

# Kansas Ornithological Society

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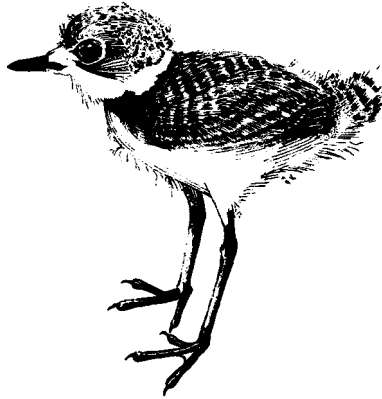
September 1969

No. 3

### CHARADRIIFORM BIRDS OF CHEYENNE BOTTOMS

#### PART II

By DAVID F. PARMELEE, MARVIN D. SCHWILLING,  
AND H. A. STEPHENS



Snowy Plover Chick  
David Parmelee, artist

#### *Actitis macularia* (Linnaeus): Spotted Sandpiper

Regular, uncommon transient, and probably uncommon summer resident. Extreme dates of northward migration 26 April and 15 June; most numerous 9–27 May; largest spring count: 22 May 1963 (100+ birds). Extreme dates of southward migration 15 July and 7 October; most numerous 3 August–13 September; largest daily count: 5 September 1959 (12 birds).

Remarks.—A nest with four eggs was observed 27 June 1968 by Schwilling near a sandpit in Great Bend southwest of Cheyenne Bottoms.

#### *Tringa solitaria* Wilson: Solitary Sandpiper

Irregular, rare transient in spring, uncommon in fall. Recorded only once in spring: 30 April 1961 (one bird). Extreme dates of southward migration 2 July and 8 August; most observations to date 17 July–8 August. Ferguson (1962) noted the species once (18 September 1961, three birds).

Remarks.—This species may be more numerous at Cheyenne Bottoms than our records indicate, since its status in peripheral areas is uncertain.

*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus* (Gmelin): Willet

Regular transient, uncommon to common in spring, uncommon in fall. Extreme dates of northward migration 7 April and 11 June; most numerous 24 April–14 May; largest daily counts: 28 April 1967 (flock of 39 birds); 29 April 1966 (flock of 50 birds); 30 April 1963 (50+ birds); and 30 April 1964 (200+ birds including flock of 49 birds). Zuvanich and McHenry (1964) noted one bird on 19 and 26 June 1963. Extreme dates of southward migration 26 June and 5 October; most numerous 1 August–1 September; largest daily counts: 1 July 1961 (13 birds); and 1 September 1964 (10 birds).

*Totanus melanoleucus* (Gmelin): Greater Yellowlegs

Regular, abundant transient. Extreme dates of northward migration 8 March and 12 June, most numerous 29 March–8 May. Extreme dates of southward migration 20 June and 6 December, most numerous 15 July–25 September.

*Totanus flavipes* (Gmelin): Lesser Yellowlegs

Regular, abundant transient. Extreme dates of northward migration 1 March and 18 June, most numerous 24 April–14 May. Extreme dates of southward migration 20 June and 6 December, most numerous 15 July–10 October.

*Calidris canutus* (Linnaeus): Knot

Irregular, rare transient in fall. No spring records. Recorded 28 August–24 September: two birds on 5 September 1953 (Bishop, 1953); two on 28 August 1963; one on 5 September 1963 (McHenry, 1964); one on 21 September 1968; and two on 24 September 1968 (Martinez, personal communication). Kansas State Teachers College specimens: one male (T855) and one female (B1135) juvenile 28 August 1963; and one male (T858) juvenile 5 September 1963.

Remarks.—One Knot was seen at the salt marshes in Stafford Co. on 1 June 1957 by Rice (1957).

*Erolia melanotos* (Vieillot): Pectoral Sandpiper

Regular, abundant transient. Extreme dates of northward migration 18 March and 9 June; most numerous 29 April–2 June. Zuvanich and McHenry (1964) noted five to 10 birds daily during 19–21 June 1963. Extreme dates of southward migration 8 July and 26 October; most numerous 10 August–10 October. Ely (unpublished notes) saw a "small" number on 6 November 1960.

Remarks.—The species is probably more abundant during July and early August than our records indicate.

*Erolia fuscicollis* (Vieillot): White-rumped Sandpiper

Regular, abundant transient in spring, uncommon in fall. Extreme dates of northward migration 29 April and 19 June; most numerous 14 May–11 June. Ferguson (1962) saw one bird on 16 April 1962. Species may have been observed as early as 26 March 1967 (one bird) by Martinez and 27 March 1964 (one bird) by the authors, but identification in both cases was uncertain. Extreme dates of southward migration 1 July and 29 September; most numerous 15–26 July; largest daily count: 26 July 1963 (25 birds). There is a fall specimen (Kansas State Teachers College specimen B590) dated 29 September 1957.

Remarks.—Ferguson (1962) believed this species to be the most abundant shorebird in spring at Cheyenne Bottoms in 1962 when the principal migration was during 19–25 May (extreme dates 19 May–12 June). According to Sutton (1967), the species is abundant in Oklahoma in spring, especially in the "latter half of May." Our data indicate that substantial numbers (thousands) pass through Cheyenne Bottoms from about mid-May to early June, and that hundreds may still be migrating as late as 9 June, numbers decreasing rapidly thereafter. One banded by Martinez (personal communication) at Cheyenne Bottoms on 28 May 1967 was recovered by him there on 12 May 1968.

*Erolia bairdii* (Coues): Baird's Sandpiper

Regular, abundant transient. Extreme dates of northward migration 7 March and 17 June; most numerous 30 March–22 May. Extreme dates of southward migration 8 July and 6 December; most numerous 19 July–5 September.

*Erolia minutilla* (Vieillot): Least Sandpiper

Regular, abundant transient. Extreme dates of northward migration 29 March and 17 May; most numerous 24 April–16 May. Extreme dates of southward migration 2 July and 11 December; most numerous 16 July–1 November.

Remarks.—One banded by Martinez (personal communication) at Cheyenne Bottoms on 7 September 1967 was recovered by him on 23 August 1968.

*Erolia alpina* (Linnaeus): Dunlin

Irregular transient, uncommon in spring, rare in fall. Extreme dates of northward migration 23 April and 3 June; most numerous 22–28 May; largest daily count: 23 May 1963 (50+ birds, including flock of 34 birds). Recorded in fall 28 November 1964 (two birds, male collected).

Remarks.—The 28 November specimen (Kansas State Teachers College specimen B1341) is an important record. According to Johnston (1965), autumnal movements are not well documented for the species in Kansas, the birds having been seen "only in August."

*Limnodromus griseus* (Gmelin): Short-billed Dowitcher

Probably regular, uncommon transient but status poorly known. Kansas State Teachers College specimens: male (B1296) collected on 22 May 1963; female (B1295) on 22 May 1963; female (B1141) on 24 May 1963; and female (B1301) on 15 August 1963.

Remarks.—This species probably has been overlooked among the myriads of Long-billed Dowitchers. Most short-billed individuals have proven to be male Long-billed Dowitchers, which are noticeably shorter billed than females of that species. Our records indicate that Short-billed Dowitchers arrive at Cheyenne Bottoms in late May following the peak migration of Long-billed Dowitchers, and that they probably arrive early during the southward migration ahead of the main body of Long-billed Dowitchers.

*Limnodromus scolopaceus* (Say): Long-billed Dowitcher

Regular, abundant transient. Extreme dates of northward migration 27 February and 19 June; most numerous 2 April–17 May. Extreme dates of southward migration 13 July and 20 November; most numerous 31 July–5 November. Ely (unpublished notes) collected a female (Fort Hays Kansas State College specimen 806) on 9 July 1963.

Remarks.—Incredibly large numbers of these birds have occurred at Cheyenne Bottoms during 27 April–8 May, and at various times during August, September, October.

*Micropalama himantopus* (Bonaparte): Stilt Sandpiper

Regular, abundant transient. Extreme dates of northward migration 24 April and 7 June; most numerous 8–27 May. Extreme dates of southward migration 8 July and 10 October; most numerous 23 July–11 September.

Remarks.—Ferguson (1962) listed the species as rare at Cheyenne Bottoms in fall. Johnston (1965) stated that "some" of these birds are present in Kansas during summer and listed the autumnal departure as "September 5–October 21." According to our observations, thousands of Stilt Sandpipers may pass through Cheyenne Bottoms during July and August.

*Ereunetes pusillus* (Linnaeus): Semipalmated Sandpiper

Regular, abundant transient. Extreme dates of northward migration 16 March and 8 June; most numerous 16 April–23 May. Extreme dates of southward migration 7 July and 25 September; most numerous 19 July–13 September.

Remarks.—One banded at Cheyenne Bottoms by Ely on 22 April 1967 was recovered there by Martinez (personal communication) on 2 May 1968. Two banded by Martinez on 7 and 26 May 1968 were recovered by him on 11–12 August 1968.

*Ereunetes mauri* Cabanis: Western Sandpiper

Apparently irregular, uncommon transient in spring but status uncertain; regular, abundant transient in fall. Recorded 16 April–19 June but records few and scattered. Ely (unpublished notes) recorded the species as early as 12 March 1961 (five birds), and during 21–22 April 1967 when it was "fairly common." Extreme dates of southward migration 20 June and 30 September; most numerous 19 July–20 September. Kansas State Teachers College spring specimens: male (B1456) 27 April 1968; male (T995) 3 May 1969.

Remarks.—Zuvanich and McHenry (1964) reported "thousands" at Cheyenne Bottoms during 19–21 July 1963. Our records indicate that thousands may migrate through the area in July and August.

*Tryngites subruficollis* (Vieillot): Buff-breasted Sandpiper

Irregular, uncommon fall transient. One spring record: 10 May 1969 (four birds). Recorded in fall 5–22 September; largest daily count: 5 September 1959 (six birds). Six birds were banded by Martinez (personal communication) 19–22 September 1967, and two on 6 September 1968.

Remarks.—Status in peripheral areas of Cheyenne Bottoms uncertain.

*Limosa fedoa* (Linnaeus): Marbled Godwit

Regular, uncommon to common transient in spring; uncommon in fall. Extreme dates of northward migration 7 April and 5 June; most numerous 22–30 April; largest daily count: 30 April 1963 (150+ birds). Extreme dates of southward migration 20 June and 13 September; most numerous 26 July–5 September; largest daily counts: 30 June 1968 (24 birds); 2 August 1963 (21 birds); and 5 September 1964 (25 birds). Ely (1961) recorded the species as late as 25 September.

*Limosa haemastica* (Linnaeus): Hudsonian Godwit

Regular, common transient in spring; irregular, rare transient in fall. Extreme dates of northward migration 19 April and 18 June; most numerous 27 April–21 May; largest daily counts: 23 April 1966 (300+ birds); 28 April 1966 (403 birds); 30 April 1963 (200+ birds, including flock of 135 birds); 1 May 1967 (flock of 130 birds); and 17–18 May 1963 (100+ birds each date). Recorded 30 June 1964 (one bird) and 19 August 1968 (four birds). An adult male and young female (University of Kansas specimens 49855 and 49856) were collected on 26 September 1965.

*Crocethia alba* (Pallas): Sanderling

Regular transient, uncommon to common and at times abundant in spring; uncommon in fall. Extreme dates of northward migration 5 April and 6 June; most numerous 14 May–4 June; largest daily counts: 14–16 May 1964; and 22–24 May 1963 (thousands of birds each date). Ferguson (1962) noted a few individuals on 8 June 1962. Extreme dates of southward migration 26 July and 9 November; most numerous 10 September–10 October; largest daily counts: 5 September 1959 (12 birds); 10 September 1961 (12 birds); and 3 October 1963 (15 birds).

Remarks.—This species was considered a "rare" transient in Kansas as recently as 1956 (Tordoff, 1956). According to Johnston (1960, 1965), it is an "Uncommon" and "Low-density" transient. Apparently it is more numerous in Kansas than was previously believed.

**\**Recurvirostra americana*** Gmelin: American Avocet

Regular, common to abundant transient and summer resident. Nests on dry ground in open areas, especially cultivated fields and mud bars. Recorded 13 March–8 December; most numerous 15 April–15 October. Eggs recorded 5 May–16 July.

Remarks.—A downy young banded by John Nilsen on 24 June 1962 was recovered by F. Jones in Okeechobee, Florida, in December of the same year.

***Himantopus mexicanus*** (Müller): Black-necked Stilt

Irregular, rare transient in spring and casual visitor in summer and early fall. No proof of nesting exists. Recorded every month from 1 April–24 August (one to three birds each observation). One Kansas State Teachers College specimen (T869) collected 5 May 1964.

***Phalaropus fulicarius*** (Linnaeus): Red Phalarope

Irregular, rare transient. Six records to date, including one bird seen 10 May 1967, and five birds seen 22 September 1968 (Martinez, personal communication). Kansas State Teachers College specimens: male (T840) 10 May 1963; male (B1440) 6 October 1963; male (B778) 8 October 1959; and female (B1224) 5 December 1963.

Remarks.—The specimen taken 10 May 1963 is nearly gray throughout with only a few reddish feathers showing. The bird seen 10 May 1967 was fairly bright.

**\**Steganopus tricolor*** Vieillot: Wilson's Phalarope

Regular, common to abundant transient and summer resident. Nests in spike rushes over water or in dry, grassy areas near pools. Recorded 5 April–5 December; most numerous 24 April–5 September. Eggs recorded 24 May–2 July. Newly hatched young recorded 11 June–2 July.

Remarks.—The first known nestings (downy young seen) for Kansas were recorded at Cheyenne Bottoms (Andrews and Stephens, 1954).

***Lobipes lobatus*** (Linnaeus): Northern Phalarope

Irregular, uncommon transient. Extreme dates of northward migration 19 April and 28 May; largest daily counts: 22 May 1963 (50+ birds); and 23 May 1963 (30+ birds). Extreme dates of southward migration 12 September and 10 October; largest daily counts: 22 September 1967 (nine birds); and 2 October 1963 (six birds). Kansas State Teachers College specimens: six males (17–24 May); one male (26 September); two females (18 May); and two females 23 September. Fort Hays Kansas State College specimens: one male (23 May).

***Stercorarius parasiticus*** (Linnaeus): Parasitic Jaeger

Irregular, rare transient. Recorded in 1965 on 27 September (one adult), 2 October (adult with one immature), 9 October (one adult, two immatures), 16 October (immature male collected), 23 October (one adult), 27 October (one adult), 31 October (one adult).

Remarks.—The immature male (Kansas State Teachers College specimen B1441) collected by Parmelee 16 October 1965 is the first specimen for Kansas. Identification of the specimen was verified by G. E. Watson of the Smithsonian Institution. The male reportedly collected in Douglas Co. in 1898 by Long (1940) is referable to *S. pomarinus* (see Tordoff, 1956).

***Stercorarius longicaudus*** Vieillot: Long-tailed Jaeger

Irregular, rare transient. The only record is that of a female (University of Kansas specimen 32610) collected 23 June 1955 by Mosby and Linn (1956).

***Larus hyperboreus*** (Gunnerus): Glaucous Gull

Irregular, rare transient. Recorded in 1966 on 8 March (one adult), 9 March (two birds), 10 March (one bird); in 1967, on 12 February (one bird), 15 February

(one bird), 6 March (one immature female collected), 3 July (one adult), 9 September (one bird); in 1968, during 30 January–13 February (one adult noted almost daily), 15 February (one adult and one immature), 13 March (two birds), 3 May (one bird).

Remarks.—The immature female (Kansas State Teachers College specimen B1406) collected by Schwilling on 6 March 1967 is the first specimen for Kansas.

*Larus argentatus* Pontoppidan: Herring Gull

Regular, uncommon to common transient and probable winter and summer resident. No evidence of breeding. Small numbers recorded every month of the year; most numerous February and March; peak numbers in some years estimated to be 800+ birds. Immatures are usually more numerous than adults.

Remarks.—Whether individuals remain in the area for extended periods of time is not known.

*Larus delawarensis* Ord: Ring-billed Gull

Regular, common to abundant transient and probable winter and summer resident. No evidence of breeding. Recorded every month of year when both adults and immatures may be present. The species may be extremely abundant at times when water levels of pools are low, resulting in a superabundance of dying and dead fish. Peak numbers in some years are estimated to be 50,000 birds.

Remarks.—Whether individuals remain in the area for extended periods of time is not known.

*Larus pipixcan* Wagler: Franklin's Gull

Regular, abundant transient. The relatively few adults (in breeding plumage) that are seen in the marshes during summer are not known to nest. Extreme dates of northward migration 6 February and 7 June; most numerous during April and May, although hundreds of transients may be seen in early June some years. Extreme dates of southward migration 7 July and 1 December; most numerous from late September to early November, numbers often peaking in October. Mosby and Linn (1956) reported seeing "hundreds" in 1965 on 21 June and again on 24 July.

Remarks.—Franklin's Gull may well establish itself as a breeding species at Cheyenne Bottoms.

*Larus philadelphia* (Ord): Bonaparte's Gull

Irregular, rare transient in spring, uncommon in fall. Extreme dates of northward migration 19 March and 18 May but observations few and scattered (one to three birds each observation). Extreme dates of southward migration 7 August and 8 November; largest daily counts 7–8 August 1959 (12+ birds each date) and 1 November 1967 (nine birds including flock of seven birds).

*Xema sabini* (Sabine): Sabine's Gull

Irregular, rare transient in fall. No spring records. Recorded in 1963 on 11 October (one immature male collected) and 17 October (one immature); in 1965, on 23, 27, 28 September (one adult each date). Kansas State Teachers College specimens: one immature male (T625) collected by Richard H. Schmidt on 29 September 1957; one immature male (B1169) collected 11 October 1963.

\**Sterna forsteri* Nuttall: Forster's Tern

Regular, common transient; irregular, common summer resident. Nests on vegetation over water in marshes, occasionally on muskrat houses. Recorded 7 April–19 October; most numerous 25 April–5 October. Eggs recorded 1 June–12 August; newly hatched downy young noted as early as 10 June.

Remarks.—The first known nesting for Cheyenne Bottoms (and Kansas) was reported by Zuvanich (1963). Since that time numerous nests have been found. Clutch size has been two or three eggs.

*Sterna hirundo* Linnaeus: Common Tern

Irregular, rare transient. Three specimens (University of Kansas specimens 49867, 49868, 49869) were taken 26 September 1965, according to Clayton White (personal communication); and one was taken by Schwilling on 27 May 1968 (Kansas State Teachers College specimen: male (B1451)).

Remarks.—Since this species is similar in appearance to the much commoner Forster's Tern, it probably has been often overlooked at Cheyenne Bottoms.

\**Sterna albifrons* Pallas: Least Tern

Regular, uncommon transient; irregular, uncommon summer resident. Nests on ground where vegetation is thinly scattered. Recorded 9 May–15 August. Eggs recorded 31 May–1 July.

Remarks.—This species breeds commonly at the salt marshes in Stafford Co. where live eggs have been recorded 1 June–1 August.

*Hydroprogne caspia* (Pallas): Caspian Tern

Irregular, rare transient. Recorded: 2–3 June 1961 (one bird each date); 12–13 May 1968 (one bird each date); 24 May 1968 (three birds); 11 September 1961 (one bird); 21 September 1963 (three birds); and 25 September 1963 (one bird). Kansas State Teachers College specimen: male (B1302), 3 June 1961; male (B1150), 22 September 1963.

\**Chlidonias niger* (Linnaeus): Black Tern

Regular, abundant transient; irregular, common summer resident. Nests on vegetation over water in marshes. Recorded 28 April–23 October; most numerous 12 May–16 September. Eggs recorded 11 June–12 August.

Remarks.—The first known nestings for Kansas were recorded at Cheyenne Bottoms in 1961 (Parmelee, 1961). Although the clutch is usually three eggs (see Johnston, 1964), it may also be two eggs, and occasionally one egg.

HYPOTHETICAL LIST

*Stercorarius pomarinus* (Temminck): Pomarine Jaeger

Probably irregular, rare transient. Two immatures were observed by Schwilling on 29 September 1967.

*Larus atricilla* Linnaeus: Laughing Gull

Probably irregular, rare transient. One individual with dark hood was noted by Parmelee on 7 May 1964. Bishop (1953) noted two birds on 5 September 1953. There is a specimen for Marion Co. and there are sight records for Barton and Shawnee counties (Tordoff, 1956).

*Rissa tridactyla* (Linnaeus): Black-legged Kittiwake

Probably irregular, rare transient. One bird was observed by Schwilling each date on 22, 26, 28 April 1967. One was observed by Martinez (personal communication) on 9 April 1968.

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The Fall Field Trip will be held at Pittsburg, Kansas on October 12 with Dr. Theodore M. Sperry in charge of local arrangements. Details of the meeting will be mailed soon. Plan to attend and bring a friend.

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