
Eastern Iowa Birdwatch



The Iowa City Bird Club Newsletter

Volume 35 Number 2

September 2015

Schedule

Field trips depart from the location listed for each trip. Please contact the leader in advance if you plan to meet the group at the trip destination. Many of our trips are accessible to people with disabilities; for more information contact the trip leader. **Meetings** are held at the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center, Room A, 220 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, generally at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month.

***** PLEASE NOTE *****

FALL MEETINGS WILL BE HELD AT THE ROBERT A. LEE RECREATION CENTER, ROOM A, IOWA CITY

September 16, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk. Meet at the Kent Park CEC. Rick Hollis, 665-3141.

September 17, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting. Jim Durbin of Cedar Rapids Audubon Society will present "Moths of Iowa".

September 27, Sunday, 7 a.m. Cedar and Muscatine Counties for sparrows and other fall migrants. *Meet at Fin & Feather parking lot on S. Riverside Drive.* Mark Brown, 358-8765.

October 3, Saturday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Hawk Watch at Bluestem Shelter at Macbride Nature-Recreation Area. Bring a lawn chair and spotting scope if you have one. Karen Disbrow, 430-0315.

October 7, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk. Meet at the Kent Park CEC. Rick Hollis, 665-3141.

October 15, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting. Jessica Bolser, USFWS Biologist at Port Louisa National Wildlife Refuge, will present "Birding Port Louisa Refuge."

October 21, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk. Meet at the Kent Park CEC. Rick Hollis, 665-3141.

October 24, Saturday, 8 a.m. Cone Marsh. *Meet at Fin & Feather parking lot on S. Riverside Drive.* Bring a spotting scope if you have one. Linda Rudolph, 325-8393.

November 4, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk. Meet at the Kent Park CEC. Rick Hollis, 665-3141.

November 15, Sunday, 7 a.m. Lansing Area and Mississippi River for Tundra Swans and other late fall migrants. *Meet in the parking lot east of the gas station at the new Hy-Vee on N. Dodge Street.* This is an all-day trip. Call Karen if you plan on attending, as there is a possibility of taking a boat trip on the Mississippi River. Karen Disbrow, 430-0315.

November 18, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk. Meet at the Kent Park CEC. Rick Hollis, 665-3141.

Continued on next page →

Schedule (continued)

November 19, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting. Linda Rudolph and Bill Scheible will present “Birding the Areas of La Mancha, Coto Donana and Extremadura in Spain.”

December 20, Sunday. Iowa City Christmas Bird Count. To participate please contact Diana Pesek at (319) 560-8393 or keesiemom@yahoo.com. More information will be provided in the December newsletter.

From the President’s Desk Karen Disbrow

I hope you are all enjoying the fall birding season. It has been a challenging summer for the club, as we have been searching for a new permanent location for our meetings. This fall our meetings will be held at the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center (a.k.a. Iowa City Recreation Center), 220 S. Gilbert Street, Iowa City, in Room A on the second floor. There is free parking at the rear of the building after 5 p.m., and there is an elevator for access to the second floor. I would like to thank Grant Wood AEA for hosting our meetings for the past nine years.

When you receive this, two fall club events will already have taken place, the second annual Cy-Hawk Big Day Challenge and the Pelican Festival at Coralville Reservoir. We will have full reports on these events in the next newsletter. We tried to notify everyone about these events on our web site and by email – if you don’t currently receive club announcements by email and would like to, please send me your email address. We have several other fun trips and events lined up for the fall schedule, including some new locations as well as familiar favorites we haven’t visited for a while. As always I am interested in setting up trips to where you want to go and to see the birds you want to see. If you have an idea, I’ll find a leader.

I was sorry to hear of the passing of Bob Anderson of Decorah on July 27. Bob was the founder and director of the Raptor Resource Project and was known as the man behind the Decorah Eagles webcam. Bob was instrumental in saving the Peregrine Falcon from extinction,

and led the successful effort to reintroduce them to their historic eyries on the bluffs of the Mississippi River. Bob’s legacy will live on as others carry on his work through the Raptor Resource Project.

We have purchased new Iowa Ornithologists’ Union Iowa Bird Checklists, and will sell them at meetings for 25¢ each or 5 for \$1.00. As always we will provide a free copy to new members. The IOU also has a new publication produced by Rick Hollis available, called the Iowa Yellowbook. For more information see page four.

There have been recent changes at the Macbride Raptor Project and Iowa Young Birders – see the separate announcements in this issue for more information.

Remember that members receive a 10% discount on regularly-priced bird seed and suet at Leno & Cilek North Ace Hardware and Forever Green Garden Center. Just bring your newsletter or membership card to receive the discount.

A Bird Population Monitoring Initiative at Kent Park

In May of 2014, Rob Bradley, Mark Bowman, and Amy Collette began research towards establishing a MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship) site in F. W. Kent Park near Tiffin. Rob is a federally licensed bird bander, Mark has a banding sub-permit, and Amy is a long-time banding volunteer with first-rate mist-net extraction and scribing skills.

Bird banding is a research tool sponsored for many years by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Through the years, it has provided an immense amount of species-specific data such as distribution ranges, migration routes, and longevity. MAPS is a standardized protocol created by the Institute for Bird Populations that derives population vitality information from bird banding data. The information can significantly enhance that gathered via Breeding Bird Atlas surveying.

We chose the Kent Park site for three primary reasons. First, the intersections of Kent Park's forest, prairie, and wetlands create many edge habitats wherein birds are quite abundant. Second, we were heartily welcomed and promised support by Johnson County Conservation staff. Third, we anticipated volunteer support from the local area's vibrant birding community. We were not disappointed in any regard.

Brad Freidhof and Dave Wehde suggested two trial sites for us, and provided material support in creating mist-net lanes and a banding bench. Sydney Algreen and Dory Kjosa helped us schedule banding on quieter days, and to use the bird blind for mist-net extraction training. Kent Park rangers and maintenance staff also provided enthusiastic and effective help. We have received excellent volunteer support from Jen Belyeu, Rick Hollis, Kathleen Kuenstling, and Linda Quinn.

In our trial breeding season, we captured 207 individual birds among 25 species. The most abundant species included Gray Catbirds, Common Yellowthroats, House Wrens, Baltimore Orioles, American Redstarts, American Goldfinches, and Indigo Buntings. Some other species that we especially delighted in capturing were Cedar Waxwings, Eastern Bluebirds, a Prothonotary Warbler, and both a Yellow-throated and a White-eyed Vireo.

While our primary goal is to assess population vitality, we also hope to enhance birding in this beautiful park, and to raise awareness of its

value as a wildlife refuge. We wish to thank everyone for their support.

– Mark Bowman

Iowa Young Birders Names New Executive Director

Tyler Harms was recently appointed to the position of Executive Director of Iowa Young Birders. Tyler had been serving as Associate Director since December 2014. Former Executive Director Carl Bendorf and his wife are moving to Colorado, where their daughter and son-in-law live. Carl will continue to assist Tyler as needed and will remain as a board member. Tyler has planned an exciting schedule of upcoming young birder events which are listed on the Iowa Young Birders website at www.iowayoungbirders.org/events.

Carl stated, "Thank you to all the parents, grandparents, friends, volunteers and, especially, the young birders who have all helped to make the first three years of Iowa Young Birders so successful and gratifying! I can assure you that Iowa Young Birders is in the very best of hands and our commitment to encouraging and developing the next generation of Iowa's birding and conservation community leaders is as strong as ever."

Changes Underway at Macbride Raptor Project

Recently, the Macbride Raptor Project's administrators at the University of Iowa and Kirkwood Community College announced that they have placed a moratorium on the project's rehabilitation activities and are no longer accepting injured birds. As we are entering a period of greatly increased raptor movement, including migration through the state, individuals who encounter an injured bird will need to know of alternative resources for intake, treatment, and rehab. The Black Hawk Wildlife Rehabilitation Project covers the region of the state that Macbride formerly covered, and

they have people with experience and permits for rehabilitating raptors. Their hotline is (319) 277-6511 and their web site is <http://www.bhwildliferehab.com/bhwildliferehab.com/HOME.html>. In addition to this change, a new director for the Macbride Raptor Project was recently hired. The live bird displays at the Macbride Raptor Center are still open to the public, and the birds there continue to be cared for by volunteers.

New Yellowbook on Iowa Birds Available

The Iowa Yellowbook: A Field Checklist of The Birds of Iowa is now available from the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. Compiled by Rick Hollis, the Yellowbook contains information about the seasonal occurrence of 422 species of birds that are on the Iowa Checklist. For all 309 regular species (seen every year or nearly every year) there are bar charts detailing weekly occurrence and the early and late dates on which the species have been seen. Less detailed information is provided about the 24 casual species (seen many years but not all) and 89 accidental species (seen once to several times).

For all species, it is noted whether there are breeding records. The Iowa Checklist contains 426 species, but two are extinct and two are extirpated from Iowa. The data contained in the Yellowbook comes from sightings submitted to the IOU Field Reports and to eBird.

Field guides are pretty vague about when birds arrive and leave – mainly maps with blue and yellow or blue and pink areas for seasonal occurrence. Of course, it should be noted birds do not read bird books and we always are adding birds to our state's list.

For many years, birders in Iowa could rely on the wonderful book *Birds of Iowa* by Thomas Kent and James Dinsmore, but this book is now out of print. Another source of information is the list of early and late dates, which is updated several times per year, found on the IOU

website. But early and late records often are pretty extreme – the Orange-crowned Warbler found on last year's Iowa City Christmas Bird Count is one such record – and don't indicate when the species is expected to be seen.

The Yellowbook is a slim 20 pages long and is sized to fit with most field guides. It is available for \$3 from Karen Disbrow or Rick Hollis, or from the IOU website for \$6 for two (www.iowabirds.org/IOU/Merchandise.aspx).

Mobile App Review: The Warbler Guide App

The Warbler Guide is a revolutionary and widely-acclaimed field guide to North American warblers by Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle, published in 2013 by Princeton University Press. Now there is a companion app available for Apple's iOS platform. (At this time there is no Android version available.)

I broke down and bought the Warbler Guide App this spring. Wow! It is as good as I expected. Just as *The Warbler Guide* really blazed new ground for bird guides, The Warbler Guide App does the same.

Among the many features it offers is showing you only the expected warblers by season and region, and you can start with one of six views of all the warblers. You can sort the species by color in addition to species name and taxonomy. You can also sort by song, and view sonograms. A set of icons for each species gives habitat in which it is most likely to be seen – canopy, midlevel, trunk and limbs, or ground. Another set of icons represents typical behavior, silhouette, and undertail. There is a mini-icon showing the colors. The sound collection includes multiple variations of multiple songs for each species as well as a call and flight call.

You can page through multiple views of any species, and if you choose one of the similar species a window pops up with the same view of this species. If you choose the 3D views, you can rotate both species in synch to see the birds

from the side, below, head-on, or any other angle you chose. I have not looked to see how much memory the app is occupying, but I have a feeling the 3D images are memory hogs.

The birds that you get to choose from to start out with (and also in the similar species window) are limited by the region and season that you choose. You can also filter them by a number of visual and song characteristics.

This app is extraordinary! For the first time we are seeing an app that fully realizes the potential of the platform, instead of just being a mini field guide in your pocket.

– Rick Hollis

Books for Birders: Offshore Sea Life

Offshore Sea Life ID Guide: West Coast. Steve N. G. Howell and Brian L. Sullivan. Princeton University Press, 2015. 56 pages. Softcover. \$14.95.

I've attempted three pelagic trips in my birding life; one involved pretty awful seasickness amid the lifers, another had a moment with me threatening to throw myself overboard due to drastic seasickness amid the lifers, and one thankfully turned around at the jetty due to extreme waves. I'm someone who gets sick on a swing set. So am I the best person to review the new Steve Howell and Brian Sullivan guide, *Offshore Sea Life ID Guide: West Coast*? Possibly not!

This is a short (56 pages) rain-jacket pocket-sized paperback guide for reference use while out on the boat. It packs in many color photograph examples of typical sightings superimposed on water/sky backgrounds like those seen in the Crossley ID Guide series. The authors are clear that this is to be mostly used for sightings seen away from the shore (it skips most large gulls) yet occasionally strays to include common near-shore wildlife such as Pigeon Guillemot or Harbor Porpoise. The guide

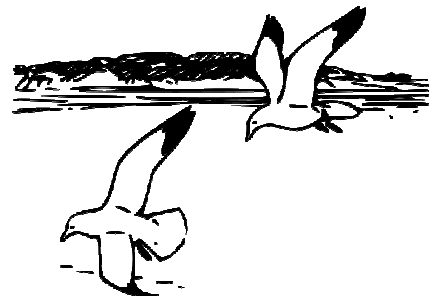
is geared towards the beginner or intermediate offshore watcher and most Iowa City birders won't find the need for this book until they have booked their first pelagic.

There is a helpful glossary of terms in the front which includes some activities the mammals partake in (porpoising, spy-hopping) though I would have included the descriptor "falcate" which they often use to describe dorsal fin shape. Due to the intended audience and need for brevity, descriptions do not often refer to specific bird feather groupings; instead the authors were smart to mostly focus on terms like "underwing" with a few "primary" or "covert" exceptions tossed in for those that are savvy. The trick with short beginner guides is figuring out how much info to try to include. Identifying Common vs. Arctic Tern probably needs more than one page, so it's nice that the authors included the line "best called Common/Arctic".

The mammal section includes many dorsal shots of whales and porpoises along with fluking tails and blow spray. I imagine many of these would be tricky identifications based on the photos. I don't have much experience with offshore wildlife mammal identification but I could see this guide being able to get you close to an identification for the tricky ones and the authors are good about using the descriptions to include behavior tips, typical sighting locations, and time of year for further help with ID.

Overall this will be a useful and highly portable guide to take with you on your first west coast pelagic trip, but be sure to get that prescription for a scopolamine patch!

– Jason Paulios



2015 Johnson County Spring Count

Chris Caster

The Johnson County Spring Count was held on May 9, 2015. The early morning temperature was 55° and the afternoon high was 70°. It was about as nice a 24-hour stretch as you could wish. Winds were light all day and occasional afternoon clouds only brought shade. Thirty-two participants might have been our largest number ever. We broke tradition and held our lunch at the North Liberty Community Center, rather than the Coralville Hy-Vee, as we weren't sure that their new dining area would fit our needs.

Bird numbers were modest, but we managed 163 species on the day, which was above average. Ten species of waterfowl was decent. Nineteen shorebirds and 23 warblers were pretty good.

We had a number of interesting birds this year. At the Mallard Ponds at Hawkeye Wildlife Area were a Least Bittern, Bell's Vireo and a Henslow's Sparrow. A Greater White-fronted Goose was at Round Pond. An American Avocet and a Willet were also found at Hawkeye. Black Terns were at Terry Trueblood Recreation Area. An American Woodcock and a Wilson's Snipe were at Williams Prairie. An Acadian Flycatcher was along Alpine Ave NW. Veery, Cerulean Warbler, and Kentucky Warbler were at Squire Point. A Summer Tanager was at the Hills Access. A Loggerhead Shrike and a Northern Mockingbird were at 500th Street and Johnson-Muscatine Road. Pine Siskins were at two feeder locations.

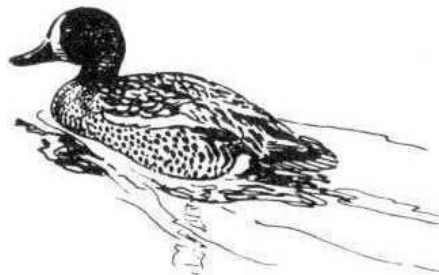
The most notable miss may have been Ruby-crowned Kinglet. But American Bittern, White-eyed Vireo, Prothonotary Warbler, Sedge Wren, and Marsh Wren were also missed. And just to prove that every year is different, it is quite ironic that the Hooded Merganser, Dunlin, Common Nighthawk, Northern Mockingbird, and Cerulean Warbler recorded on this year's count, were all notable misses on last year's near-record count of 174 species. So I'm letting it be known that we missed out on Northern Goshawk this year. Thanks to everyone for helping.

Participants: Kyle and Dena Belcher, Miriam, Ruth & Sarah Borntrager, Mark Brown, Chris Caster, Brandon Caswell, Gerald Denning, Drew Dillman, Karen Disbrow, Chris Edwards, Linda Fisher, Jim Forde, Jim Fuller, Rick Hollis, Lois Hughes, James Huntington, Merle Ihne, Andy and Katie Long, Mark Madsen, Jess Miller-Camp, Jason Paulios, Diana Pesek, Daryl Ropp, Merlin and Annabel Ropp, Jim Scheib, Sharon Somers, Donna Warner, Kai Weatherman.

SPECIES LIST

Greater White-fronted Goose	1	Pied-billed Grebe	16	Broad-winged Hawk	2
Canada Goose	317	American White Pelican	320	Red-tailed Hawk	19
Wood Duck	71	Double-crested Cormorant	13	American Kestrel	3
Gadwall	39	Least Bittern	1	Sora	12
American Wigeon	1	Great Blue Heron	13	American Coot	244
Mallard	108	Great Egret	2	Black-bellied Plover	1
Blue-winged Teal	200	Green Heron	4	Semipalmated Plover	52
Northern Shoveler	57	Turkey Vulture	109	Killdeer	42
Lesser Scaup	6	Osprey	4	American Avocet	1
Hooded Merganser	3	Bald Eagle	21	Greater Yellowlegs	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	34	Northern Harrier	1	Lesser Yellowlegs	294
Wild Turkey	8	Cooper's Hawk	1	Solitary Sandpiper	11

Willet	1	Yellow-throated Vireo	30	Magnolia Warbler	6
Spotted Sandpiper	19	Blue-headed Vireo	4	Blackburnian Warbler	7
Semipalmated Sandpiper	2	Warbling Vireo	36	Yellow Warbler	38
Least Sandpiper	73	Red-eyed Vireo	46	Chestnut-sided Warbler	12
White-rumped Sandpiper	3	Blue Jay	68	Blackpoll Warbler	4
Pectoral Sandpiper	13	American Crow	64	Palm Warbler	3
Dunlin	28	Horned Lark	5	Yellow-rumped Warbler	27
Stilt Sandpiper	1	Purple Martin	47	Yellow-throated Warbler	4
Long-billed Dowitcher	4	Tree Swallow	118	Black-throated Green Warbler	3
Dowitcher sp.	5	N. Rough-winged Swallow	13	Wilson's Warbler	3
Wilson's Snipe	2	Bank Swallow	30	Summer Tanager	1
American Woodcock	2	Cliff Swallow	349	Scarlet Tanager	26
Wilson's Phalarope	12	Barn Swallow	91	Eastern Towhee	30
Ring-billed Gull	54	Black-capped Chickadee	73	Chipping Sparrow	98
Herring Gull	1	Tufted Titmouse	41	Field Sparrow	27
Caspian Tern	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	30	Vesper Sparrow	4
Forster's Tern	2	Carolina Wren	2	Lark Sparrow	9
Black Tern	10	House Wren	188	Savannah Sparrow	2
Rock Pigeon	8	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	30	Grasshopper Sparrow	6
Eurasian Collared-Dove	2	Eastern Bluebird	30	Henslow's Sparrow	1
Mourning Dove	139	Veery	1	Song Sparrow	68
Eastern Screech-Owl	1	Gray-cheeked Thrush	11	Swamp Sparrow	1
Great Horned Owl	2	Swainson's Thrush	23	White-throated Sparrow	4
Barred Owl	9	Wood Thrush	11	White-crowned Sparrow	14
Common Nighthawk	1	American Robin	455	Northern Cardinal	162
Chimney Swift	13	Gray Catbird	165	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	61
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2	Northern Mockingbird	2	Indigo Bunting	105
Belted Kingfisher	4	Brown Thrasher	15	Dickcissel	16
Red-headed Woodpecker	41	European Starling	108	Bobolink	11
Red-bellied Woodpecker	58	Cedar Waxwing	6	Red-winged Blackbird	796
Downy Woodpecker	29	Ovenbird	10	Eastern Meadowlark	82
Hairy Woodpecker	9	Northern Waterthrush	17	Western Meadowlark	7
Northern Flicker	13	Golden-winged Warbler	6	Common Grackle	156
Pileated Woodpecker	6	Blue-winged Warbler	3	Brown-headed Cowbird	122
Eastern Wood-Pewee	8	Black-and-white Warbler	12	Orchard Oriole	14
Acadian Flycatcher	1	Tennessee Warbler	66	Baltimore Oriole	109
Willow Flycatcher	5	Orange-crowned Warbler	2	House Finch	16
Least Flycatcher	5	Nashville Warbler	44	Pine Siskin	7
Eastern Phoebe	17	Kentucky Warbler	2	American Goldfinch	183
Great Crested Flycatcher	41	Common Yellowthroat	131	House Sparrow	180
Eastern Kingbird	59	American Redstart	114	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	30
Loggerhead Shrike	1	Cerulean Warbler	4		
Bell's Vireo	4	Northern Parula	4	TOTAL SPECIES	163



Warbler Walk Results – April 27-May 22, 2015

Day of week		M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
Species / Date	Days	27	28	29	30	1	4	5	6	7	8	11	12	13	14	15	18	19	20	21	22
Ovenbird	13						X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Worm-eating Warbler	-																				
Louisiana Waterthrush	-																				
Northern Waterthrush	7						X	X	X		X			X		X					X
Golden-winged Warbler	10						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Blue-winged Warbler	4						X	X	X			X									
Black-and-white Warbler	14						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Tennessee Warbler	14						X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Orange-crowned Warbler	6				X		X	X	X		X	X									
Nashville Warbler	13		X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
Connecticut Warbler	3															A				A	X
Mourning Warbler	4													X			X			X	X
Kentucky Warbler	1															X					
Common Yellowthroat	15						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hooded Warbler	-																				
American Redstart	14							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cape May Warbler	1							X													
Cerulean Warbler	1															A					
Northern Parula	12				X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X		X
Magnolia Warbler	9								X			X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Bay-breasted Warbler	-																				
Blackburnian Warbler	12						X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Yellow Warbler	8						X				X					X	X	X	X	X	X
Chestnut-sided Warbler	14						X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Blackpoll Warbler	9						X				X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Palm Warbler	7				X		X	X	X			X			X	X					
Yellow-rumped Warbler	14	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X			X		
Yellow-throated Warbler	-																				
Black-throated Green Warbler	9						X	X	X		X	X	X		X						X
Canada Warbler	7													X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Wilson's Warbler	12								X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

X = Found on Warbler Walk. A = Found but not on Warbler Walk.

Others: Black-billed Cuckoo 5/20, 5/22; Alder Flycatcher 5/18, 5/21, 5/22; Yellow-bellied Flycatcher 5/18-5/22;
Olive-sided Flycatcher 5/18; Philadelphia Vireo 5/22; White-eyed Vireo 5/5-5/7; Summer Tanager 5/15, 5/19, 5/22;
Bobolink 5/5.

Field Trip and Meeting Reports

April 16, Meeting. Photographers Linda and Robert Scarth presented “Capturing the Action: Images from Ecuador”. Linda and Robert love capturing the action wherever they are. Hummingbirds are all action and a subject they particularly enjoy. On their last trip to Ecuador they photographed hummingbirds in special flash setups and in the cloud forest. At one location, photography was expanded into the night when several bat species came to the hummingbird feeders in the flash setups. They also made images of other bird species, moths and plants. Over several days they made video of a pair of White-capped Dippers building a dome-shaped moss nest on a boulder in the middle of a river. A day at the Antisana Reserve (important for Andean Condors) above 13,000 feet elevation added several species from the páramo grasslands above the tree line. One special one was the Ecuadorian Hillstar hummingbird, which lives up to 17,000 feet elevation and experiences torpor at night.

Attendees: Sydney Algreen, Barry Buschelman, Karen Disbrow, Chris Edwards, John Erickson, Bruce Gardner, Therese Guedon, Lauren and Doina Johnson, Jane Knoedel, Nancy Lynch, Ramona McGurk, Rebecca Reiter, Marcia Shaffer, Donna Warner, Diane Zumbach.

April 19, Macbride Nature-Recreation Area. Despite off-and-on rain showers we were able to check out the bird blind and get out to the Bluebird Trail and back without too much of a downpour. Best bird of the day was the pair of Eastern Bluebirds on the Bluebird Trail, where we also had good looks at a Wild Turkey and a coyote. Checking for waterfowl we stopped at the Lake Macbride backwater of the south arm, a boat ramp of the north arm and then had a quick look at Swan Lake. A few Broad-winged Hawks put on a show near the Macbride boat ramp. No warblers were seen but Northern

Parula and Yellow-throated Warbler were heard.

Participants: Lauren Ipsen, Kate Kostenbader, Ted Lepic, Nate Otjen, Linda Quinn (co-leader), Mark and Deb Rolfes, Jim Scheib (co-leader), Sharon Somers.

Birds (37 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Redhead, Ruddy Duck, Ring-necked Pheasant, Wild Turkey, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Turkey Vulture, Broad-winged Hawk, American Coot, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, White-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Brown Thrasher, Northern Parula, Yellow-throated Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Brown-headed Cowbird.

– Jim Scheib



May 3, Hickory Hill Park. We birded the park between rain showers from 8:15 - 9:50 a.m. Many thanks to Mark Madsen with the marvelous ears. We would not have seen or heard as much without his excellent assistance.

Bird highlights: White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Wood Thrush, Golden-winged Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Orange-

crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Blackburnian Warbler, Eastern Towhee.

Participants: Isabelle Bach, Chad, Colleen & Sophia Davis, Karen Disbrow (leader), Corey and Cherie Duggan, Tony Franken, Jaeda Harmon, Kate Kostenbader, Ted Lepic, Katie Long, Lucy Luxenburg, Mark Madsen, Seth Petchers, Linda Quinn, Donna Warner.

– *Karen Disbrow*

May 17, Amana Area. It was a pleasant morning with mostly cloudy skies and temperatures in the 60s. Linda Quinn met me at the Dodge Street Hy-Vee and we headed to Amana. We started the morning south of Homestead, where we did some roadside birding in the extensive pastureland there. We found Grasshopper and Savannah Sparrows, Bobolinks, both meadowlark species, Dickcissels, and a Horned Lark.

We then drove to the Amana Nature Trail, where we were met by Sharon Somers. We hiked a two-mile loop through the savanna and woods. Tennessee Warblers and American Redstarts were abundant, but otherwise migrant warblers were somewhat scarce. Other highlights included a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, two presumed breeding pairs of Acadian Flycatchers, half a dozen Wood Thrushes, and two Scarlet Tanagers. We also enjoyed the abundant spring wildflowers. Just before returning to the parking lot, we spotted both Orchard and Baltimore Orioles.

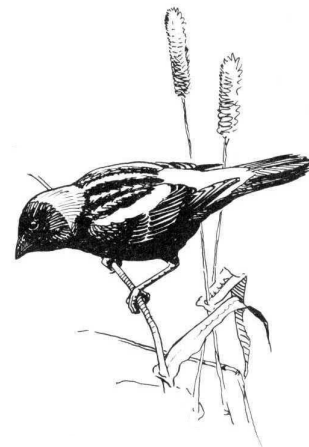
After a pit-stop in Main Amana, we walked the south side of the trail along Lily Lake. We enjoyed seeing two Trumpeter Swan nests, and there was a lingering Ruddy Duck and several Lesser Scaup. We practiced picking Bank Swallows out of the mixed swallow flocks foraging over the lake. And we watched a pair of Eurasian Tree Sparrows making baby tree sparrows near a nest site in a dead tree.

All in all, we sampled a variety of habitats and it was a great morning of birding.

Participants: Chris Edwards (leader), Linda Quinn, Sharon Somers.

Birds (73 species): Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Wood Duck, Mallard, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck, Double-crested Cormorant, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, American Coot, Spotted Sandpiper, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Yellow-throated Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Swainson's Thrush, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Ovenbird, Tennessee Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Western Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, House Finch, American Goldfinch, Eurasian Tree Sparrow.

– *Chris Edwards*



May 21, Meeting. Jim Fuller, with major help from Jim Scheib, presented “Quest for Rare Birds in Iowa.” Stories were related of rarities and their appearance in the state, plus the chase involved in seeing them.

Attendees: Dean Abel, Murray Bouschlicher, Jerry Denning, Karen Disbrow, Vic and Nola Edwards, Bruce Gardner, Peter Hansen, James Huntington, Kristen Lawton, Larry Mahoney, Jamie McCoy, Bob and Jill McKay, Gail McLure, Mary Noble, Mark Oxley, Rosemarie Petzold, Damien Pieper, Linda Quinn, Tom and Carol Rosenberger, Marcia Shaffer, Donna Warner, Lori Ziegenhorn.

June 13, Indiangrass Hills. Six birders joined me for the annual outing to Indiangrass Hills in Iowa County. The weather was overcast and rain was threatening, but we made the trek regardless, especially since all the birders this year had never been to this location before. Just outside the property along 240th Street, a pair of Eurasian-Collared Doves were seen at a private residence. They have been present for the last several years. Also seen along this stretch was a singing Vesper Sparrow, plenty of Dickcissels, and several Brown Thrashers. We then drove along 250th Street, which borders the north part of the property and got a couple of targets there: a nice male Bobolink, and a singing but secretive Sedge Wren.

After a while we made our way to the traditional area that starts just east of the I Avenue parking area. Another male Bobolink was present, and three Henslow’s Sparrows were singing at the beginning of the trail. One of them showed itself pretty well. After about fifteen minutes, the rain began, so the group retreated back to the parking area, and we decided to call it a day since the radar didn’t look too promising. The outing lasted just over an hour, but we did manage 36 total species and most of the targets, so not a bad field trip overall.

Participants: Fawn Bowden, Mark Brown (leader), Jaeda Harmon, Gail Heater, Andy and Katie Long, Seth Petchers.

Birds (36 species): Mallard, Wild Turkey, Red-tailed Hawk, Mourning Dove, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, Barn Swallow, House Wren, Sedge Wren, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Common Yellowthroat, Field Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Henslow’s Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Cardinal, Dickcissel, Indigo Bunting, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– *Mark Brown*

June 20, Turkey Vulture Festival at Coralville Dam East Overlook. The day started with great enthusiasm, as up to 100 Turkey Vultures were perched on the north side of the dam face. By 8 a.m. about 75 had departed, but there were still good numbers left to show visitors. Barn Swallows, Tree Swallows, Chipping Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, and House Wren were also seen.

The morning was mostly overcast, and although it poured in Iowa City and Cedar Rapids, it only sprinkled on us about 11 a.m. Nearly 40 adults and kids attended. Many thanks to Bruce Gardner, Jim Walters of The Songbird Project, Dave Irvin of Bees of Eastern Iowa, Donna Warner, Pat Keiffer, Linda Fisher, Ed Allgood, and Tom Woodruff, who came and helped out or had displays. Thanks to the Macbride Raptor Project for providing a Turkey Vulture wing and foot to compare with a Wild Turkey wing and foot, to demonstrate the size and weight difference of these birds.

– *Karen Disbrow*

July 18, Butterfly Count. The seventeenth annual Iowa City Butterfly Count, part of the North American Butterfly Association's Fourth of July Butterfly Count program, was conducted by Chris Edwards and Linda Rudolph. It was a warm day with temperatures ranging from 79-89° F. It was mostly cloudy in the morning, with an early brief light rain, and mostly sunny and breezy in the afternoon. We visited Kent Park, Macbride Nature-Recreation Area, Lake Macbride State Park, and Turkey Creek Preserve.

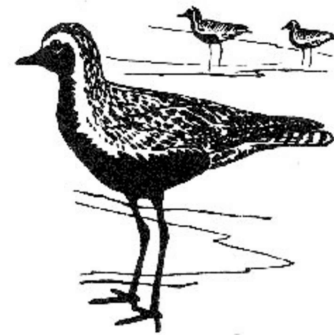
The count's 17-year average is 33 species and 1,057 individuals. This year in ten hours we found 29 species and 2,297 individuals. Clouded and Orange Sulphurs, Summer Azures, Meadow Fritillaries, and Red Admirals were found in good numbers. More than half the total butterflies were found at an alfalfa field south of Solon. The most prominent nectar sources elsewhere were mountain mint, wild bergamot, and red clover. There seemed to be less swamp milkweed than in previous years.

For more information about the NABA butterfly count program, visit www.naba.org.

Participants: Chris Edwards (leader), Linda Rudolph.

Butterflies (29 species, 2,297 individuals): Black Swallowtail 1, Eastern Tiger Swallowtail 6, Cabbage White 164, Clouded Sulphur 1236, Orange Sulphur 323, Little Yellow 2, Eastern Tailed-Blue 15, Summer Azure 284, Great Spangled Fritillary 18, Meadow Fritillary 23 (record high count), Pearl Crescent 19, Question Mark 8, Eastern Comma 6, Gray Comma 2, American Lady 2, Painted Lady 1, Red Admiral 85 (record high count), Red-spotted Purple 1, Viceroy 10, Hackberry Emperor 1, Common Wood-Nymph 3, Monarch 33, Silver-spotted Skipper 18, Least Skipper 11, Peck's Skipper 10, Tawny-edged Skipper 7, Dion Skipper 2, Black Dash 4, Dun Skipper 2.

– Chris Edwards



August 8, Hawkeye Wildlife Area. Nine birders joined me for the outing to Hawkeye Wildlife Area in Johnson County. This is the trip that is planned annually in early August to capitalize on the fall shorebird migration. Recent conditions had been ideal with some good sightings so hopes were pretty high. The morning was muggy and overcast with a threat of rain looming, so the group decided to head out to Sand Point first thing as this is the trek that always takes the longest. Shorebirds were not present in great numbers, but after checking all sides of the peninsula, the variety that was spotted was excellent, with thirteen species seen. Highlights were one Buff-breasted Sandpiper, one American Avocet, one Black-bellied Plover, one Wilson's Phalarope, and three Stilt Sandpipers.

The most interesting sighting at Sand Point, however, and for the entire outing, was a small juvenile tern that was initially spotted at the northern tip of the point by new area birder Bill Blackburn. The group watched it for several minutes working the west cove while being chased by swallows. The wings were very contrasting, with dark primaries and carpal bar on the upper wing along with lighter secondaries, giving it a Sabine's Gull-like pattern. A consensus could not be reached in the field, but the final two considerations among the group were Common and Least Tern. Brandon Caswell and myself took many photos and we felt confident that they would lead us to an ID.

The next stop was Round Pond, which in the previous week had decent habitat and

shorebirds. Although the habitat was still good, shorebirds were rather scarce. We did add Lesser Yellowlegs which brought our total for the outing to an impressive fourteen species. A Willow Flycatcher along the east trail was another good find. Working our way back east, some other interesting sightings were the continuing and possibly breeding pair of Sandhill Cranes at Babcock Access, and a single Sedge Wren just south of Gun Club Ponds.

Now back to that tern at Sand Point. After reviewing the photos and passing them around for several opinions, several features became apparent. The secondaries were very white, with no trace of dark gray edging, and the length of the tern compared to the length of Barn Swallows that were in the same frame was a mere 25% greater. A consensus was reached that this bird was a juvenile Least Tern, a great bird at any time of year for Johnson county!

Participants: Bill Blackburn, Mark Brown (leader), Brandon Caswell, Andy and Katie Long, Larry Mahoney, Diana Pesek, Linda Quinn, Linda Rudolph, Bill Scheible.

Birds (67 species): Wood Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested

Cormorant, American White Pelican, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Sandhill Crane, American Avocet, Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Stilt Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Wilson’s Phalarope, Ring-billed Gull, Least Tern, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Chimney Swift, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Sedge Wren, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Cedar Waxwing, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Field Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow, Eurasian Tree Sparrow.

– Mark Brown

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Chris Edwards, Editor
4490 Daniels Cir. NE
Solon, IA 52333

