was not using binoculars at the time. The consensus was that the bird was probably an immature Bald Eagle.

—Common Nighthawk, 11/2/88, White Earth L., Becker Co. (vote 3-4). The identification was based primarily on the "peent" vocalizations of the bird, but it is possible other calls of other species could also be described in the same way; more importantly, nighthawks apparently only give their "peent" call during summer while on their breeding territory, not in late fall. Also the plumage description was too sketchy for such an unusual record, with a "white bar" on the wing and a "white neck" being the only content of the description.

—Blue Grosbeak, 5/22/88, Murphy-Hanrehan Park, Scott Co. (vote 1-6). This previously Acceptable record was reconsidered, and the majority voted not to accept because of the brief description of the reported pair. The female was only described as "brown with a bit of rust on wings;" and the male's entire description was "medium sized blue bird with grosbeak bill, rusty wing bars," and it was felt this description could also fit a second-year male Indigo Bunting.

—Ferruginous Hawk, 1/7/89, La Moille, Winona Co. (vote 2-5). The observation was made somewhat casually, with the observer having claimed to have seen this species more than once before in Winona. Only one useful mark — the "dark V of the legs" — was given, but this was mentioned only in passing with more emphasis given to other features shared by other Buteos, especially Krider's-type Red-taileds. (Also, when very pale or albinistic Red-taileds fly overhead, the darkest part of their underparts is their tarsi; the

feathering on the tarsus is dark on a Ferruginous, and should be stated as such). Also, two individuals were reported, which tends to make the record less credible.

—Wood Stork, 6/16/87, Hassel L., Swift Co. (vote 2-8). All ten members vote in the case of potential first state records. Although it was agreed a Wood Stork may actually have been seen, the description was too vague and incomplete for a first state record. The identification was based on its "dark neck and head and a dirty-yellow slightly decurved bill," and a "short black tail." However, the legs and wings were not described at all, and it was unclear how the tail could have been visible under the folded wings. It was also

possible the bird could have just been a pelican, which sometimes has some duskiness on the head and yellowish bill.

—Red-necked Phalarope, 4/23/89, Lake Maria, Carver Co. (vote 1-6). The sketchy description did not say anything diagnostic about the plumage, and the identification was based entirely on this phalarope's smaller size in comparison with adjacent Pectoral Sandpipers. However, since Wilson's Phalarope can also be smaller than a Pectoral, it was felt the bird was more likely a Wilson's, which is much more likely in April than a Red-necked. 8255 Congdon Blvd., Duluth, MN 55804.



BOOK REVIEWS

SOUTH AMERICAN BIRDS, A PHOTOGRAPHIC GUIDE TO IDENTIFICATION: by John S. Dunning. Harwood Books, Newton Square, Pennsylvania. 1987. 351 pp., 1,400+ color photographs. \$47.50; paper \$35.00.

This book "describes all the birds likely to be seen in interior South America including the fresh water lakes." It is a massive undertaking. Over 2,700 species are described, and color photographs are included illustrating 1,352 of them. The vast majority of these often striking photographs were taken by the author, making the work a memorial to one man's skill, persistence, and commitment to quality. Dunning travelled throughout South America for over 25 years capturing and photographing living birds with his wife Harriet; most of the last five years of his life were spent in the field photographing the inland water birds of the continent. The organization, production and informational content

of this book have been improved over the author's previous work (*South American land birds*, 1982, same publisher), and the inland waterbirds have been added. The majority of the photographs were taken in a small, portable, cloth "studio" (details of which are included, p. 315), where the author had ultimate control over the lighting. The results are good-to-excellent, nearly shadowless images that, although small (approximately 3.5x4 cm), are reproduced quite well on the whole. The guide is a foremost one for birdwatchers, and is organized to this end. Color images are interspersed with the text, so that range maps, descriptions, and images occur **together**, with two columns of species accounts per page. Descriptions of species without an accompanying photograph frequently refer the reader to a photograph for comparison. Range maps appear quite good; although I haven't the expertise to critique their accuracy, they were prepared by Dr. Robert Ridgley, a collaborator on the work.