

# Eastern Iowa Birdwatch

The Iowa City Bird Club Newsletter

Volume 21 Number 2

September 2001

## Calendar

**Field trips**, unless otherwise noted, leave from the Dodge Street Hy-Vee; meet in the SW corner of the parking lot near the recycling bins. Please contact the leader in advance if you plan to meet the group at the trip destination.

**Meetings** are generally held at 7:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month at Robert Lucas Elementary School, 830 Southlawn Drive, near Towncrest in eastern Iowa City.

**September 15, Saturday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Hawk Watch** at Stainbrook Preserve. Come join us on the hill to watch the hawks sail past. See page 8 or call Karen Disbrow at 337-1017 for additional details.

**September 16, Sunday, 7:30 a.m. Local areas** for fall warblers. James Huntington, 338-1837.

**September 27, Thursday, 7:00 p.m. Meeting.** Sharon Scheib will present “Local Wildlife,” a heart-stopping video tour of Johnson County.

**September 30, Sunday, 7:30 a.m. Coralville Reservoir** for sparrows, late warblers, and other migrants. Chris Edwards, 626-6362.

**October 6, Saturday, 7:30 a.m. Wickiup Hill Natural Area.** Meet at Hy-Vee in Iowa City at 7:30 a.m. or at the Handimart on the corner of Edgewood Road and Blairs Ferry Road in Cedar Rapids at 8:00 a.m. Jim

Durbin will take us on a birding tour of this diverse area which includes a marsh boardwalk, uplands, oak savanna and river. Bob and Joan Stearns (846-3286) or Jim Durbin (377-7194).

**October 18, Thursday, 7:00 p.m. Meeting.** Marty Condon of Cornell College will discuss hummingbirds and plants.

**October 28, Sunday, 7:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. A birding tour of Cedar Valley Park, Rochester Cemetery, Salzbury Park** and other interesting mystery spots in Cedar, Muscatine and Louisa counties. Ed and Jean Allgood, 338-8090.

**November 10, Saturday, 7:30 a.m. Local areas** for diving ducks and gulls. Leader to be drafted at a later date. Call Chris Edwards at 626-6362 to volunteer or for more information.

**November 15, Thursday, 7:00 p.m. Meeting.** Andy McCollum from Cornell College will discuss his work with amphibians.

**November 18, Sunday, 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. Allamakee County,** Pool 9 for Tundra Swans and other migrating waterfowl, and a possible hike for Ruffed Grouse. Stops will be made for lunch and supper. Jim and Karole Fuller, 338-3561.

## Membership News

**The Wildlife Habitat** in Coralville offers our members a 10% discount on purchases. Just mention the club when you make a purchase and please thank them.

This year's **Christmas Bird Count** will be held on Sunday, December 16. Details will be provided in the next newsletter.

**Submission deadline** for the December newsletter is November 15.

## Field Trip and Meeting Reports

**April 20, Night Sounds of Hawkeye Wildlife Area and Williams Prairie.** It was a lovely warm evening which started out slightly overcast and ended with raindrops. We met at Upper City Park where we saw several species including Cedar Waxwings. We car-pooled to Hawkeye Wildlife Area, and at various stops

saw Blue-winged Teal, Wood Duck, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Red-winged Blackbird, Ring-necked Pheasant, Eastern Bluebird, Northern Cardinal, Tree Swallow, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, American Coot, and Canada Goose.

On the way to Williams Prairie I accomplished every field trip leader's worse nightmare: I lost the two cars following mine. When they could not locate me they went on to Kent Park where they heard American Woodcocks and saw bats in the twilight. Meanwhile, my car arrived at Williams Prairie, where Common Snipe and American Woodcocks were winnowing in their spring mating rituals. Arriving at Williams Prairie about one-half hour before sunset in late April is the perfect time to hear these two species. I have often seen the woodcocks though I have not seen the downward plummeting of the snipe. The positioning of the wing feathers produces the winnowing sound in both of these species as they plummet towards the ground. We also saw a muskrat and heard Spring Peepers and Chorus Frogs.

On the way back we stopped at a small woodlot west of North Liberty and tried to call out an Eastern Screech-Owl, but were unable to hear a response to our tape. The wind had picked up and raindrops started to fall so we called it a night.

Participants: Ed Allgood, Jean Allgood, Forrest Clingerman, Gail Clingerman, Margrieta Delle, Drew Dillman, Karen Disbrow (leader), Thérèse Guedon, Ramona McGurk, Allyson Shames.

– Karen Disbrow



**April 29, Otter Creek Marsh.** It was a rainy pre-dawn meeting at the Dodge Street Hy-Vee for eleven birders hoping for a “routine” trip to Otter Creek Marsh west of Belle Plaine to see Sandhill Cranes, Virginia Rail and Sora among other spring migrants. The weather was dreary and the rain was still coming down as we made our pit stop in Belle Plaine but it let up as we drove the access road into Otter Creek Marsh where two Sandhill Cranes swooped across the road in front of us to a soft landing just to our east. Several members of the group had the Sandhills as tops on their wish list for the trip and we all had excellent looks. So the heat was off, as far as the cranes were concerned. In all, four Sandhill Cranes were seen. At least one pair has nested here each year recently.

The rails were a different story. The best time for spring migratory rails at Otter Creek is usually the first weekend after the 25th of April with good chances for Marsh and Sedge Wrens too. Due to the winter weather, and that of the early spring, the vegetation along the dikes and in the ponds was somewhat limited. A couple of Soras were seen but Virginia Rail and the

wrens were not found.

After walking the dikes we visited the barn to look for otters. None were spotted but a Spotted Sandpiper and Common Yellowthroat were added to the trip list there.

As is traditional, the group feasted on a family style breakfast in Main Amana and got to know one another better. It was a great meal in great company. Some had just made their first visit to Otter Creek and hoped to return another year.

Participants: Ed Allgood, Jean Allgood, Ann Bagford, Jack Bagford, Chris Caster, Bob Dick, Thérèse Guedon, Dick Lynch, Nancy Lynch, Jim Scheib (leader), and Sharon Scheib (but Murph, the wonder dog, stayed home.)

Birds (34 species): Pied-billed Grebe, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Green Heron, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Hooded Merganser, American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, Sora, Sandhill Crane, Killdeer, Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, House Sparrow.

– Jim Scheib

**May 17, Meeting.** A variety of issues were discussed and Chris Caster summarized this year’s spring count. Harlo Hadow from Coe College spoke to us on the natural history of the Blue-spotted Salamander and its status in Eastern Iowa.

Attendees: Ed Allgood, Jean Allgood, Chris Caster, Margrieta Delle, Karen Disbrow, Thérèse Guedon, Jenny Hollis, Rick Hollis,

Bernie Knight, Calvin Knight, Dave Kyllingstad, James Miller, Darlyne Neff, John Neff, and Rosemarie Petzold.

– *Rick Hollis*

**May 20, Hickory Hill Park.** It had been a wet, buggy spring so I knew that the insects would be bad. We arrived at Hickory Hill Park, and the biting gnats were on us at once. Bottles of insect repellent appeared rapidly. Ed Allgood used a shirt over his head in the manner of the ancient Egyptian Pharaoh headdress.

We walked down the edge of the big field where we saw a few birds: Red-eyed Vireo, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, and Chestnut-sided Warbler, while Barn Swallows and Chimney Swifts soared overhead. House Wrens and Gray Catbirds called from the nearby thickets. We made a loop around and headed into the south valley. We could hear but not see the Kentucky Warbler singing. (I had heard the Kentucky Warbler almost every morning for over a week, but rarely got to see him. I was hoping that he would show himself to the group on this morning.)

We cut through the South Valley; the Kentucky Warbler was near, but then he moved off. I wanted to get to the Hawkeye Wildlife Area yet that morning, but decide on one more crack at the Kentucky. As we came out of the south valley we took the trail which runs along the edge of the woods paralleling the valley. All of a sudden the song of the Kentucky Warbler seemed to be right on top of us. I spotted it sitting on a horizontal branch in a small 'hole' in the foliage. He sang and sang for us. Most of the group got to see him. It was a life bird for many. Unfortunately our birding Pharaoh, Ed didn't get to see him.

By now I was hearing comments such as, "I bet there are birds perched on the Hy-Vee sign."

That is a good indication to the leader that it is time for a donut break.

After the donut break, we headed to the Hawkeye Wildlife Area. On the Swan Lake Road about 1/4 mile or so east of the Sand Point parking lot a singing Bell's Vireo showed itself to some members of the group. Upon reaching the Sand Point parking lot we were attacked by another predatory insect – THE MOSQUITO! The birders endured the siege of the mosquitoes long enough to observe Black-and-white Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Ovenbird, Wilson's Warbler, Canada Warbler, and American Redstart. From there we headed west past Swan Lake. Our last stop at the temporary ponds east of the Babcock Access Road provided welcome relief. There was a cool breeze out of the west and NO BUGS! It was a pleasure to leisurely observe Killdeer, Semi-palmated Plover, Least Sandpiper, Semi-palmated Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Dunlin. It was a treat to see the White-rumped Sandpipers in breeding plumage.

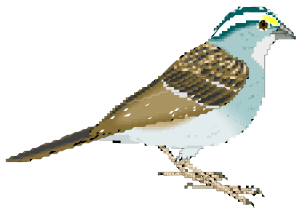
On the way home some of us went south towards Tiffin. We were able to observe Eastern Bluebird, Loggerhead Shrike, Bobolink, Western Meadowlark, Dickcissel, Grasshopper Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, and Field Sparrow.

Participants: Ed Allgood, Jean Allgood, Jack Bagford, Chris Caster, Margrieta Delle, Dara Dick, Robert Dick, Karen Disbrow, James Huntington (leader), Ramona McGurk, Bob Stearns, Joan Stearns.

Birds (75 species): American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, Semi-palmated Plover, Semi-palmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, White-rumped

Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Dunlin, Ring-billed Gull, Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Loggerhead Shrike, Bell's Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, European Starling, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Kentucky Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Wilson's Warbler, Canada Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird, Western Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– James Huntington



**June 23, Sockum Ridge Park.** We met Lou Pailliotet at 8 a.m. at Sockum Ridge Park, a beautiful wooded park in southern Washington County. Lou is in his seventies and has been a lifelong resident of Washington County. He knows the history of Sockum Ridge, and though walking with a cane while recovering from a hip replacement, was able to direct us to several

areas of Sockum Ridge. We walked up a slope through the woods while Lou drove up to a circular parking lot just beyond a small pond impoundment. Lou spotted a pair of Yellow-billed Cuckoos on the way to his car. The male cuckoo was preening and showing off, presumably for the female cuckoo and not Lou. We flushed a Belted Kingfisher at the water impoundment, and many Indigo Buntings were seen in this area.

In the woods beyond the parking lot a Kentucky Warbler was observed feeding her young. We also disturbed a Turkey Vulture, and Lou reported that a week later a vulture chick was observed in the hollow tree where we had seen the adult.

From Sockum Ridge we drove several miles southeast to Fern Cliff Park. Along the way we paused at a pond along the road where a Wood Duck family with 15 young was observed. At Fern Cliff we stopped at an overlook on the bluff above the river and all piled out to take in the view. Bob Dick pointed out a male Wild Turkey with his harem in the distance. We all thought he was kidding until we got the scope out, and over a mile away in a meadow near the far woods – sure enough, a turkey! We were all amazed at Bob's keen eyesight. A longtime hunter, he knew what he was seeing.

Both Sockum Ridge and Fern Cliff are good birding spots, and we all wished we had visited in May during the passerine migration. I have noted this for next spring as a field trip.

Participants: Ed Allgood, Jean Allgood, Bob Dick, Dara Dick, Karen Disbrow (leader), Dave Kyllingstad, Mary Noble, Lou Pailliotet, Bob Stearns, Joan Stearns, and Margaret Marie, a visitor from California.

Birds (47 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck,

Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Killdeer, Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Chimney Swift, Belted Kingfisher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Wood-Pee-wee, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Ovenbird, Kentucky Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– *Karen Disbrow*

**July 8, Bicycle Birding Trip to Lake Macbride.** I arrived at the Hy-Vee a little before 6:30 a.m. on a warm, humid morning. I waited until about 6:35 before starting out. I wasn't very surprised that nobody else was there. I had only gone a few yards, when a voice behind me said "Are you headed to Solon?" I glanced over my shoulder to see a smiling Drew Dillman. Good, I had some company.

We bicycled along paved roads for about six miles. Then we headed north on Quincy which is gravel. The wind was light and there were almost no cars. We saw the expected birds: lots of Red-winged Blackbirds, Indigo Buntings, a few Eastern Meadowlarks, Baltimore Orioles, American Goldfinches, Chipping Sparrows, Song Sparrows, Dickcissels, Killdeers. A pair of Eastern Phoebes nested in a culvert under Quincy Road. We arrived at a field flanked on one side by large trees where I had seen Bobolinks earlier in the week. We saw Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Red-

headed Woodpecker, Baltimore Oriole, Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo and Eastern Bluebird. A Grasshopper Sparrow sang in the distance. Then Drew said "Look, Bobolinks," and we could see a flock of perhaps thirty Bobolinks, all seemingly males!

We had to press on to Solon to meet Karen Disbrow at 8:00. We arrived at 8:05. We waited for Karen until 8:15, then headed down the bike trail which runs along Lake Macbride to the state park. About one mile down the trail we could hear Sedge Wrens, but the Bell's Vireo was silent. We headed down a side trail where I had see a chat a couple of times. Now that chat would have been a life bird for Drew, so I figured it wouldn't cooperate, but after about forty minutes it popped up on a snag and sang! Great.

We pedaled on to the state park where Karen found us. She had just missed us at Solon. It was almost 11:00 when we reached the boat rental spot. We had a lemonade slush, which was refreshing, but heavy clouds were threatening. Karen asked if we would perhaps like a lift home. We got Drew's bicycle in her car, but I decided to continue on by bike. I had gotten about two miles, when it started to rain. Luckily, there was a shelter where another bicyclist waited. I waited about forty-five minutes. It was quite a storm. I was glad of that shelter. On the way back after the storm, I added Wild Turkey and Savannah Sparrow. Next time, I hope I can get a few more participants. You can put Drew on the spot and ask if he had a good time!

Participants: Drew Dillman, Karen Disbrow, James Huntington (leader).

Birds (56 species): Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Turkey Vulture, Mallard, Ring-necked Pheasant, Wild Turkey, Killdeer,

Spotted Sandpiper, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, House Wren, Sedge Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Northern Parula, Yellow Warbler, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, House Finch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– *James Huntington*

**July 21, Butterfly Count.** Our small but enthusiastic crew braved the heat and humidity to conduct the third annual Iowa City 4th of July Butterfly Count, sponsored by the North American Butterfly Association. We spent the day at Kent Park, Hawkeye Wildlife Area, and Macbride-Nature Recreation Area and finished with 36 species, one short of last year's total. The best sightings were an 'Olive' Juniper Hairstreak, many Byssus Skippers, and a Common Checkered-Skipper. Jim gave us a lot of pointers on dragonfly identification as well.

Participants: Chris Caster, Jim Durbin, Chris Edwards (leader).

Butterflies (36 species): Black Swallowtail (8), Giant Swallowtail (2), Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (6), Checkered White (2), Cabbage White (82), Clouded Sulphur (21), Orange Sulphur (35), Little Yellow (60), Dainty Sulphur (23), Bronze Copper (3), 'Olive' Juniper Hairstreak (1),

Eastern Tailed-Blue (81), Spring Azure (97), American Snout (5), Great Spangled Fritillary (36), Meadow Fritillary (21), Pearl Crescent (12), Question Mark (3), Eastern Comma (2), American Lady (1), Painted Lady (12), Red Admiral (17), Common Buckeye (11), Red-spotted Purple (2), Viceroy (14), Tawny Emperor (1), Common Wood-Nymph (18), Monarch (16), Silver-spotted Skipper (4), duskywing sp. (1), Common Checkered-Skipper (1), Least Skipper (29), Fiery Skipper (1), Peck's Skipper (1), Byssus Skipper (18), Dun Skipper (2).

– *Chris Edwards*

**August 16, Picnic in City Park.** We met at Pavilion 5 to share our summer adventures. It was a beautiful but windy day, resulting in trouble starting the grills. Finally at 6:30 the grills were ready to do the cooking and we ate at 7:00. There was plenty of food and talk of birding trips taken in June and the upcoming fall schedule.

Participants: Ed Allgood, Jean Allgood, John Bollenbacher, Margrieta Delle, Bob Dick, Dara Dick, Karen Disbrow, Thérèse Guedon, Bernie Knight, Cal Knight, Ramona McGurk, Rosemarie Petzold, Jim Scheib, Sharon Scheib, Bob Stearns, Joan Stearns.

– *Karen Disbrow*

**August 19, Cone Marsh and Hawkeye Wildlife Area.** Our bright, clear, cool morning quickly clouded over as we took back roads to Cone Marsh. I was surprised, but pleased by the overcast sky, as the first stop required us to look east. We saw lots of Pectoral Sandpipers, Killdeers, and a few Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpipers, and Least Sandpipers. With the wind, it was almost chilly.

We headed to the dike next. The day before, I had seen Willet and avocets here, but these birds

were, unfortunately, gone. Three released Trumpeter Swans were still present, grazing on the short grass with Canada Geese. There were swallows everywhere, mostly Tree Swallows, skimming over the marsh. Green Herons were common and we flushed four Black-crowned Night-Herons. We advanced down the dike. A Common Snipe lurked in the grass and Karen spotted a Great Horned Owl sitting on a low stump at the end of a small slough. We had a nice close comparison of Lesser Yellowlegs and juvenile Stilt Sandpiper. As we headed back, a Cooper's Hawk cruised along the tree line. It was now after 11:00, the clouds were diminishing, and it was getting hot. I proposed to those who wanted to keep birding that we check out Sand Point at the Hawkeye Wildlife Area, stopping quickly at North Liberty for some food.

It was a hot walk out to Sand Point. The water level was up, covering the shorebird habitat. We spread out in a line to sweep the point. I had hoped that we would find a Buff-breasted Sandpiper, but we flushed only Horned Larks, Pectoral Sandpipers, and Killdeers. As we approached the end of the point, I kicked up a large bird. It floated up in front of us and I yelled "Short-eared Owl!" It flew to a small island and actually perched on a small branch, where we could scope it. That was surprising, and it was a life bird for several.

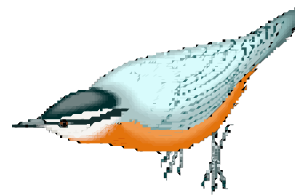
When we got back to our cars, most of the group departed. Karen and I headed west. A quick check of Babcock Access revealed a very close juvenile Short-billed Dowitcher, and at Greencastle a number of Semipalmated Sandpipers were present. A few passerines along James Avenue ended our birding day.

Participants: Bob Dick, Dara Dick, Karen Disbrow, Chris Edwards, Julie Englander, Thérèse Guedon, James Huntington (leader),

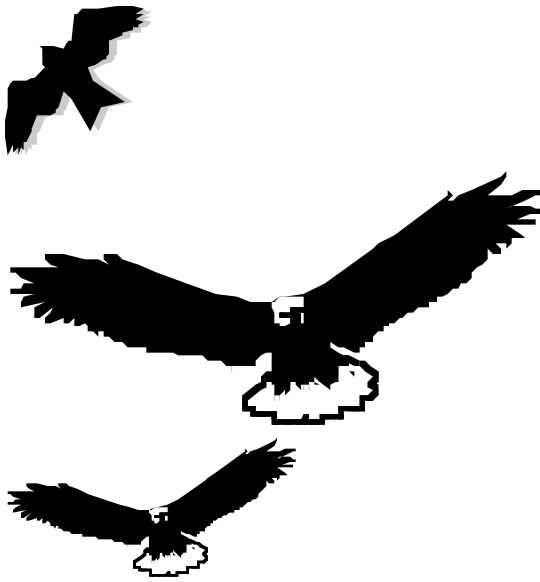
Diana Pesek, Bob Stearns, Joan Stearns.

Birds (74 species): American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Turkey Vulture, Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Wood Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Common Snipe, Ring-billed Gull, Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Great Horned Owl, Short-eared Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Chipping Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– James Huntington







**Saturday, September 15<sup>th</sup>  
9 AM - 2 PM**

**Bring the family and friends for a migration celebration!**

**At: Macbride Nature Recreation Area & Stainbrook State Preserve  
on County Road F-28 between North Liberty and Solon.**

**\_ 9 AM & 11 AM At the Raptor Center-Hawk identification Seminar by John Knoot (U of I Wildlife Camp/School of the Wild Assistant Coordinator) & Gail Dawson (Macbride Raptor Project)**

**\_ 10 AM At the Raptor Center-Osprey Introduction Slide presentation by Jodeane Cancilla (Macbride Raptor Project)**

**\_ 12 PM At the Raptor Center-Live Raptor Program by Macbride Raptor Project Staff**

**\_ 9 AM-1 PM At the Raptor Center -Songbird banding by Meredith Caskey  
(U of I Wildlife Camp/School of the Wild Assistant Coordinator)**

**\_ 9 AM-2 PM Hawk watching on the ridge at Stainbrook State Preserve,  
Next to Sugar Bottom Entrance by Iowa City Bird Club members. Bring  
binoculars, blankets, lawn chairs and picnic lunches for an exciting day of  
autumn migration and scenery.**

This program is sponsored by the Macbride Raptor Project (UI Division of Recreational Services and Kirkwood Community College), Iowa City Bird Club, Cornell College Biology Department and the US Army Corps of Engineers. For more information call 398-5495 or 335-9293.

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to attend all University of Iowa sponsored events. If you are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation in order to participate in this program, please contact Recreational Services in advance at 335-9293.

## 2001 Johnson County Spring Migration Count

**Chris Caster**

The Johnson County Spring Migration Count was held on Saturday, May 12th. The weather conditions were fantastic. It was around 45 degrees at sunup and 65 by the afternoon, with light breezes and clear skies most of the day. The mosquitoes were numerous and persistent, but the birding made up for it. We had an excellent turnout with 16 birders participating. Our noon get-together was held at the Coralville Hy-Vee where about half of us met to exchange sightings and eat lunch. Incidentally I would welcome comments as to the desirability of this location for next year's count.

This year we blew our previous Spring Count totals out of the water. We found 155 different species, ten more than the previous high of 145 from 1997 and 2000. This included 13 species of waterfowl, 14 species of shorebirds, and 26 species of warblers.

The count's best bird was undoubtedly a White-winged Scoter discovered at the S & G Materials sandpit south of Iowa City by Mike Dooley days before. This bird was good enough to hang around for some time beyond the count and was seen by many birders from around the state. Other surprises at the sandpit included a Common Goldeneye and a Yellow-headed Blackbird. At Hawkeye Wildlife Area, the Babcock access road provided our best

shorebirding. Two Red-necked Phalaropes, numerous Dunlins, Ruddy Turnstones, and a lone Hudsonian Godwit were found. A Common Tern in basic plumage was another notable find there. Other good birds included Bell's Vireo along Swan Lake Rd., Clay-colored Sparrow along James Avenue, Swamp Sparrow at the Sand Point parking lot, Cape May Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat at Redbird Farms Wildlife Area, and Cerulean Warbler and Yellow-throated Warbler at Lake Macbride.

Cattle Egret, Great Egret, Sedge Wren, and Eurasian Tree Sparrow had all been found in the days preceding the count, but were not produced during the count. Of course the great thing about a count is that all the birds are "good." We were thankful to find the Common Nighthawks, Whip-poor-wills and Great Horned Owls missed last year. Based on previous counts I can't say that we had any notable misses, but it is easy to see that we could tally over 160, maybe even 165 one of these years. Can't wait for next year! Thanks to all those who helped make the day so enjoyable.

Participants: Chris Caster, Bob Dick, Karen Disbrow, Mike Dooley, Chris Edwards, Julie Englander, Jim Fuller, Rick Hollis, James Huntington, Tom Kent, John McLure, Mary Noble, Patrick O'Shaughnessy, Jim Scheib, Bob Stearns, Joan Stearns.

**SPECIES LIST**

Pied-billed Grebe	2	Wood Duck	46	Ruddy Duck	4
American White Pelican	11	Gadwall	10	Osprey	2
Double-crested Cormorant	62	American Widgeon	2	Broad-winged Hawk	1
Great Blue Heron	25	Mallard	52	Red-tailed Hawk	11
Green Heron	3	Blue-winged Teal	37	American Kestrel	4
Turkey Vulture	27	Northern Shoveler	12	Ring-necked Pheasant	36
Snow Goose	1	Ring-necked Duck	6	Wild Turkey	14
Canada Goose	99	Lesser Scaup	16	Northern Bobwhite	1
		White-winged Scoter	1	Sora	2
		Common Goldeneye	1	American Coot	22

Semipalmated Plover	75	Warbling Vireo	31	Blackpoll Warbler	3
Killdeer	35	Red-eyed Vireo	38	Cerulean Warbler	8
Lesser Yellowlegs	7	Blue Jay	80	Black-and-white Warbler	25
Solitary Sandpiper	4	American Crow	93	American Redstart	41
Spotted Sandpiper	17	Horned Lark	5	Ovenbird	26
Hudsonian Godwit	1	Purple Martin	17	Northern Waterthrush	1
Ruddy Turnstone	2	Tree Swallow	137	Louisiana Waterthrush	1
Semipalmated Sandpiper	14	N. Rough-winged Swallow	10	Common Yellowthroat	76
Least Sandpiper	160	Bank Swallow	1	Wilson's Warbler	1
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	Cliff Swallow	24	Canada Warbler	2
Dunlin	90	Barn Swallow	63	Yellow-breasted Chat	1
Short-billed Dowitcher	11	Black-capped Chickadee	61	Scarlet Tanager	7
American Woodcock	5	Tufted Titmouse	22	Eastern Towhee	4
Red-necked Phalarope	2	White-breasted Nuthatch	18	Chipping Sparrow	44
Franklin's Gull	1	Carolina Wren	1	Clay-colored Sparrow	2
Ring-billed Gull	41	House Wren	120	Field Sparrow	15
Caspian Tern	3	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	Lark Sparrow	8
Common Tern	1	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	19	Savannah Sparrow	7
Black Tern	1	Eastern Bluebird	27	Grasshopper Sparrow	2
Rock Dove	71	Veery	5	Song Sparrow	25
Mourning Dove	101	Gray-cheeked Thrush	2	Swamp Sparrow	1
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	1	Swainson's Thrush	14	White-throated Sparrow	4
Eastern Screech-Owl	1	Wood Thrush	7	White-crowned Sparrow	3
Great Horned Owl	3	American Robin	188	Northern Cardinal	167
Common Nighthawk	4	Gray Catbird	170	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	65
Whip-poor-will	5	Brown Thrasher	20	Indigo Bunting	84
Chimney Swift	24	European Starling	145	Dickcissel	5
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	9	American Pipit	1	Bobolink	24
Belted Kingfisher	4	Cedar Waxwing	4	Red-winged Blackbird	623
Red-headed Woodpecker	23	Blue-winged Warbler	2	Eastern Meadowlark	12
Red-bellied Woodpecker	33	Golden-winged Warbler	6	Western Meadowlark	3
Barred Owl	15	Tennessee Warbler	119	Yellow-headed Blackbird	1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	Orange-crowned Warbler	4	Common Grackle	100
Downy Woodpecker	21	Nashville Warbler	18	Brown-headed Cowbird	88
Hairy Woodpecker	3	Northern Parula	8	Orchard Oriole	6
Northern Flicker	27	Yellow Warbler	33	Baltimore Oriole	106
Eastern Wood-Pewee	6	Chestnut-sided Warbler	20	House Finch	7
Willow Flycatcher	2	Magnolia Warbler	12	American Goldfinch	110
Least Flycatcher	13	Cape May Warbler	1	House Sparrow	169
Eastern Phoebe	9	Yellow-rumped Warbler	16		
Great Crested Flycatcher	26	Black-throated Green Warbler	10		
Eastern Kingbird	46	Blackburnian Warbler	8		
Bell's Vireo	1	Yellow-throated Warbler	2		
Yellow-throated Vireo	11	Palm Warbler	2		

binoculars to Jim Fuller for all his years of service.

## Rick's Ramblings

**Rick Hollis**

**The Iowa Birdline** has a new home and a new primary carekeeper. Pete Ernzen is now taking care of the line. The new phone number is (712) 364-2863. Pete's e-mail address is [pkernzen@pionet.net](mailto:pkernzen@pionet.net). Birdline announcements will also continue to be found on IA-BIRD. We wish Pete the best of luck, and again tip our

**Climate Change and Birds.** As we all know, spring temperatures in many parts of the world have increased over the past several decades. Local breeders and some long-distance migrants have displayed changes in the timing of their breeding, to take advantage of these climate changes. In some species, the timing of spring migration relies on endogenous rhythms that are

set by other factors. In species like this, the timing of their breeding can only advance to that point which would represent when they arrive on their breeding grounds. The Pied Flycatcher, *Ficedula hypoleuca*, is a European species that

has advanced its egg laying date over the past 20 years. This shift has not kept up with the advances of climatic changes. This is because either their migration strategy is unaffected by climate change, or the climate in breeding and wintering areas are changing at different speeds, preventing adequate adaptation. *Nature* 411, 296 - 298 (2001).

**The 2001 Big Sit, Sunday, October 14.** The Big Sit! is an annual bird watching event started in 1993 by members of the New Haven (CT) Bird Club. Unlike birdathon competitions where participants race all over trying to see the maximum number of species in a 24-hour period, Big Sit! participants do all their 24 hours (optional) of birding from within a 17-foot diameter circle. On that day, Big Sitters from all over the world will be sitting in their count circles waiting for that next good bird. Participation in The Big Sit! is free, but the organizers do ask that teams register their circles before the Sit and submit their results after the event. For more information or to register your team, visit <<http://members.aol.com/nhbirdclub>> or send an e-mail to [nhbirdclub@aol.com](mailto:nhbirdclub@aol.com). You can also write to The Big Sit!, c/o John Triana, 2 Coer Rd., Prospect, CT 06712. Results from this year's event will be posted on the BWD website <<http://www.birdwatchersdigest.com>>.

**Birdscapes** (News from International Habitat Conservation Partnerships) is published three times a year by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Canadian Wildlife Service. The Spring/Summer 2001 issue's 37 pages are packed with numerous short articles about bird habitat restoration projects and are profusely illustrated with color photographs. Articles from the last 3 issues (sans photographs) may be viewed online at:

<http://library.fws.gov/birdscapes/birdindex.htm>  
Subscriptions are available FREE by writing to Dee Butler, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,

Division of Bird Habitat Conservation, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 110, Arlington, VA 22202 or [dee\\_butler@fws.gov](mailto:dee_butler@fws.gov).

**West Nile Virus.** New York wildlife officials have discovered that of birds collected for a study on West Nile Virus (WNV), more died from pesticide poisoning than from the virus itself. In response to this early data, the National Audubon Society is calling upon Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Virginia to begin testing dead birds for pesticide poisoning, if they have not already, and to publicly release their findings. In light of WNV, spread to the states mentioned above as well as Washington DC, and the first human deaths in the United States, the Iowa Department of Health is asking to be informed of any Blue Jays or American Crows that are seen sick or dying in unusual ways: flopping on the ground, etc. Corvids are especially susceptible to the virus.

**Sustainable Forestry** should be good for birds in all regions, especially in the tropics. Global Forest Watch, Forest Stewardship Council, Conservation International and other groups are working to persuade U.S. retailers to purchase only wood from logging companies that practice sustainable forestry. This will be a slow process, in part because of the logistics of certifying shipments and because unsustainable logging can be as much as five times as profitable. As with many conservation matters, this is a multi-front battle and as we change one factor, it affects others. A good alternative to using chemically treated woods, which resist rot and insects, is to use woods that are naturally resistant. A wood such as Ipe, from Brazil, meets these requirements, but there are enormous difficulties in certifying woods, especially in the third world. Two of the largest buyers of lumber in the U.S. have now agreed to purchase only certified wood. So here is a big

“Tip of Our Binoculars” to Home Depot and  
Lowe’s Home Improvement Warehouse!

Sharon Scheib saw the following bumper sticker  
in Pennsylvania: “Shoot your TV set. Watch  
birds instead.”

