

## SORA IN A TREE

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On July 31, 1976, while bird watching near our cottage at Weymouth, Manitoba (at the south end of Lake Winnipeg, approximately 10 miles north of Winnipeg), I observed a Sora perched on a branch of an oak tree, approximately 18 feet above the ground. It remained motionless for several seconds and made no sound.

To understand it is rare to find this ground-feeding bird on a tree limb. I presume this bird was flushed from a brush which is about 200 yards from our cottage. Along the wedge of the brush are many bushes against a background of trees.

To confirm my observations I referred to A. C. Bent and found he had one reference to a Sora in a tree: the autumnal flight to Bermuda is even more remarkable. Major J. W.

Wedderburn (a naturalist in Bermuda) states the it (the sora) regularly visits Bermuda, arriving early in Sept. The first specimen, obtained Sept. 3, 1847, was settling on a branch of a mangrove tree — a very unusual action for this species, as it very rarely alights on a limb, and this one was four feet from the ground.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>BENT, A. C. 1926. Life histories of North American marsh birds. Bull. 135. Smithsonian Inst., Washington. 392 pp.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** An earlier observation of a Sora climbing and even nesting at some height was reported by Thomas E. Randall (*Blue Jay* 20:116) who found a Sora nest in 1945 at Brooks, Alberta, in the center of a willow bush and four and one-half feet above water. The nest was discovered when a Sora flew from near the top of the bush which was about seven feet tall. Although normally a ground dwelling bird on its breeding range, these two incidents indicate the versatility of the species.



-eyed grass

Gary W. Seib