

(Birds)

Craters of the Moon National Monument
Arco, Idaho 83213

N-1419

December 4, 1969

Dr. Oliver K. Scott
437 East 13th St.
Casper, Wyoming 82601

Dear Dr. Scott:

I regret that I neglected to send you a report for the summer season; I actually had little to comment on for that period. In regard to your report in the June 1969 APN, I found the Pied-billed Grebe wintering on Silver Creek not Silver Lake (page 503). Also I doubt that anyone could locate Niagara Springs on a map, and to say that it is in central Idaho is quite misleading. It is located south of Wendell, on the Snake River in Gooding County. The fact that the location is in the Snake River Canyon rather than in the central mountains or high desert is important.

Weather: Mild, dry weather prevailed this fall. Some cold, wet weather in mid-October seemed to give presage of an early winter, but it was a false alarm. Five inches of snow fell at Craters of the Moon, November 7, but none has fallen since, and the ground was bare (except on north slopes) at the end of the period.

Idaho Records:

- Common Snipe - One observed at a beaver pond in Cottonwood Canyon, October 25 & 30 and November 2 was the first recorded at Craters of the Moon.
- Mourning Dove - One in Cottonwood Canyon, CRMO, November 15 was quite late.
- Saw-whet Owl - A recently killed bird was picked up from the highway in the Monument, October 18; it had apparently been hit by a car.
- Clark's Nutcracker - Flocks of several hundred were present in the Monument through early September, but numbers diminished after that. They seem to move into this area in numbers to feed on limber pine nuts. A few are always present.
- Common Bushtit - 18 were found on the Snake River at Niagara Springs, Gooding County, October 20 and six, November 11. The species apparently occurs regularly in this locality.
- Red-breasted Nuthatch - Numerous at Craters of the Moon in late August but disappeared in early September.
- Dipper - One at a beaver pond in Cottonwood Canyon, October 26 was the first for the Monument. It would have had to have flown overland to reach this site.
- Sage Thrasher - A dozen or more frequented the Visitor Center area at CRMO in late August.
- Pine Grosbeak - One was seen at the Craters of the Moon Visitor Center, October 21, and the species was present in the Monument until at least November 16 with a high count of 20 in Cottonwood Canyon, November 6. I had not seen it here previously, although there are a few other records.

Gray-crowned Rosy Finch - A Flock of about 400 was seen in Cottonwood Canyon, CRMO, October 30.

Common Redpoll - Three were seen at the Craters of the Moon Visitor Center, October 19 and one, November 22.

Red Crossbill - This species invaded the Monument for a brief time in late August; the high count was about 22, August 21. They had apparently departed by September 1.

Wyoming Records: I made some trips to the Jackson Hole area this fall and obtained some interesting records there.

Common Loon - One was on Jenny Lake, Grand Teton National Park, October 14.

Catbird - One was seen at Jackson, September 22.

Wilson's Warbler - One observed at close range at Jackson, October 14 seemed very late; it was not injured.

American Redstart - One was seen at Jackson, September 22 and again September 23.

Pine Grosbeak - A flock of about a dozen was observed along the Jenny Lake Trail, October 14 and again November 3.

Red Crossbill - A small flock of about 6 was found along the Jenny Lake Trail, November 3.

White-winged Crossbill - I was thrilled to find a flock of about 50 feeding in Engelmann spruce at Hidden Falls, near Jenny Lake, Grand Teton National Park, October 14. Both males and females were present, and I watched them for about 10 minutes. All field marks, especially the white wing-bars, were clearly seen. I had observed this species previously in Alberta and Minnesota but never in the western U.S.

I hope that you and your wife will have an enjoyable holiday season and a successful Christmas Count.

Sincerely,

Dennis L. Carter
Park Naturalist