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GEORGE M. SUTTON AVIAN RESEARCH CENTER, P.O. BOX 2007, BARTLESVILLE, OK. 74005 (DLR); USDA FOREST SERVICE, SEMINOLE RANGER DISTRICT, 40929 STATE ROAD 19, UMATILLA, FL. 32784 (JEP); 403140 W. 2010 DR., BARTLESVILLE, OK. 74006 (BLG). Received 6 March 2001, accepted 17 October 2001.

## NOTES

*Bull. Okla. Ornithol. Soc.* 34:25–27, 2001  
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**Wood Stork invasion in McCurtain County, Oklahoma.**—An invasion of Wood Storks (*Mycteria americana*) into McCurtain County, Oklahoma, occurred during the summer of 2000. The first storks reported that year were four that we observed at the Red Slough Wetland Reserve Project (Red Slough) on 5 June. By August, numbers had increased dramatically, with the greatest number of Wood Storks being 158 on 30 August 2000 at Red Slough. Three of the five bird censuses we made during the month showed 100 or more storks. On 5 September 2000 we observed 250 Storks, and on 19 September, we counted 350, the highest number ever recorded for Oklahoma. The last date storks were reported at Red Slough in 2000 was on 27 September when we observed eight. All but two reports of Wood Storks in Oklahoma during 2000 were from Red Slough, the other reports being of single birds in Washington and Sequoyah counties in early September (J. Arterburn, pers. comm.).

Red Slough is a 2954-ha impounded shallow fresh marsh project developed in 1998 and 1999. It is located in the Red River floodplain 10 km south of Haworth and 3 km north of the Red River (Fig. 1). The area is enrolled in the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Wetland Reserve Program, which has resulted in construction of extensive dikes and water level management structures.

A possible factor in the invasion of Wood Storks was the abnormally hot and dry summer in 2000 throughout the south central states, resulting in reduced water levels and concentration of prey species such as fish and crawfish. According to Tom Smith (pers. comm.), the Oklahoma State Forestry fire lookout tower at Tom, 6 km east of Red Slough, recorded only 5.0 cm of rain in July, none in August, and 5.8 cm in late September. Also recorded were 15 days during August when the temperature reached or exceeded 37.8°C. Crawfish, which serve as an important food source

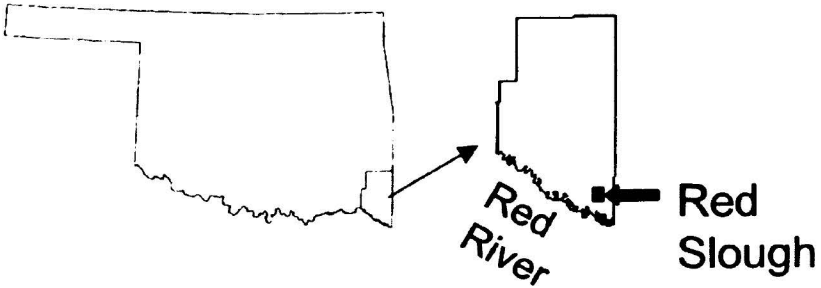


Fig. 1. Location of Red Slough Wetland Reserve Project in McCurtain Co., Oklahoma.

for Wood Storks, are abundant in the shallow impoundments of Red Slough and attract large numbers of wading birds. In mid-August 2000, Heck observed a flock of 98 White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) actively feeding on crawfish in 20-cm deep water. The crawfish being captured were approximately 7 cm in length, and approximately 4 seconds would elapse from time of capture of each one until it was swallowed. Heck scanned the flock twice, counting 26 and 28 White Ibis with captured crawfish in their bills, giving an indication of their abundance in the Red Slough impoundments.

The first state record for the Wood Stork in Oklahoma was on 22–26 August 1934, when 1–4 birds were seen near Spiro, LeFlore Co. Until our observations in 2000 the previous high count of Wood Storks for the state was 150 on 13–14 August 1954 in McCurtain Co. (Baumgartner and Baumgartner, Oklahoma bird life, Univ. Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1992). During 1999, we found 27 storks at Red Slough on 31 August and 28 on 13 September, although we did not search extensively for them that year. Storks found in Oklahoma originate from breeding colonies in Mexico (Coulter et al., Wood Stork in The birds of North America (F. Gill and A. Poole, eds.), no. 409, Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, and American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, D.C., 1999.). Thus, the storks found in Oklahoma probably move through Texas. B. Frenz (pers. comm.) stated that Wood Storks are usually uncommon from mid-June to mid-October and rare at other times in central Texas, but in 2000 many more were present. A raptor migration census during the late summer and fall of 2000 conducted by Hawk Watch International at Hazel Bazemore County Park in northwest Corpus Christi, Texas, included counts of migrating Wood Storks, and in 2000, 875 migrating storks were counted

from 23–27 September.—BERLIN A. HECK, 109 Kaye Dr., Broken Bow, OK. 74728 and W. DAVID ARBOUR, 1462 West Collin Raye Dr., DeQueen, AR. 71832. Received 30 October 2001, accepted 12 November 2001.

*Bull. Okla. Ornithol. Soc.* 34:27, 2001  
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**First nesting record for the Common Moorhen in McCurtain County, Oklahoma.**—On 20 July 2000 we observed a family group of two adult and seven flightless young Common Moorhens (*Gallinula chloropus*) in a shallow, flooded marsh in the 2954-ha U.S. Department of Agriculture's Red Slough Wetland Reserve Project in McCurtain County, 10 km south of Haworth, Oklahoma. We found adult Common Moorhens with juveniles in the same area once in August and three times in September. Our last observation of Common Moorhens was on 1 October 2000 when we observed two well-feathered juveniles.

The first documented nesting of Common Moorhens in Oklahoma was in Love County on 15 May 1889 (Nice, *The birds of Oklahoma*, revised ed., Publ. Univ. Oklahoma Biol. Surv. 3:86, 1931). No additional nestings were documented until 1961, when broods were recorded in Bryan and Grady counties. Nestings have since been recorded in Oklahoma, Canadian, Major, Kingfisher, and (now) McCurtain counties (Baumgartner and Baumgartner, *Oklahoma bird life*, Univ. Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1992; J. Arterburn, pers. comm.).—BERLIN A. HECK, 109 Kaye Dr., Broken Bow, OK. 74728 and W. DAVID ARBOUR, 1462 West Collin Raye Dr., DeQueen, AR. 71832. Received 3 November 2000, accepted 31 October 2001.

### Recent Literature

Johnsgard, Paul A., 2001. *Prairie Birds: Fragile Splendor in the Great Plains*. University Press of Kansas. Lawrence, Kansas. ISBN:0-7006-1067-7. 331 pages. \$29.95.

This book celebrates the simple, elegant beauty of the prairies of the American Great Plains and their birdlife. Johnsgard's lifetime of experience, knowledge, and great love of the prairies is quite elegantly expressed in both words and drawings. The book opens with chapters describing the geological structure and plant communities of the different sorts of prairies, information necessary to understand the true complexity of this ecosystem. Johnsgard continues with chapters describing specific bird communities, such as the grassland grouse and prairie-chickens, owls, and prairie sparrows. He ends the book with a discussion of the disappearing prairie and its imperiled avifauna, a sobering account of the current state of conservation in the Great Plains. As always, Johnsgard has illustrated the book with numerous maps and line drawings of birds. These pen-and-ink illustrations are always my favorite part of a Johnsgard book. There is one particularly charming drawing of a Burrowing Owl family and an

other of an incubating Upland Sandpiper. Throughout the book, Johnsgard has sprinkled quotes from writers such as Peter Matthiessen, William Least Heat-Moon, and Henry David Thoreau. Each chapter ends with a brief section on additional reading, and there is a substantial bibliography and glossary at the end of the book. An appendix describing some of the major grassland preserves in the Great Plains is also included. Johnsgard says it best, "...but a prairie without the song of a Horned Lark or a Sprague's Pipit overhead is no prairie at all. And a place with no prairies at all is not a place that will stir the heart."—*Mary Bomberger Brown*

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