

7/11/35

CRESCENT LAKE MIGRATORY BIRD REFUGE

ANNUAL REPORT ON RESERVATION WILD LIFE AND ACTIVITIES
APPURTENANT THERETO

FISCAL YEAR 1935

I. REPORT ON THE WILD LIFE OBSERVED DURING THE YEAR.

1. Birds observed and definitely identified (Underlined species indicate that nests or young birds were found)

WATERFOWL

Mallard
Green-winged Teal
Blue-winged Teal
Black Duck
Pintail
American Merganser
Hooded Merganser
Red-breasted Merganser
Golden-eye
Gadwall
Canvas-back
Red-head
Shoveler
Buffle-head
Ruddy
Scup
Baldpate
Coot
Horned Grebe
Western Grebe
Black Tern
Common Tern
Ring-billed Gull
Herring Gull
Snow Goose
Canada Goose
Whistling Swan
White Pellican

SHORE BIRDS

Wilson Snipe
Long-billed Curlew
Western Sandpiper
Western Willet
Wilson Phalarope
Killdeer
Upland Plover
Lesser Yellow-legs
American Bittern
Sandhill Crane
Semi-Palmated Plover
Greater Blue Heron
Black-crowned Night Heron

UPLAND GAME BIRDS

Sharp-tailed Grouse
Prairie Chicken
Ring-necked Pheasant

BIRDS OF PREY

Prairie Falcon
Marsh Hawk
Sparrow Hawk
Golden Eagle
American Eagle
Short-eared Owl
Barred Owl
Burrowing Owl

INSECTIVOROUS

California Red-winged Blackbird
Eastern Red-winged Blackbird
Yellow-headed Blackbird
Brewer Blackbird
Red-shafted Flicker
King Bird
Magpie
Crow
White-crowned Sparrow
White-throated Sparrow
Baltimore Oriole
Northern Shrike

Meadow Lark
Red-headed Woodpecker
Night Hawk
Arkansas Kingbird
Blue Jay
Robin
Cowbird
Slate-colored Junco
Barn Swallow
Blue Bird
Western Wood Pewee

Fall migration started November 26th at which time a cold wave struck from the north, and in two days time all of the lakes on the refuge froze over, and all of the ducks moved on south to the North Platt River Refuge, and to Blue Creek, which did not give time to get an estimate on the number of ducks which stopped on the refuge.

Spring migration started about March 1st., on March 6th we had a snow storm followed by a cold wave which froze up the lakes and forced the ducks back south to open water on the North Platt River and it's tributaries which are fed by springs and stay open.

About March 10th ducks and geese started coming back in to the lakes.

The height of spring migration was reached in the later part of March, and an estimate indicated approximately 30,000 ducks on the refuge with Shovelers predominating.

Large numbers of Snow Geese stopped on the refuge during spring migration. Most of these birds stopped on Swan Lake which is on the west part of the refuge.

Approximately 2000 White Pelicans stayed on Island Lake until May 3rd at which time they moved on north except about 50 of these birds, which have remained here for the summer. About the middle of June approximately 150 of these birds came back, and at the present time there are approximately 200 of them, they stay on Crescent Lake during the day, and about sundown each evening they come to Island Lake which is well stocked with fish, which they feed on.

Ducks and Geese gradually moved north until approximately 8000 ducks including Coots were left, which have remained for the summer. This number is divided approximately as follows:

Coot.....	3000
Blue-winged Teal....	1750
Shovelers.....	1450
Mallards.....	600
Ruddy.....	350
Pintails.....	300
Red-heads.....	2200
Gadwall.....	150
Canvas-back.....	100
Baldpate.....	50
Scaup.....	25
Green-winged Teal...	25

There is approximately 450 Western Grebes which have stayed on the refuge during the summer, approximately 200 of these have stayed on Hackberry Lake and have done their nesting among the rushes along the east and south shores.

It is my belief that the abundance of rain during April, May, and June broke up a number of the nesting ducks within the refuge, as on June 27th I found Blue-winged Teal and Shoveler nests which had only from two to four eggs in them. I watched these nests and found that these birds were just beginning to lay their eggs. Two of these nests, which both happened to be of Blue-winged Teal were destroyed during the time of observation by something.

The only waterfowl that can be found nesting in any fair numbers are Coot, Grebes, and those species which nest out over the water. Ducks which nest back from the lakes on the prairie have but very little cover. on most all of the lakes within the refuge. This is due to the mowing of hay within the nesting areas, which during the summer of 1934 was mowed right up to the edge of the lake beds, as water levels were so low at that time that this could be done.

The abundance of rain during April, May, and June of this year brought the water levels up to the stage that the water now stands up to the edge of last years mowing, which leaves very little cover around the lakes.

The following are lake guage readings up to date showing water levels since May 6th to 9th at which time the guages were reset this spring, compared to the last reading taken during 1934, at which time the guages were heaved by ice.

	Last reading taken in 1934 11-26-34	Readings taken at time guages were reset	5-23-35	6-6-35	6-20-35	7-3-35
Sven	3801.16	3802.23	3802.58	3802.84	3802.86	3802.50
Harrison	3812.80	3814.67	3815.36	3815.34	3815.36	3815.02
Bean	3829.59	3830.16	3830.70	3831.14	3831.34	3831.12
Gim	3806.90	3807.68	3807.78	3808.20	3808.26	3808.02
Rounaup	3801.65	3802.24	3802.50	3802.64	3802.70	3802.48

Hackberry	3791.60	3792.22	3792.46	3792.58	3792.72	3792.50
Blue	3783.35	3783.60	3783.74	3783.70	3783.68	3783.42
Isl	3791.60	3792.16	3792.46	3792.66	3792.58	3792.34
Crescent	3778.02	3779.83	3780.04	3780.26	3780.56	3780.44
Deer	3800.82	3801.48	3801.72	3801.86	3801.92	3801.74
Crane	3787.44	3788.00	3788.22	3788.36	3788.36	3788.12
Rush	3833.16	3833.93	3834.18	3834.30	3834.34	3834.14
Goose	3823.67	3824.40	3824.66	3824.86	3824.90	3824.72
Jones	No reading	3799.68	3800.26	3800.58	3800.74	3800.48
Smith	No guage	3836.23	3836.68	3837.00	3837.10	3836.88
Martin	No guage	3843.03	3843.40	3843.60	3843.64	3843.44

About 50 Ring-necked Pheasants wintered around Refuge Headquarters, and were fed around the flowing well on Gimlet Lake about 40 rods west of refuge buildings, where they liked to come for water.

About 30 Ring-necked Pheasants wintered along the north side of Island Lake, I furnished the feed, and these birds were fed by Abbott's men who were feeding a herd of cattle, and were camped nearby.

2. Animal Life

Coyotes have been cleaned up within and around the refuge during the winter of 1934-1935, no coyotes have been sighted or heard since Mr. John Martin left here about April 5th.

There were approximately 225 coyotes caught within and around the refuge during the winter which I have heard of. There were also a few packs of hounds used adjacent to Crescent Lake Refuge, and these parties also caught a few coyotes which would place the number at approximately 275 coyotes.

Muskrats are quite scarce on all of the lakes within the refuge except Smith Lake which is on the west part of the refuge, on this lake they are quite abundant.

In June the trapping of a small number of muskrats at 20 day intervals for the Muskrat Fur Condition Study in Cooperation with the Division of Fur Resources was discontinued until further notice. This completed a period of two years. Results of this study have not yet been received.

Jack Rabbits are becoming a nuisance, they keep holes dug under the woven wire goose fence which has been completed around Gimlet Lake. When Canadian Geese are placed in this area I am afraid it is going to be quite a job to keep them in this enclosure, as my experience with these birds is that they are pretty much of a fence walker, trying to find a place to escape.

I purchase a small carton of 22 caliber ammunition this spring, and have been carrying the rifle with me, and have killed approximately 300 rabbits within the last 90 days, but there seems to be just as many now as there were when I started to shoot them off.

Antelope were frequently sighted between the refuge and Oshkosh during the winter. Have seen as high as 21 in a single band around the corn-fields about 14 miles north of Oshkosh, at which place they go for the winter after the prairie dries up in the fall.

Antelope have moved back north to the prairies at the present time. On July 2nd I found 3 head of them on the Harris place which is on the refuge.

II. Other Activities

1. Protection

Saw one party this spring fire two shots at a flock of Snow Geese, have warned this person to not shoot at any more birds out of season.

No fires were reported during the year.

2. Improvements and Developments.

The Goose fence around Gimlet Lake has been completed and is now ready to stock with Canada Geese.

The Canada Geese which Mr. Silvernail of Bridgeport, Nebraska is to turn over to the refuge for stocking this area were nesting before this fence was finished, and could not be moved, but will be moved as soon as it is possible to do so.

Two miles of stock fence has been changed between the refuge and Mr. Joe Hanser which was off line. Also one half mile of fence has been changed between the refuge and Mr. George Dietlein which was off line.

Approximately two miles of graded road which was built by the CCC during the summer of 1934 has been put in shape for travel.

This road had several bad sand blowouts start in it, these have all been filled in, and rushes have been cut on Smith and Martin Lakes and applied to the sandy stretches which were impassible, and this road is now the main traveled road through the west part of the refuge.

Lake guages were set on all of the main lakes during the fall of 1934. These were heaved out by ice during November, these were all reset during the early part of May, and water levels are again being taken each week.

Permanent Bench Marks were placed on all of the lakes which have guages, during the summer and fall of 1934.

Permanent Bench Marks have also been placed at each of the 33 wells used for ground water study.

A telephone has been installed in the cabin on the east side of the refuge and also in the basement at headquarters, which puts the telephone line built by the CCC during the summer of 1934 in working order.

