

Notes

JANUARY RECORD FOR WESTERN GREBE AT AMENIA, NORTH DAKOTA.—On 6 January 1976, a Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) was seen resting in a brushy pasture on the Jim Guy farm near Amenia, North Dakota (20 miles WNW of Fargo). On 8 January 1976, the Guys notified the Zoology Department at NDSU of the presence of the grebe and that they had picked the bird up to protect it from the dogs. Cassel brought the grebe to the campus where it was placed in a cage for observation. On 10 January a large tub was filled with cold tap water and the bird and five minnows were placed in it. The bird made a few feeble stabs at the fish but failed to secure any. After a period of time the bird became very sluggish and was placed back in a cage. It became difficult to care for the bird as it would not eat on its own and was very aggressive when force fed. The bird died on 11 January.

Johnsgard (1953, *Birds of North Dakota*, North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, Fargo, typescript) records the Western Grebe as being "A locally common migrant and summer resident in central North Dakota." The latest fall record he reports is 2 November 1950, at Long Lake, North Dakota. Three later records in the museum files at NDSU are: 3 November 1966, Snake Creek NWR (Audubon Field Notes, 21(1): 48); 11 November 1964, Des Lacs NWR (Audubon Field Notes, 19(1): 48); and 12 November 1927, from Long Lake (Found frozen in ice. Specimen was mounted and is now at the State Historical Museum at Bismarck, Accession No. 3260.).

The occurrence of a Western Grebe in eastern North Dakota in January is most unexpected. Why this bird was present at this time of year will probably never be known. It can be speculated, however, that the bird did not migrate because there was open water in the area due to the mild winter up until that time, but the period around the time of the discovery of the bird was very cold.

Data from eight reporting stations in the east central region (Amenia area) of the state showed the weather to be fairly moderate the last two weeks of December, with the highs in the 20's and the lows in the teens. During the first nine days of January these same stations reported an average daily high of around +10°F and an average low of around -15°F. The bird was first noticed on 6 January when Amenia reported a high of +19°F and a low of -19°F on this day. (NOAA. Climatological Data. December 1975, Vol. 84, No. 12 and January 1976, Vol. 85, No. 1.)—*John M. Wiebe and J. Frank Cassel, Zoology Department, North Dakota State University, Fargo, North Dakota, 58102.*