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BREEDING RECORDS FOR CLARK'S GREBE IN COLORADO AND NEVADA

Richard L. Bunn

ABSTRACT.—Described as a new breeding species is Clark's Grebe in Colorado and Nevada.

The Western Grebe (Aechmophorus occidentalis) and Clark's Grebe (A. clarkii) were originally named and described by Lawrence (1858 in Baird 1858) as two species based on plumage, bill structure, and color, and size. Coues (1874) reduced the Clark's Grebe to subspecific rank, which was upheld by the American Ornithologists' Union (in Nuechterlein 1981). Recently, a decision by the AOU Committee on Classification and Nomenclature (AOU 1985) restored the Clark's Grebe to specific rank, based on studies of assortative mating (Storer 1965, Ratti 1979), spatial segregation (Ratti 1979), and, within sympatric populations, advertising calls and ecological segregation (Nuechterlein 1981). Breeding populations of Clark's Grebe are known in Oregon, California, Utah, North Dakota, and South Dakota in the United States; Manitoba and Saskatchewan in Canada; Chihuahua, Durango, Zacatecas, Nayarit, Jalisco, Michoacán, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, State of Mexico, and Guerrero in Mexico (Storer 1965, Ratti 1979, 1981, Nuechterlein 1981, Williams 1982). This note reports the nesting of Clark's Grebe in Colorado and Nevada.

Two courting pairs of Clark's Grebe were observed 21 June 1978 at Barr Lake, Adams County, Colorado (B. Andrews, personal communication). Since then Clark's Grebe has been sighted in small numbers in eastern Colorado in the South Platte River drainage. They are apparently far less abundant there than the Western Grebe during migration and during the nesting season (personal observation). However, in the Arkansas River valley and areas in the San Luis Valley, the Clark's Grebe represented approximately half the breeding Aechmophorus grebe population on several reservoirs from 1983 to 1985.

On 4 July 1983 Charles Chase III and I found 20 adult and 5 juvenile Clark's Grebes in Saguache County, Colorado, southwest of Russell Lakes State Wildlife Area. Four juveniles occurred singly and were each accompanied by one adult bird; one juvenile was accompanied by two adults. The grebes were seen on two reservoirs that had extensive bullrush stands along their western edge. The advertising calls of the Clark's Grebe were heard throughout the visit, but Western Grebes were neither seen nor heard on either reservoir.

On 17 June 1984 I saw 33 adult and 8 juvenile Clark's Grebes at Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, Fallon, Nevada. The juveniles occurred singly with either 1 or 2 accompanying adults on Lead and Goose lakes. Only adult Clark's Grebes were seen on Stillwater Point Reservoir.

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LITERATURE CITED


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