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THE BIRDS OF MINNESOTA POINT

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Minnesota Point is a sandbar over seven miles long, varying in width from less than two hundred yards to nearly one-fourth of a mile. It lies south of Duluth and is opposed by Wisconsin Point three miles long. It separates Lake Superior from Superior Bay which connects with St. Louis River Bay. The channel between the two Points, the Superior entry, is the natural outlet of St. Louis River; the Duluth entrance channel is artificial. About three miles of the north end of the Point is settled. The remaining area is owned by Duluth Park Department, except the extreme south end bordering Superior canal which belongs to the United States Government. About one mile of the area beyond the present settlement is being converted into pleasure grounds under the constructive measures of the New Deal Program. This leaves about two miles of the Point relatively undisturbed, despite the summer dwellings scattered among the pines.

Minnesota Point lies along the airlines of many a migrating flock. The miles of inviting shoreline attract the weary travelers. There they alight in numbers to feed and rest. The birds come and go by waves during their journeys north and south. A remarkable variety of natural features may be found in so limited an area. Within the narrow confines of the opposing shores many kinds of bird habitats exist. They include the lake and the bay, the beach and the bay flats some with shallow ponds and dense growths of vegetation; bogs and sedge meadows, dunes and sand trails, thickets and forest. Therefore, many birds find it congenial to spend summer and winter on Minnesota Point, in addition to transients that find it a convenient stopping place.

Among the most conspicuous spring migrants of 1936 were the shorebirds. During the third week in May they began to arrive in numbers. At that time the lake beach was overrun with insects. Species of *Lepidoptera, Coleoptera, Hymenoptera, Hemiptera* and *Diptera* littered the shoreline almost in an unbroken strip along the entire length of the Point. One tried to find answers to the questions, "Where did they come from?" and "How?" Perhaps they were crippled in storms and washed ashore. Seemingly in this squirming mass the increasing flocks of shorebirds fed. The following species were identified: Sanderlings, Ruddy Turnstones, Semipalmated, Black-bellied and Piping Plovers, Red-backed, Spotted and Baird's Sandpipers. Undoubtedly the list of species was much greater; it requires expert knowledge to identify sandpipers in the field. On Oatka Beach, on the bay front, Golden Plovers were seen on the seventeenth of May. About the twentieth of May the shorebird migration reached its height, when the beach seemed fairly

alive with moving birds. By the last of the month they were gone. Four Ruddy Turnstones were last seen on the rocks of northbreakwater on the sixth of June.

Three species of shorebirds remained to nest. Spotted Sandpiper sought nesting sites under tufts of *Ammophila* and *Elymus* on the upper beach and sand dunes. Killdeer and Piping Plover nested in open sand on the bay flats. The nesting record of the latter is of interest because the bird is a rare summer resident in the state. One nest of four eggs was found on the third of July.

Flocks of water birds were seen during migration in the bay and the lake. It was possible to identify a small number, only: Common Loon, Lesser Scaup, Mallard, American Golden-eye and Holboell's Grebe.

About four miles out on a narrow, wave-washed sandbar a colony of gulls added a notable feature to the summer bird population. The flocks were seen there daily feeding on the foam-flecked beach. Among Herring Gulls which are permanent residents were identified Ring-billed and Bonaparte's Gulls. Common and Black Terns were usually seen with the gulls.

While Sora Rails and Wilson's Snipes hide in sedge meadows and under the shore vegetation of the bay flats, the larger birds frequent the tall trees of the pine ridge. Crows nest there commonly. Marsh Hawks and Sparrow Hawks have been seen during migration. Great Horned Owl is a winter resident; Snowy Owl was seen once in late November. According to the residents of the Point the "White Owl" lived there the entire winter. The owls apparently live on the rabbits which are numerous in underbrush of the wooded section. Whether or not, they killed a Goshawk and Ruffed Grouse whose remains were found, is a matter of speculation.

Bluejays have been observed only during migration. On the tenth of May these birds took possession of the Point. The woods and thickets seemed blue because of their unusually large numbers. The birds remained there about a week in gradually decreasing numbers. They seemed to be eating the fruits of various shrubs including *Corylus* and *Juniperus*. Several birds appeared weak and sick and were easily caught with bare hands from trees, but not without protests of loud screeching. The stomachs of the three birds found dead contained poison ivy fruits.

In the protective shelter of the trees, Downy Woodpecker and Red-breasted Nuthatch live throughout the year. Black-capped Chickadee did not appear during the last winter, but was seen in the spring of 1936. Flocks of Pine Siskins cling to pine cones in search of seeds. Redpolls likewise frequent the pines and the thickets of *Alnus* and *Betula* but are more often found in the open areas feeding on seeds of sandbinders, and common weeds such as *Oenothera biennis*, *Cycloloma atriplicifolium* and many others. In similar places large flocks of Snow Buntings were seen in November. Bohemian Waxwings and Evening Grosbeaks have been observed

from time to time, feeding on small fruits such as those of *Sorbus,* species of *Prunus* and *Amelanchier.*

The sheltering forest and the borders of thickets are also sought by those birds which are seen there during summer. They include Ruby-throated Humming Bird, Catbird, Veery, American Redstart, Yellow Warbler, Chipping and Song Sparrows, Kingbirds, Least Flycatcher, Robin, Purple Martin, Flicker and others. A pair of Mourning Doves was seen twice, but there was no evidence that these birds nested there. A pair of European Starlings was found feeding young in a hollow of a tree on the Fourth of July.

Of the transient sparrows Slate-colored Junco, Tree, Harris and White-throated Sparrows have been common. Most of the warblers on record were observed during fall migration.

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STUDIES OF PRENATAL DEVELOPMENT IN FARM ANIMALS

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The central objective of these studies has been to gather as accurate data as possible regarding normal prenatal development in farm animals. Once this is established as a base we or other workers will be in a position to study the specific effects of unfavorable environments, such as deficiency rations, excess fat, etc. Our work has progressed far enough so that we are now incorporating some of the latter in our studies.

Our studies of prenatal development have been confined chiefly to the sheep and the bovine. The sheep series includes 200 specimens of rather definitely known ages; the bovine series includes 78 specimens of well known ages. The sheep series is complete but it will be necessary to add a few more bovine specimens. The age of each specimen is calculated from the cession of heat. In this respect our calculations differ from others in that the onset of heat has generally been used. The objections to using the onset of heat are: the duration of heat is subject to considerable individual variation and time of ovulation is more closely related to the cession of heat than heat's onset. In the ewe ovulation occurs about as heat is passing; we have found a range of about six hours either way. In the cow ovulation occurs about 24 hours after the cession of heat. This means that by our method of calculating the ages of our specimens the bovine ones are actually about one day younger than the sheep specimens given the same age. This is interesting because

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