

THE 1937 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS IN IOWA

We present herewith the 1937 Christmas bird census in Iowa. If our readers like the census reports in this tabulated form, we shall no doubt make it an annual feature in our magazine. We do not have space to comment on the absence or presence of various species; but a careful study of the table will reveal many interesting points—the scarcity of the Bob-white, the small numbers of Horned Larks (which became very common in January), the appearance of the Magpie, and the records of Bluebirds, Robins and Meadowlarks due to rather mild weather conditions. Meadowlarks apparently have wintered in Iowa in greater numbers than for several years, judging from many reports. The Starling is on all the lists; from the numbers reported it is increasing rapidly.

Some observers included the English Sparrow and others did not. In order to make the table uniform we decided to omit this species, which is highly domesticated and quite unworthy of a place on a list of wild birds. If we were to include the English Sparrow, it seems we should also list the Rock (Domestic) Dove.

We are indebted to 'Bird-Lore' for five of the Iowa lists (pp. 58-59 in the February, 1938, issue). We like 'Bird-Lore's' practice of including photographs of the census-takers. So far, likenesses of Mrs. Toni Wendelburg, Walter Rosen, Fred Pierce, Dr. T. C. Stephens, M. L. Jones and Miss LaMar (all members of our Union) have appeared in 'Bird-Lore'.

Data on place, time, weather and the observers who reported are given below.

BACKBONE STATE PARK (Delaware Co.): Dec. 20; 8:30 a. m. to 3:30 p. m. Cloudy most of the day, with occasional glimpses of the sun, snow in the air at times; about 10 in. snow, partially ice-encrusted, on the ground with fair sized drifts; temp. 19° at start, same at return; 4 miles on foot in the park, and an auto ride from Winthrop to the park. Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Jones, Paul A. Pierce, F. J. Pierce. ('Bird-Lore')

DES MOINES: Dec. 23; 8 a. m. to 5 p. m. Clear in a. m., cloudy in p. m.; temp. 11° at start, 29° at return; 152 miles by auto, 30 on foot; observers in 5 groups. Brenton's Slough, Fischer's Lake, Morningstar Farm, Beaver Creek, Denman Woods, Brown's Woods, Walnut Woods State Park, Waukonsa Woods and Ashworth Park. Geo. Tonkin, J. F. Thompson, Kate LaMar, H. L. Bump, Mrs. Margaret Lutton, Olivia McCabe, Elizabeth Peck, Jessie Morrison, Mrs. Toni Wendelburg, Edna Rounds, Dwight Smith, A. F. Denboer, Mrs. Harold Johnson, Evangeline Grooters, Mrs. H. R. Peasley. ('Bird-Lore')

DUBUQUE: Dec. 26; 9:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Clear, no wind; 4 in. snow; temp. 14° at start, 30° at return; 12 miles by auto, 6 on foot. Eagle Point Park, Linwood Cemetery, high school grounds, and 5 miles north to bottomlands along Mississippi River. Dubuque Bird Club.

FAIRFIELD: Dec. 25; 2 hrs. during middle of day. Cloudy and raw. On the farm of Ross Parrett, 7 miles west of Fairfield; habitat included fairly heavy woods, open fields, creek, etc. Margaret and Kenneth Parrett, John Bliese.

HARPERS FERRY: Dec. 26; 8 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Clear, no wind; 6 in. snow; temp. -6° at start, 16° at return; 62 miles by auto, 10 on foot. To Dam No. 9, Wexford, Lansing, Waterville and Waukon Junction. A. J. Palas, B. W. Winder. ('Bird-Lore')

OGDEN: Dec. 26; 9 a. m. to 12 m., 1:30 to 5 p. m. Clear, no wind; 1-2 in. snow; temp. 25° at start, 32° at return; 48 miles by auto, 4 on foot. Wooded hillsides and bottom-lands along Des Moines River, open country to Beaver Creek, then to Ledges State Park. W. M. Rosen, Paul Leaverton, Sam Hyde. ('Bird-Lore')

PIERSON: Dec. 26; 8 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Clear, no wind; ground

	Backbone State Park	Des Moines	Dubuque	Fairfield	Harpers Ferry	Ogden	Pierson	Pomeroy	Sioux City	Tama
Mallard		305								
Baldpate		1								
Scaup Duck									2	
American Merganser			13							
Red-tailed Hawk		2				2	3	2		4
Red-shouldered Hawk		1	1							
Rough-legged Hawk						1	1			3
Marsh Hawk		3							1	3
Sparrow Hawk		4				1				
Bob-white		17	15					17		
Ring-necked Pheasant	5					2	1			1
Mourning Dove		6					9			
Screech Owl		2								2
Great Horned Owl	1	6	3			2		2		
Barred Owl		1	3			2				
Long-eared Owl				1	1					
Short-eared Owl						2	1			
Belted Kingfisher		1							1	
Flicker		38			1	1	5		10	5
Red-bellied Woodpecker	2	28	3	1	3	8		1	2	4
Red-headed Woodpecker	1			9						
Hairy Woodpecker	2	27			1	2	10	4	9	4
Downy Woodpecker	5	79	2	3	10	8	8	9	16	15
Horned Lark (Prairie)					1			6	35	
Blue Jay	25	47	6	5	35	7	15	8	6	14
American Magpie							1			
Crow	18	2086	310	4		19	67	225	525	54
Chickadee	12	258	28		7	42	32	49	38	30
Tufted Titmouse		20								18
White-breasted Nuthatch	7	87	4	5	17	21	7	13	14	4
Red-breasted Nuthatch					3		2		2	
Brown Creeper	1	17	1	3	1			9	2	1
Robin									26	
Bluebird		4				2				10
Golden-crowned Kinglet		5							4	
Cedar Waxwing		4								
Northern Shrike		1								
Starling	36	157	1	2	48	89	118	17	500	127
Western Meadowlark		5				1	1	2		
Red-winged Blackbird					2	55				
Bronzed Grackle									1	
Cardinal	12	89	12	1	151	8	1	2	2	11
Purple Finch	30	14					4			
Pine Siskin		209								
Goldfinch	35	226			4	12	3		3	3
Slate-colored Junco	150	551	28	17	181	54	28	131	107	145
Tree Sparrow	200	956	30	30	738	120	207	65	34	125
Harris's Sparrow		1					6			
Song Sparrow	1	10		1		1		1		4
Lapland Longspur							4000		1	
Number of species	18	36	16	13	17	24	23	18	23	22
Number of Observers	4	15		3	2	3	5	4	10	3

partly snow-covered; temp. 26° at start, 32° at return; 28 miles by auto, 12 on foot. Two miles west of Pierson, 8 miles east to Ranney's Knob, then down valley of Little Sioux River. W. R. Mills, Paul Osborn, Melvin Treptow, Jack Warner, Harry Williams. ('Bird-Lore')

POMEROY: Dec. 22; 9:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Boy Scouts Enfred Linder, Loran Fricke, Curtis Johnson and Asst. Scoutmaster Harry Telles of Troop 39, Pomeroy.

SIOUX CITY: Dec. 26; 8:15 a. m. to 4:50 p. m. Cloudy in a. m., clear in p. m., no wind; little snow; temp. 18° at start, 38° at return. Stone Park, McCook Lake, Perry Creek road, Missouri River bottoms, Riverside Park. Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Armour, Dr. and Mrs. J. A. Dales, Wilfred Crabb, Leona Keckler, Dr. J. L. and Miss Ruth Schott, Bruce and Mrs. Alice Stiles.

TAMA: Dec. 25; 2 hrs. in a. m., 4 hrs. in p. m. Drove in a circular

direction as much as possible, starting east, then north, then west and home, never more than 5 miles from Tama. Mr. and Mrs. W. G. MacMartin, Miss Bay Brice.

The first national bird census sponsored by 'Bird-Lore' was taken December 25, 1900. Since then it has been an annual event and always a popular and worthwhile feature of the magazine. The first Iowa census for 'Bird-Lore' was taken on December 25, 1903, by Rett E. Olmstead at Decorah, with nine species listed. The next Iowa census was taken two years later and from then on Iowa has been regularly represented. Some statistics gleaned from the Pierce bibliography may be of interest. Since the beginning of 'Bird-Lore's' Christmas census there have been 164 Iowa lists. These represent 25 counties of the state and are distributed among the 32 Iowa cities given in the following list. The dates given are the years in which the census was published, though of course the list was made in December of the preceding year.

- Ames: 1924, '25, '26, '27, '28, '29, '31.
- Backbone State Park (Delaware Co.): 1924, '33, '34, '35, '36, '37, '38.
- Bettendorf: 1916, '18, '21, '22, '23, '24, '31.
- Cedar Rapids: 1907, '08, '23.
- Davenport: 1918, '24, '26, '34, '35.
- Decorah: 1904.
- Des Moines: 1911, '12, '23, '24, '25, '26, '27, '28, '29, '30, '31, '32, '33, '34, '35, '36, '37, '38.
- Eldora: 1931.
- Emmetsburg: 1920, '22, '23, '24.
- Grinnell: 1908.
- Harpers Ferry: 1938.
- Iowa City: 1920, '22, '23, '24, '27.
- Keokuk: 1922, '26, '27, '28, '29, '30, '31, '32.
- Lanesboro: 1916, '17.
- Marion: 1910.
- Mt. Vernon: 1910.
- National: 1909.
- New Hampton: 1922, '25, '26, '30.
- Ogden: 1923, '24, '26, '27, '28, '29, '30, '31, '32, '33, '34, '35, '36, '37, '38.
- Oskaloosa: 1922, '23.
- Pierson: 1922, '23, '24, '25, '26, '27, '28, '29, '30, '31, '33, '34, '35, '36, '37, '38.
- Sabula: 1911, '12.
- Sigourney: 1928, '29, '30, '31, '32.
- Sioux City: 1910, '11, '12, '13, '14, '15, '16, '17, '18, '19, '20, '21, '23, '24, '26, '29, '30, '31, '32, '34, '36, '37.
- South English: 1917.
- Spirit Lake: 1931.
- Tabor: 1926, '27.
- Wallingford: 1914, '15.
- Wall Lake: 1909, '10, '11, '12, '13, '14, '15.
- Waukon: 1907.
- Webster: 1931.
- Winthrop: 1921, '22, '23, '26, '27, '28, '29, '30, '31, '32.

Without making research into the matter, we believe that Rosen, Mills, and Pierce have taken Christmas censuses over a longer period than any other observers in Iowa. The census just taken was Pierce's eighteenth consecutive Christmas census, and all have been published in 'Bird-Lore'. As the years pass the census trip becomes almost as important an event as the Christmas holiday itself, and we can look back upon many fine trips with congenial companions, in good weather and bad.

--F. J. P.