
Eastern Iowa Birdwatch



The Iowa City Bird Club Newsletter

September 2026 • Volume 46 Number 2

Schedule

Field Trips are free and open to the public. Trips may be changed or cancelled due to inclement weather or other circumstances. Please check our website calendar for updates: <https://iowacitybirdclub.org/events/>. Updates will also be emailed to club members and posted on our Facebook page. **Meetings** are held on Zoom and/or in-person. A Zoom link will be posted on our website calendar for each meeting. For more information or questions email iowacitybirdclub@gmail.com.

August 30, Sunday, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Pelican Festival at Hawkeye Wildlife Management Area. Located near the DNR headquarters, 2564 Amana Road NW, Swisher. A family-friendly event celebrating our local migrant American White Pelicans. Attend outdoor presentations on pelicans, raptors, and more. View pelicans and other birds through our spotting scopes. Browse the many conservation-related exhibits. Enjoy face painting for the kids. A portable toilet will be on-site.

September 2, Wednesday, 8 - 10 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk with leader Chris Edwards. Meet at the Conservation Education Center, 2048 Hwy. 6 NW, Oxford.

September 17, Thursday, 6 p.m. Potluck Dinner. Before our first fall meeting, enjoy a potluck with old and new birding friends. Bring a dish to share and table service. Lemonade and ice tea will be provided. Iowa City Environmental Education Center, 2401 Scott Boulevard, Iowa City.

September 17, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting – In-Person/Zoom. Professor Christopher Brochu, vertebrate paleontologist and systematist at the University of Iowa School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability, will present “Bird Origins – The More We Learn, the Less We Know.” Iowa City Environmental Education Center, 2401 Scott Boulevard, Iowa City.

September 20, Sunday, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Hawk Watch at Lake Macbride State Park. *** **New location** on the Lake Macbride dam, which offers a panoramic view of the Coralville Reservoir, Lake Macbride, and surrounding woods. Bring a lawn chair and a spotting scope if you have one. We’ll watch for migrating raptors including Broad-winged Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper’s Hawk, and Osprey. Directions: from Solon, take Main Street/Hwy. 382 west to its end at Lake Macbride State Park; at the T intersection turn right (sign: Spillway Waterfall) and then right again (sign: Fisheries Station). Go past the boat ramp to the parking lot at the end of the road. Walk south across the lawn and down the steps to the dam.

September 26, Saturday, 8 - 11 a.m. Riverwalk Trail near the Coralville Reservoir Dam, 4103 Prairie Du Chien Road NE, Iowa City. This is a flat, paved, short (0.4 mile) trail through the woods along the Iowa River, just downstream from the dam. It offers opportunities for waterbirds and forest birds, and our target birds include eagles, pelicans, other waterbirds, migrating songbirds, and resident birds such as woodpeckers. This is a good walk for beginning birders, and we’ll aim for a slower pace than other bird walks. Restrooms are available near the dam. Meet leader Linda Rudolph at the Devonian Fossil Gorge parking area.

September 27, Sunday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Get Outside! - An Outdoor Recreation Festival at City Park. ICBC is a partner organization for this event and we need volunteers! Please consider helping out with one of our education stations or short guided bird walks for non-birders. This family-friendly event is sponsored by Iowa City Parks and Recreation and will feature a range of activities from canoeing, bird walks, and archery to LARPing, plein-air painting, and yoga. Attendees will also be able to grab food from local food trucks and other prepared food vendors. No admission fee or registration required. Drop in anytime from 10:00-2:00. To help, contact Linda Quinn at 319-330-3328 or quinnhenry@msn.com.

October 3, Saturday, 8 a.m. - Noon. Cedar River Crossing, 5473 Sutliff Rd. NE, Solon, with leader Jamie McCoy. Target species include migrant sparrows, raptors, shorebirds, and waterfowl. This property offers open riparian woodland, sand prairie, and a wetland complex. Meet Jamie in the parking lot near the restrooms. Expect extensive walking on mowed grass paths which may be wet, muddy, and uneven. For safety, wear orange as this area does have public hunting in season. Bring a spotting scope if you have one.

October 4, Sunday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Wings & Wild Things Festival at F.W. Kent Park. ICBC is a partner organization for this event and we need volunteers! Please consider helping out with one of our education stations or short guided bird walks for non-birders. Last year's attendance was huge – 1800 people enjoyed learning about conservation and our natural world. Birding and food trucks are just two of many outdoor activities to enjoy at this year's festival. To help, contact Linda Quinn at 319-330-3328 or quinnhenry@msn.com.

October 7, Wednesday, 8 - 10 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk with leader Chris Edwards. Meet at the Conservation Education Center, 2048 Hwy. 6 NW, Oxford.

October 15, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting. Doug Harr, President of Iowa Audubon and retired Iowa DNR Wildlife Diversity Coordinator, will present on Minnesota's Sax-Zim Bog, a popular birding destination for winter birds such as Great Gray Owl, Northern Hawk Owl, Evening Grosbeak, Boreal Chickadee, and more. Iowa City Environmental Education Center, 2401 Scott Boulevard, Iowa City.

November 4, Wednesday, 8 - 10 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk with leader Chris Edwards. Meet at the Conservation Education Center, 2048 Hwy. 6 NW, Oxford.

November 8, Sunday, 8 a.m. - Noon. Terry Trueblood Recreation Area, 579 McCollister Blvd., Iowa City. Park near the boat launch area and concessions building. Mark Madsen will lead us along the flat, paved trail around the lake, and then into the woods on an unpaved mulch trail. The target birds will include ducks, geese, raptors, forest songbirds, and sparrows. There are restrooms in the concessions building and a portable toilet along the paved trail.

November 19, 7 p.m. Meeting – In-Person/Zoom. Iowa City Environmental Education Center, 2401 Scott Boulevard, Iowa City. Dick Sayles will present "My Texas... Birds and More Highlights." Distance – it's a long way with lots of history and today, sadness. Dick's experiences go back 30 years.

December 2, Wednesday, 8 - 10 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk with leader Chris Edwards. Meet at the Conservation Education Center, 2048 Hwy. 6 NW, Oxford.

December 20, Sunday, Iowa City Christmas Bird Count. Watch for details in the next issue.

Other Dates of Interest

September 1, October 6, November 3, Tuesdays, 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. Cedar Rapids First Tuesday Birding Hike Series. Join us at one or all of our monthly hikes at various city parks for birders from beginners on up. Sponsored by the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, Cedar Rapids Audubon Society, and Linn County Conservation. Registration required at <https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Linn/Events>.

September 11-13, Friday-Sunday. Iowa Ornithologists' Union Fall Conference in Ames. The conference will be held at the Spark by Hilton Hotel, 2609 S. University Blvd., Ames. Field trips will be held Saturday and Sunday mornings, with presentations Saturday afternoon and a banquet and keynote Saturday evening. For more information and to register visit www.iowabirds.org.

September 13, Sunday, 9:30 - 11 a.m. Birdability Outing at Terry Trueblood Recreation Area, 579 McCollister Blvd., Iowa City. Stationary birdwatching with other birders at the outdoor patio of the lodge. Accessible parking, restrooms, and loaner optics available. Stay for the entire event or drop in anytime. For more information visit www.birdability.org.

October 18, Sunday, 9:30 - 11 a.m. Birdability Outing at Terry Trueblood Recreation Area, 579 McCollister Blvd., Iowa City. Stationary birdwatching with other birders at the outdoor patio of the lodge. Accessible parking, restrooms, and loaner optics available. Stay for the entire event or drop in anytime. For more information visit www.birdability.org.

2026 Johnson County Spring Migration Count

Chris Caster

This year's Spring Migration Count was held on the 9th of May. It was a perfect morning to be birding – at sunrise the temperature was 49 degrees, it was sunny, and there was little wind. At about 10 a.m. the wind picked up and blew pretty steadily for the rest of the day at 15 to 20 mph. When flushed, birds were more likely to duck into cover than sit in the open. It was still great to be out and it never got above 75 degrees. We met for lunch at the North Liberty Community Center at 1 p.m. rather than the usual noon. Lengthening our morning is something we will probably do again. But those birding in the afternoon added much to our species totals, and we had one of our better days. Our species count was 169. We have averaged closer to 160 in recent years. We had 11 species of waterfowl, 19 shorebirds, and 23 warblers.

We had three species never recorded on the Spring Count: a Ross's Goose was still enjoying the pond at North Ridge Park in Coralville; six Black-bellied Whistling Ducks were at the pond next to the new UIHC clinic on Forevergreen Road; and a Nelson's Sparrow was found at a prairie pothole project along Swan Lake Road at Hawkeye Wildlife Area (HWA). This last location is well west of Round Pond, just before the corner that turns north, along the south side of the road. Many Sora, a Swamp Sparrow, and two Marsh Wrens were also found there. Northern Bobwhite, Bobolink, and Savannah Sparrows were nearby. This location often has Sedge Wrens. I do not know if a name has been given to it, but it is usually a productive stop.

There were a number of other seldom-found birds. A Virginia Rail was at Cedar River Crossing. A White-faced Ibis, a Trumpeter Swan, and a Snow Goose were found at HWA along Amana Road. A Merlin was at Hickory Hill Park (HHP). A Kentucky Warbler and Red-breasted Nuthatch were also at HHP, as was a flyover American Golden-Plover. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was at the Oakdale Field Campus.

American Woodcock, Wilson's Snipe, and Eastern Screech-Owl were at the Gun Club Ponds. Bank Swallows were at Waterworks Park. A White-eyed Vireo was along the Sugar Bottom bike trail. Six Bell's Vireos were found including two along the path to Mallard Pond at HWA. A Yellow-breasted Chat was also there, and other chats were found at Terry Trueblood and Cedar River Crossing. A Louisiana Waterthrush was at Cangleska Wakan, a.k.a. the Celebration Barn area. Prothonotary Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Acadian Flycatcher were at Squire Point. Other Prothonotaries were along Swan Lake Road in western HWA where the river floods to the road, and at Cedar River Crossing. Yellow-throated Warblers were at the Coralville Dam West Overlook, Lake Macbride State Park, and Sugar Bottom Recreation Area. Blue Grosbeaks were at the Riverwalk Trail below the Coralville Dam, along Babcock Access Road, at Cedar River Crossing, and at Terry Trueblood. A Vesper Sparrow was along the Hoover Nature Trail.

Black-necked Stilts had been seen from Amana Road recently but could not be located. Neither Northern Mockingbird nor Loggerhead Shrike could be found. Hooded Merganser, Cerulean Warbler, Henslow's Sparrow, and Summer Tanager were also missed.

Participants (24): Elizabeth Aubrey, Kyle and Lauren Belcher, Tom Bootsmiller, Mark Brown, Chris Caster, Karen Disbrow, Chris Edwards, Laura Harwood, Jenny and Rick Hollis, James Huntington, Alisa Kandel, Ken Lowder, Mark Madsen, Jamie McCoy, Ramona McGurk, Jason Paulios, Linda Quinn, Mark Reagan, Kevin Ripka, Chris Ruge, Jim Wiese, Eliza Willis.

SPECIES LIST

Blackk-bellied Whistling Duck	6	Red-tailed Hawk	7	House Finch	23
Snow Goose	1	Eastern Screech-Owl	2	American Goldfinch	184
Ross's Goose	1	Great Horned Owl	2	Grasshopper Sparrow	3
Canada Goose	248	Barred Owl	10	Lark Sparrow	5
Trumpeter Swan	1	Belted Kingfisher	3	Chipping Sparrow	25
Wood Duck	48	Red-headed Woodpecker	45	Field Sparrow	32
Blue-winged Teal	91	Red-bellied Woodpecker	44	White-crowned Sparrow	32
Northern Shoveler	20	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	White-throated Sparrow	15
Gadwall	2	Downy Woodpecker	36	Vesper Sparrow	1
Mallard	25	Hairy Woodpecker	14	Nelson's Sparrow	1
Lesser Scaup	2	Northern Flicker	6	Savannah Sparrow	15
Northern Bobwhite	1	Pileated Woodpecker	7	Song Sparrow	48
Wild Turkey	6	American Kestrel	4	Lincoln's Sparrow	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	19	Merlin	1	Swamp Sparrow	2
Pied-billed Grebe	10	Peregrine Falcon	1	Eastern Towhee	33
Rock Pigeon	24	Great Crested Flycatcher	40	Yellow-breasted Chat	4
Eurasian Collared-Dove	2	Eastern Kingbird	24	Bobolink	3
Mourning Dove	55	Eastern Wood-Pewee	4	Eastern Meadowlark	32
Chimney Swift	4	Acadian Flycatcher	1	Western Meadowlark	1
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	3	Willow Flycatcher	1	Orchard Oriole	19
Virginia Rail	1	Least Flycatcher	7	Baltimore Oriole	145
Sora	9	Eastern Phoebe	12	Red-winged Blackbird	496
American Coot	29	White-eyed Vireo	1	Brown-headed Cowbird	81
Sandhill Crane	4	Bell's Vireo	6	Common Grackle	42
Black-bellied Plover	2	Yellow-throated Vireo	20	Ovenbird	3
American Golden-Plover	1	Blue-headed Vireo	6	Louisiana Waterthrush	2
Killdeer	24	Eastern Warbling Vireo	40	Northern Waterthrush	4
Semipalmated Plover	29	Red-eyed Vireo	16	Golden-winged Warbler	2
Stilt Sandpiper	2	Blue Jay	89	Blue-winged Warbler	4
Dunlin	10	American Crow	46	Black-and-white Warbler	2
Least Sandpiper	147	Black-capped Chickadee	52	Prothonotary Warbler	3
White-rumped Sandpiper	1	Tufted Titmouse	27	Tennessee Warbler	20
Pectoral Sandpiper	1150	Horned Lark	7	Orange-crowned Warbler	2
Semipalmated Sandpiper	1	Bank Swallow	6	Nashville Warbler	29
Short-billed Dowitcher	5	Tree Swallow	82	Kentucky Warbler	1
Long-billed Dowitcher	5	N. Rough-winged Swallow	11	Common Yellowthroat	109
American Woodcock	2	Purple Martin	75	American Redstart	101
Wilson's Snipe	2	Barn Swallow	50	Northern Parula	7
Spotted Sandpiper	21	Cliff Swallow	18	Magnolia Warbler	1
Solitary Sandpiper	1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4	Blackburnian Warbler	2
Lesser Yellowlegs	635	Cedar Waxwing	18	Northern Yellow Warbler	53
Greater Yellowlegs	3	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	Chestnut-sided Warbler	4
Wilson's Phalarope	8	White-breasted Nuthatch	46	Palm Warbler	8
Franklin's Gull	42	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	39	Yellow-rumped Warbler	28
Ring-billed Gull	71	Carolina Wren	5	Yellow-throated Warbler	6
Black Tern	9	Northern House Wren	156	Black-throated Green Warbler	1
Forster's Tern	9	Sedge Wren	1	Wilson's Warbler	2
Double-crested Cormorant	24	Marsh Wren	6	Scarlet Tanager	10
American White Pelican	350	Gray Catbird	120	Northern Cardinal	170
Great Blue Heron	16	Brown Thrasher	9	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	86
Great Egret	12	European Starling	97	Blue Grosbeak	5
Green Heron	1	Eastern Bluebird	28	Indigo Bunting	29
White-faced Ibis	1	Gray-cheeked Thrush	2	Dickcissel	11
Turkey Vulture	116	Swainson's Thrush	16		
Osprey	4	Wood Thrush	10		
Cooper's Hawk	4	American Robin	210		
Bald Eagle	28	House Sparrow	120		
Broad-winged Hawk	2	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	41		

2026 Hickory Hill Park Warbler Walks

Chris Edwards

This year's Warbler Walks were held weekdays at 6:30 a.m. from April 27–May 22. Rotating leaders were Mark Brown, Chris Edwards, Dean Hester, Jim Kettelkamp, Mark Madsen, Jamie McCoy, Andrew Meiborg, and Jason Paulios. A total of 25 warbler species were found. Once again, there were no strong fallouts during the Warbler Walks, and the daily high count was 17 warbler species on May 18. The highlights included two Hooded Warblers, a female on May 5 and a male on May 18; Bay-breasted Warblers on three mornings between May 15-20; and a Connecticut Warbler on the final day, May 22. The full daily species list is posted on our website.

SPECIES	04/27/26	04/28/26	04/29/26	04/30/26	05/01/26	05/04/26	05/05/26	05/06/26	05/07/26	05/08/26	05/11/26	05/12/26	05/13/26	05/14/26	05/15/26	05/18/26	05/19/26	05/20/26	05/21/26	05/22/26	DAYS
Ovenbird						X		X		X		X	X			X	X	X			8
Worm-eating Warbler																					0
Louisiana Waterthrush																					0
Northern Waterthrush									X		X										2
Golden-winged Warbler						X					X	X	X		X					X	6
Blue-winged Warbler	X						X			X	X										4
Black-and-white Warbler						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			12
Prothonotary Warbler																					0
Tennessee Warbler				X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			13
Orange-crowned Warbler			X			X				X		X									4
Nashville Warbler		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X			15
Connecticut Warbler																				X	1
Mourning Warbler												X						X			2
Kentucky Warbler																					0
Common Yellowthroat	X					X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	15
Hooded Warbler							X									X					2
American Redstart			X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	17
Cape May Warbler																					0
Cerulean Warbler																					0
Northern Parula						X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			11
Magnolia Warbler								X		X		X	X		X	X	X	X			8
Bay-breasted Warbler															X	X		X			3
Blackburnian Warbler						X							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
Northern Yellow Warbler										X		X			X	X					4
Chestnut-sided Warbler										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	11
Blackpoll Warbler																X	X	X			3
Palm Warbler	X		X			X		X		X	X	X			X						8
Pine Warbler																					0
Yellow-rumped Warbler	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X				X	15
Yellow-throated Warbler																					0
Black-throated Green Warbler						X		X	X	X		X	X			X				X	8
Canada Warbler																X	X	X	X		4
Wilson's Warbler							X						X	X	X	X					5
TOTAL WARBLER SPECIES	4	2	5	4	3	13	9	10	6	15	12	15	14	10	14	17	10	14	5	8	25

In Memoriam: Jim Scheib and Bill Scheible

We recently lost two birding friends.

Long-time Iowa City Bird Club member Jim Scheib passed away June 23, 2026 after a long illness. Jim served our club in many ways – meeting presenter, field trip leader, bird feeder social host, beginning birder course instructor, and our first webmaster. His wife Sharon, also a long-time club member, passed away in 2015.

James Edward Scheib was born in 1942 in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. He spent his childhood living in the small town of Palmerton, Pennsylvania, along the Appalachian Trail near the Lehigh Gap. He earned his bachelor's degree from LaSalle College, master's degree from Temple University, and doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania. Jim married Sharon Engstrom in Smethport, Pennsylvania, and they had two sons, Christopher and Eric. The family moved to Iowa City in 1982 when Jim accepted a position with ACT. He later worked as the Staff Development Coordinator for Grant Wood AEA. That's when his interest in birds took off. In his position with Grant Wood, he frequently traveled around eastern Iowa. He began to notice hawks along the roadsides, and wanted to learn more about them. Then Jim Fuller took him birding to Cone Marsh, and he was hooked. He joined the Iowa City Bird Club about 1986, and then the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. He later served as Treasurer and Board Member for the IOU.

Jim was an excellent wildlife photographer, and he and Sharon traveled the world extensively. His wonderful photos graced our website for many years, and he often shared them with the club during meeting presentations.

Former Cedar Rapids resident and Iowa City Bird Club member Dr. William "Bill" Scheible passed away July 26, 2026. Bill was born in Cedar Rapids. His grandfather took him on hikes through the woodlands and wetlands of Linn

County, and those early experiences were instrumental in sparking his later interests in the natural world. Growing up in a military family, Bill lived in Iowa, Texas, Japan, Kansas, Indiana, and California. He attended high school in West Lafayette, home of Purdue University, and received undergraduate and medical degrees at UCLA. He went on to a long and successful career as a radiologist, initially in San Diego and Portland, Oregon. Bill was a lifelong sports fan, and always rooted for UCLA, Purdue, and Iowa – in that order.

Bill's early interest in birds was rekindled while visiting his daughter in rural Vermont, surrounded by warblers, tanagers, thrushes, and other birds of the north woods. When his career brought him back to Cedar Rapids in 1999, that's when his interest really took off. Bill met Pete Wickham and other local birders, and started exploring the hotspots around eastern Iowa. He became an active member of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, and later served on its Board of Directors, Projects Committee, Publications Committee, and Records Committee. He co-led, with Jim Fuller, an IOU trip to Southern California. He was a strong supporter of Iowa Young Birders and often co-led field trips for that organization. He enjoyed participating in citizen science projects such as the Christmas Bird Count. He traveled extensively around the world in search of birds.

In later retirement, Bill moved back to Portland to be closer to his daughter and grandchildren. He was a fun birding companion, and will be remembered for his sharp wit as well as his excellent birding skills.



Book Reviews

Chris Edwards

The Return of the Oystercatcher: Saving Birds to Save the Planet. Scott Weidensaul. W. W. Norton & Company, 2026. Hardcover with dustjacket. 356 pages including references and index. Color photographs and maps. Available at the Iowa City Public Library.

Scott Weidensaul is probably familiar to most readers of this publication, having authored many bird- and nature-related books along with numerous magazine articles including a regular column in *BWD* (formerly *Bird Watcher's Digest*). Having already written about the many challenges facing migratory birds in the best-selling *A World on the Wing: A Global Odyssey of Bird Migration*, he set out this time to write about what is going *right* for birds, specifically about conservation success stories from around the world. There are twelve chapters, each focusing on a different group of birds and the human efforts that are helping them recover. They're not all feel-good success stories though, as it's clear that even species that are doing well still face stiff challenges in our highly-altered world.

Being a subscriber to several bird-related magazines, I was already familiar with many of the ongoing conservation efforts in the U.S. that are covered in the book. These include managing sagebrush habitat in the western states for Greater Sage Grouse; protecting beaches on the Atlantic Coast and Great Lakes for Piping Plovers; Steven Kress's pioneering efforts to lure Atlantic Puffins back to New England islands; and installing protective fencing to protect declining seabirds from introduced predators in Hawaii. The book goes into much greater detail on these topics than the typical magazine article.

But I was especially interested in conservation efforts in other parts of the world, most of which were entirely new to me. These included raptor conservation in Great Britain; the Rewilding movement across Europe; and threats to Old

World vultures in Bulgaria and elsewhere in eastern Europe. I learned that the population of one of the most common migrant shorebirds we encounter in Iowa, the Lesser Yellowlegs, has declined by 60-80% since the 1970s, and I was surprised that one of the most serious threats it faces is illegal hunting in the Caribbean and South America.

Weidensaul is one of my favorite natural history authors, and I've enjoyed everything I've read by him, including this book. There were a couple spots where my attention waned as he delved a little too far into the complex politics of bird conservation, but otherwise I found it very interesting and informative throughout. If you enjoy reading about bird conservation, I recommend you pick this up.

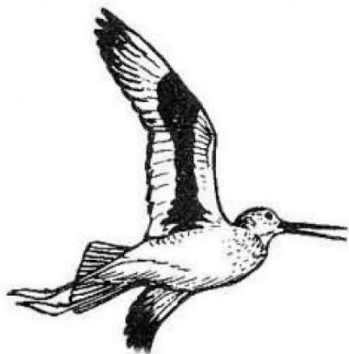
The Story of Birds: A New History from Their Dinosaur Origins to the Present. Steve Brusatte. Mariner Books, 2026. Hardcover, with dustjacket. 437 pages including notes and index. Black and white photographs and illustrations. Available at the Iowa City Public Library.

I was fascinated by this book, which combines two of my favorite passions, birds and dinosaurs – which is not too surprising, since birds *are* dinosaurs. When I was a child, this wasn't yet settled science, but in recent decades there have been many remarkable fossil bird discoveries around the world. This book draws on all the latest research.

The author is an American paleontologist who teaches at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. His previous books include the pop science bestsellers *The Rise and Fall of the Dinosaurs* and *The Rise and Reign of the Mammals*, both of which I highly recommend. He's also the paleontology advisor for the *Jurassic World* film franchise, and the media seems to ask him for a quote about every new dinosaur discovery, whether he was involved or not. Once you've seen him, he seems to pop up everywhere.

This book, according to the publisher, is “an exhilarating evolutionary history of birds, charting how feathered dinosaurs took flight, survived extinction, and evolved into the 10,000+ extraordinary bird species alive today.” As one might expect, it is largely organized chronologically, starting with the early evolution of feathers, wings, and eggs, and then other adaptations that eventually made flight possible. The oldest and most famous fossil bird, *Archaeopteryx*, is discussed along with other early primitive birds. Also covered is the rapid development of most modern bird families soon after the extinction of the non-avian dinosaurs 66 million years ago. Later chapters are devoted to birds that lost the ability to fly, such as penguins and ostriches; extraordinary extinct birds, including terror birds, demon ducks, supersize soarers, and dodos; and modern birds with remarkable abilities.

The author has developed an easy-to-read style which makes complex scientific concepts easier to understand. He describes the history of fossil bird discovery, summarizing the work of paleontology giants over the past 150 years. The material never seems dry, and he makes it more exciting by bringing in his own recent field experiences around the world. He introduces us to the work of many colleagues, both inside and outside the field of paleontology, with whom he has collaborated, for example a husband-and-wife team in Sweden who maintain a corvid cognition research station. He makes it clear that paleontology is an exciting, rapidly advancing field, and that we’ve only just scratched the surface of what the fossil record can show us about the story of birds.



Field Trip and Meeting Reports

April 1, Kent Park Wednesday Walk. To borrow a phrase from Forrest Gump, “Iowa weather is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you’re going to get.” We were hoping for a warm, sunny early spring day (the creamy caramel) but what we got was a cold, blustery late winter day (the chocolate-covered cherry, *blech!*) But it was still a great walk.

We started in the bird blind where, in addition to the usual suspects, we enjoyed great looks at an adult male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker drilling holes in the trunk of a red cedar. After seeing everything we could see there, we walked the loop trail around the completely dried-up pond north of the CEC. Right off the bat we saw a flock of at least nine Purple Finches, including several males, one of which sang for us. There was at least one House Finch in the bunch too. Nearby we saw another Yellow-bellied Sapsucker up in a cottonwood. But the rest of the trail was rather exposed to the brisk wind, and the birds were not very active.

We then took the trail east to the other ponds, stopping just past the small bridge, where we heard an Eastern Towhee and then a Field Sparrow. The towhee eventually gave us a brief look. Instead of continuing on to the east boundary trail like usual, we decided to work our way south along the stream valley, more protected from the wind, and it was a very productive walk. The ponds held some ducks—Gadwall and Blue-winged Teal in addition to the expected Wood Ducks and Mallards—and more surprisingly, a pair of Pied-billed Grebes. We saw a handful of Golden-crowned Kinglets and a single Ruby-crowned Kinglet. We enjoyed the beauty of an Eastern Bluebird’s plumage and song. We saw several sparrow species, including singing Fox Sparrows, and another Eastern Towhee. We saw a single Turkey Vulture and several Eastern Phoebes. The return trip took us through a large White Oak grove and then to a recent burn along the main road, where numerous

birds including flickers, robins, blackbirds, and bluebirds, were foraging on the ground.

Participants: Chelsea and Caleb Bauerly, Mary Bowler, Brian Broderick, Laura Harwood, Jane Shuttleworth, Jean and Jim Wiese.

Birds (41 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Gadwall, Mallard, Ring-necked Pheasant, Pied-billed Grebe, Mourning Dove, Killdeer, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Golden-crowned Kinglet, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, House Finch, Purple Finch, American Goldfinch, Field Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Northern Cardinal.

– *Chris Edwards*

April 4, Beginning Birder Trip to Terry Trueblood Recreation Area. The trip scheduled for Kent Park was switched to Terry Trueblood due to a road closure at Kent Park for a race. The morning was cold, windy, and heavily overcast. Despite these challenging conditions, thirteen new birders came. Laura Harwood was kind enough to volunteer to help. We huddled a little out of the wind on the patio of the lodge and scanned the water for birds. We observed waterfowl scattering when Bald Eagles flew overhead, and Killdeer entertained us with their incessant calls. We went home early due to the cold windy conditions.

Participants: Jenny Bradshaw, Peg Dana, Betsy Fischer, Craig and Nora Gibson, Laura Harwood (assistant), Sonia Jeon, David Lee, Jamie Liu, Ellen McCabe, Molly Mosely, Linda Rudolph (leader), Glen Schmitz, Tom Stolley, Tami Thompson.

Birds (32 species): Canada Goose, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, American Coot, Killdeer, Ring-billed Gull, Bald Eagle, Northern Flicker, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, European Starling, American Robin, House Sparrow, Eurasian Tree Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Northern Cardinal.

– *Linda Rudolph*

April 11, Redbird Farms Wildlife Management Area. The day started out totally clear at 39° then gradually clouded over. I was a little concerned that the trails might be muddy from the rain we had a couple days prior, but they were actually fairly solid except for some places where it was somewhat muddy. The group had a number of birds before we got started on the trail. We then had a singing Purple Finch, a good starting bird for the hike. We had numerous kinglets of both species both seen and heard, also a Winter Wren or two, a nice addition for the list. One of the highlights was to hear the Pileated Woodpecker's call which was expected either seen or heard. Numerous Fox Sparrows were seen and heard calling. Another highlight was seeing two Trumpeter Swans fly over, which wasn't really expected. It was fun trying to find those Hermit Thrushes which really blended in with the surroundings. It was kind of neat to see two Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers male and female side by side. The winds picked up quite a bit, but thankfully the rain held off until the afternoon. After the last vehicle had left the parking lot and I was preparing to leave, a Barn Swallow crossed the road to the south. Where was he hiding that we didn't see him? I guess that's just the way birding goes.

Participants: Elizabeth Aubrey, Brian Broderick, Lori Chasse, Thérèse Guédon, Laura Harwood, Abner Miller (leader), Jan Powers, Mark Reagan, Jane Shuttleworth.

Birds (46 species): Greater White-fronted Goose, Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Mallard, Ring-necked Pheasant, Mourning Dove, Killdeer, Turkey Vulture, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, American Kestrel, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Golden-crowned Kinglet, White-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, European Starling, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Eurasian Tree Sparrow, Purple Finch, American Goldfinch, Field Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, White-crowned Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Eastern Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Northern Cardinal.

– *Abner Miller*

April 11, Beginning Birder Trip to Kent Park.

Seventeen participants met at Kent Park. We watched birds from the bird blind for almost an hour, and practiced entering a bird list into eBird. Then we walked nearby trails and used Merlin. The weather was pretty cooperative – overcast, around 50°, and the wind was calm at first but picking up towards noon. Many species were difficult for the group to see, but a pair of Wood Ducks sat in the open under a nest box, giving us sustained looks. A nearby Cooper's Hawk was content to let us watch as it preened. We also had good looks at a male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Participants: Jenny Bradshaw, Jeff Charis-Carlson, Peg Dana, Shareef Dubdoub, Mavis Fate, Betsy Fisher, Craig Gibson, Nora Gibson, Ellen McCabe, Molly Mosely, Mona Odeh, Connie Peterson, Linda Rudolph (leader), Glen Schmitz, Tom Stolley, Tami Thompson, Lori Verdick, Joey Walker.

Birds (42 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Mallard, Pied-billed Grebe, Mourning Dove, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed

Hawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, House Finch, Purple Finch, American Goldfinch, Field Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Northern Cardinal.

– *Linda Rudolph*

April 16, Meeting. Suzanne Gucciardo presented “Bipolar Birding.” Suzanne showed and explained the many differences between the two poles and their ocean currents, including the different vegetation and wildlife. This presentation was not recorded due to copyright issues. There were ten people present and seven people attending by Zoom.

– *Sandy Eads*

April 18, Beginning Birder Trip to Lake Macbride.

Eleven beginning birders braved less than ideal conditions for a field trip to Lake Macbride. On the previous day the temperature reached 80°, but on this day we woke to a temperature of 39° and WNW winds averaging 17 mph and gusting to 38 mph. At least it was sunny and not raining! Waterfowl were scarce, but we saw two Caspian Terns flying over a group of American White Pelicans. The terns came up as rare in eBird for this date, so we studied them to verify our ID before adding them to our list. A Broad-winged Hawk was in the woods right by the Osprey Trail and reluctant to move very far. This was to our advantage as we all had good looks. After scanning the water and hiking the Osprey Trail we moved on to the Cottage Reserve Road Extension. The water was high, so there were no birds hanging out in the shallow water. However, we walked the gravel trail a short way and one of the little islands provided enough shelter from the wind that we had good looks at swooping Northern Rough-

winged Swallows. We stopped by the 200th St. eBird hotspot, but with the water being so high there was no activity.

Participants: Karen Beauchamp, Jenny Bradshaw, Shareef Dabdoub, Muse Davis, Craig Gibson, Nora Gibson, Molly Mosely, Sarah Neary, Dee Ann Rexroat, Linda Rudolph (leader), Glen Schmitz, Tom Stolley.

Birds (28 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, Mallard, Lesser Scaup, gull sp., Caspian Tern, Double-crested Cormorant, American White Pelican, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, White-breasted Nuthatch, Chipping Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Palm Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Northern Cardinal.

– Linda Rudolph

April 19, Corriell Nature Preserve. Ten of us were able to make it out to this permission-only Bur Oak Land Trust property in Muscatine County. Located along the Cedar River, Corriell's former cattle pasture is made up of about 200 acres of wetland, timber, oak savanna, and sand prairie. We spent a little time at the entrance looking at the dormant *Opuntia* prickly pear cactus. As we made our way to the first water crossing, we realized we would need waterproof boots as the trail was flooded after the early spring rains. We worked out a system of sharing pairs of boots between us and everyone made it across safely so we could explore the property.

While waiting for all to cross, we heard Wood Ducks fly past and had our first singing Northern Yellow Warbler of the season. We had nice views of Eurasian Tree Sparrows, allowing us to compare field marks with the House Sparrows we'd seen earlier in Iowa City. The open sand prairie featured Eastern Meadowlarks, a singing Field Sparrow, a flyover Northern Harrier, and

the haunting croaks from a hidden Sandhill Crane. Here we were able to closely study more *Opuntia* and the almost hidden *Anemone caroliniana* plants, a very uncommon species in Iowa. The flowers were mostly purple but we found some white and pink examples as well.

Due to the high water levels, we had to cut the walk short without getting to really explore the flooded beaver area and the trail along the Cedar River. We were able to see some Blue-winged Teal in the flooded areas and returning Tree Swallows competing for nest cavities with the invasive Eurasian Tree Sparrows.

Participants: Jess Alexander, Karen Disbrow, Seth Dudley, Thérèse Guédon, Laura Harwood, Jason Paulios (leader), Linda Quinn, Mark Reagan, Glen Schmitz, Jane Shuttleworth.

Birds (38 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Mourning Dove, Sandhill Crane, Killdeer, Double-crested Cormorant, American White Pelican, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Northern Harrier, Bald Eagle, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Northern House Wren, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, American Robin, Eurasian Tree Sparrow, American Goldfinch, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Eastern Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Northern Yellow Warbler, Northern Cardinal.

– Jason Paulios

April 25, Beginning Birder Trip to Hawkeye Wildlife Area. It was a picture-perfect day – sunny, calm, and 56 degrees to start. We explored the beginning of the trail to Sand Point and then areas of interest along James Avenue. Memorable moments were seeing an American Kestrel hover, hunt, and perch in good light, and having a flock of 20 Lesser Yellowlegs wheel back and forth in front of us several times.

Participants: Jenny Bradshaw, Laura Brouwer, Shareef Dabdoub, Muse Davis, Christine Donelson, Betsy Fischer, Craig Gibson, Nora Gibson, Molly Mosley, Connie Peterson, Linda Rudolph (leader), Tom Stolley, Joey Walker.

Birds (40 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Mallard, Ring-necked Pheasant, Mourning Dove, Sandhill Crane, Killdeer, Lesser Yellowlegs, Ring-billed Gull, Double-crested Cormorant, American White Pelican, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Belted Kingfisher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, American Kestrel, Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, White-breasted Nuthatch, Northern House Wren, Brown Thrasher, American Robin, Eurasian Tree Sparrow, American Goldfinch, Lark Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Northern Cardinal.

– Linda Rudolph

May 2, Beginning Birder Trip to Waterworks Prairie Park. Twenty birders surveyed the park on this last Beginning Birder Trip of the year. The weather was cool, but mostly sunny and calm. The highlight of the morning came at the end. We stood on a hill overlooking a small seep pond and watched for a Sora. While we were waiting, we saw a male Northern Yellow Warbler, an Orchard Oriole, two Eastern Warbling Vireos, and a female Red-winged Blackbird. It was almost magical to see all these birds in good light. Then our patience was rewarded when we spied a Sora quietly foraging.

Participants: Kara Beauchamp, Jenny Bradshaw, Ernie Cox, Peg Dana, Muse Davis, John Donelson, Betsy Fisher, Craig Gibson, Nora Gibson, Ellen McCabe, Kelsey Miller, Molly Mosely, Connie Peterson, Dee Ann Rexroat, Linda Rudolph (leader), Samantha Solimeo, Tom Stolley, Glen Schmitz, Tami Thompson, Lori Verdick, Jeff Walberg.

Birds (41 species): Canada Goose, Mallard, Mourning Dove, Sora, Solitary Sandpiper, Double-crested Cormorant, Turkey Vulture, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, American Kestrel, White-eyed Vireo, Eastern Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, Bank Swallow, Tree Swallow, Purple Martin, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Carolina Wren, Northern House Wren, European Starling, Gray Catbird, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Eurasian Tree Sparrow, Purple Finch, American Goldfinch, Lark Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Northern Yellow Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Northern Cardinal.

– Linda Rudolph

May 21, Meeting. Jim Durbin of Marion spoke about the ongoing insect surveys he coordinates at Big Sand Mound Preserve near Muscatine. We learned of night-lighting as a way of attracting and photographing moths and other insects in an area. Twelve people attended in-person, with another eleven attending by Zoom.

– Sandy Eads

June 3, Kent Park Wednesday Butterfly Walk. Our first Kent Park Butterfly Walk was well-attended, with a total of 16 people including three youngsters and some grandparents from Indiana. It was a pleasant morning with sunny skies, little wind, and temperatures in the mid-70s. We walked the loop around the pond north of the Conservation Education Center, and then walked to and around the northeast prairie. Sparkling blue and white Summer Azures were the most common butterflies, which was not surprising since dogwoods, their caterpillar host plants, were all along our route. Spectacular Great Spangled Fritillaries and flashing Silver-spotted Skippers were also numerous, and four Northern Pearly-eyes were notable. Interesting birds included Bell's Vireo, Orchard Oriole, and Yellow-breasted Chat. We didn't see great numbers of butterflies, but between the

butterflies, birds, dragonflies, and plants, there was plenty to keep us occupied.

Participants: Chelsea, Brooke and Caleb Bauerly, Mary Bowler, Alan Brink, Brian Broderick, Gerry Denning, Drew Dillman, Chris Edwards (leader), Irene Fang, Dixie and Richard Justice, Nathan and Conrad Justice, Mark Madsen (co-leader), Glen Schmitz.

Butterflies (9 species): Cabbage White, Orange Sulphur, Summer Azure, Great Spangled Fritillary, Red Admiral, Northern Pearly-eye, Silver-spotted Skipper, Least Skipper, Delaware Skipper.

– *Chris Edwards*

June 6, Indiangrass Hills. Twelve birders joined me for the annual Iowa City Bird Club outing to Indiangrass Hills in Iowa County. The morning was on the warm side, with sunny skies and moderate humidity, starting out with temperatures in the 70s and warming to the 80s by mid-morning.

I always listen for Western Meadowlark along 240th St. just NE of the property, but this year they were undetected. Once we turned onto 250th St. along the north edge of the property, some of the specialty birds like Orchard Orioles and Grasshopper Sparrows were singing and showing. After arriving at the parking area along I Ave., we were immediately greeted by a calling Northern Bobwhite, a species that is resident but doesn't always make itself known.

The group took the normal walk on the east side of I Ave. and encountered our targets of Bobolinks, Henslow's Sparrows, and more Grasshopper Sparrows, all of which eventually gave us great looks. However, for the second year in a row, we failed to detect Yellow-breasted Chat and Sedge Wren at the stream crossing. I'm wondering if for future outings, I may try to mix it up by exploring more of the west side of the property to see if these species are simply moving around to different spots.

After walking along the stream for a while, we eventually turned back and ran into Judy Felder, who manages this wonderful property. She reminded us that she always appreciates that anyone who birds there sends her a list of their sightings to jjfigh@gmail.com.

For the last several outings, it has become customary to venture south on I Ave. after returning to our cars, as the area south of 265th St. has become reliable for Northern Mockingbird and occasionally Loggerhead Shrike. Although we were unable to locate any Shrikes for the second consecutive year, the group got great looks at three mockingbirds. On the way back out, we got to see a silent male Blue Grosbeak right along the road.

In summary, by the end of the outing, we encountered a total of 49 bird species. That's a bit on the low end as historically, I've been around the mid-50s for a total. However, the butterfly diversity made up for it. I typically see around 10-12 species, but this year we ended up with a spectacular 23 species!

Participants: Mary Bowler, Brian Broderick, Mark Brown (leader), Barry Buschelman, Rachel Cardoso, Gerry Denning, David Dillman, Drew Dillman, Laura Harwood, Mark Miller, Mark Reagan, Jane Shuttleworth, Jim Weise.

Birds (49 species): Mallard, Northern Bobwhite, Ring-necked Pheasant, Mourning Dove, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-Bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Kingbird, Willow Flycatcher, Bell's Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Cedar Waxwing, Northern House Wren, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, House Sparrow, Eurasian Tree Sparrow, American Goldfinch, Grasshopper Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, Red-winged Blackbird,

Brown-headed Cowbird, Common Grackle, Common Yellowthroat, Northern Yellow Warbler, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel.

Butterflies (23 species): Black Swallowtail, Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, Cabbage White, Clouded Sulphur, Orange Sulphur, Summer Azure, Great Spangled Fritillary, Meadow Fritillary, Question Mark, Gray Comma, American Lady, Painted Lady, Red Admiral, Common Buckeye, Red-spotted Purple, Viceroy, Northern Pearly-eye, Monarch, Least Skipper, European Skipper, Peck's Skipper, Delaware Skipper, Dun Skipper.

— *Mark Brown*

June 27, Cedar River Crossing Conservation Area. Sixteen birders gathered at Cedar River Crossing for a summer morning of birding from 8 a.m. to noon. Although the forecast called for a warm, muggy day, temperatures stayed comfortably in the 70s. Rain had been in the forecast, as it had been on the preceding days, but it held off for us. The recent wet weather left the main pool high, while the trails remained mostly dry and comfortable for exploring.

Our morning got off to an exciting start on the historic Sutliff Bridge, when a Peregrine Falcon suddenly jetted across our viewing area. The unexpected flyby brought the group to an immediate stop as we worked together to figure out exactly what we had seen. We quickly ruled out several possibilities based on the bird's size and shape, while a few participants pulled up birding apps to help newer birders compare field marks. Before long, the group had reached a confident conclusion: Peregrine Falcon. You know a birding trip is off to a great start when everyone is actively discussing an identification!

From there, we hit the eastern trail along the water and tree line, accompanied all the while by a lively summer chorus of Dickcissels, Killdeer, and Red-winged Blackbirds. The choir of species provided plenty of activity and sound along the route. We then headed west on the trail just

beyond the main pool. As we neared our turnaround point, the group suddenly flushed several Northern Bobwhites. We stopped to watch and listen, comparing what each person had seen and heard. Our collective best estimate was six bobwhites in all, a rare and memorable treat for everyone on the outing.

The walk back brought another special encounter. Two little fuzzballs appeared right at the water's edge. Their characteristic, almost constant bobbing soon gave them away as recently fledged Spotted Sandpipers. An adult soon joined them, sporting the species' distinctive spotted breeding plumage to confirm the identification.

Later, a majestic Bald Eagle soared overhead. With the United States celebrating its 250th anniversary in 2026, the sight of our nation's emblematic bird provided an especially fitting moment during the morning trip. A few participants stayed on after the main outing to explore the upper prairie in hopes of finding a Grasshopper Sparrow. Unfortunately, that search came up empty—but there is always next time!

In total, the group recorded an impressive 48 species, making for a rewarding morning of summer birding, shared identification, unexpected surprises, and good company.

Participants: Yaroslav Adrianov, Jess Alexander, Elizabeth Aubrey, Mary Bowler, Brian Broderick, Hal (U.S. Military Veteran), Abner Miller, Mark Miller, Mark Reagan, Dee Ann Rexroat, Deb and Mark Rolfes (leaders), David and Trang Rowe, Anatasia Tokhtamysh, Jim Wiese.

Birds (48 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Northern Bobwhite, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Chimney Swift, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Green Heron, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Belted Kingfisher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Peregrine Falcon, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Wood-Pewee,

Yellow-throated Vireo, Eastern Warbling Vireo, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Cedar Waxwing, White-breasted Nuthatch, Northern House Wren, Gray Catbird, European Starling, American Robin, House Sparrow, Eurasian Tree Sparrow, American Goldfinch, Song Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel.

– *Deb and Mark Rolfes*

July 1, Kent Park Wednesday Butterfly Walk.

Five stalwart (or foolhardy) souls braved an excessive heat warning to find some butterflies. The temperature ranged from 82-90° and it was sunny and humid, but thankfully there was a nice breeze. Due to the conditions, I had planned to shorten the walk, but several of us (again, foolhardy) ended up staying out for three hours! Hydration and sun protection was the key.

We started by walking from the CEC out to the northeast prairie. We stopped at the first pond, where we found a Least Skipper and several dragonflies including my favorite, the Halloween Pennant. At the prairie, we spread out and walked south through the prairie. There were

many flowers in bloom, but not a lot of butterflies. The highlight was watching a female Wild Indigo Duskywing laying eggs on its caterpillar host plant, wild indigo. Orange Sulphurs were numerous, and we also found a nice Gray Copper. We headed back to the parking lot and Brian, obviously the most sensible one among us, retired while the rest of us walked the loop path north of the CEC. After that, Mark, Glen, and I drove to the southwest part of the park where Mark had seen a Banded Hairstreak earlier. We hiked a nice trail that was new to me, skirting an oak woodland and prairie. We saw several more Wild Indigo Duskywings, but no hairstreak. By the time we finished, it was after noon and we were ready for some air conditioning.

Participants: Jess Alexander, Brian Broderick, Chris Edwards (leader), Mark Madsen, Glen Schmitz.

Butterflies (12 species): Cabbage White, Orange Sulphur, Little Yellow, Gray Copper, Eastern Tailed-Blue, Summer Azure, Great Spangled Fritillary, Pearl Crescent, Red Admiral, Silver-spotted Skipper, Wild Indigo Duskywing, Least Skipper.

– *Chris Edwards*

[Subsequent field trips will be in the next issue.]

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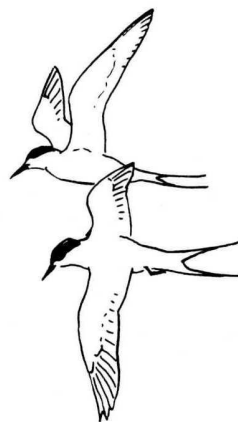
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For general club information, contact us at iowacitybirdclub@gmail.com.

To lead or suggest a field trip, contact Field Trip Coordinator Brian Broderick at brian.j.broderick@gmail.com.

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