
Eastern Iowa Birdwatch



The Iowa City Bird Club Newsletter

Volume 26 Number 3

December 2006

Schedule

Field trips depart from the Dodge Street Hy-Vee in Iowa City unless otherwise noted. Meet in the southwest corner of the parking lot. 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 please contact the trip leader. **Meetings** are held at the Grant Wood AEA Southern Facility, 200 Holiday Road in Coralville, generally at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month.

December 4, Monday, 7:00 p.m. Christmas Bird Count Planning Meeting at the home of Jim and Karole Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll NE north of Iowa City. See page 3 for more information.

December 17, Sunday. Iowa City Christmas Bird Count. See page 3 for more information.

January 7, Sunday, 8:00 – 10:30 a.m. Bird Feeder Watch Social hosted by Jim and Karole Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll NE. Come for coffee and rolls and watch the winter birds visiting the feeders. If you plan to bring food, please let Karole know ahead of time at 338-3561.

January 21, Sunday, 1:30 p.m. Owl Prowl. We'll spend the afternoon searching for roosting owls, such as Northern Saw-whet, Great Horned, and Barred Owls. Karen Disbrow, 339-1017.

February 3, Saturday, 7:00 a.m. Amana Turkey Walk and Feast. Join us for an early morning hike through the woods followed by breakfast at the Amanas. Please call Chris Caster at 339-8343 if you plan to attend.

February 15, Thursday, 7:00 pm. Meeting. Jim Walters of the Johnson County Songbird Project will present on the Purple Martin; its habitat requirements, population trends, and how to get involved in making our area a better home for Martins.

February 18, Sunday, 8 a.m. Mississippi River and Quad Cities for gulls, eagles, and waterfowl. Leader to be determined (call Karen at 339-1017 to volunteer).

March 10, Saturday, 6:30 a.m. Burlington Area for Eurasian Tree Sparrows, Winter Wren, Lapland Longspurs, waterfowl, and more with local guide Chuck Fuller. We will meet Chuck at the Port of Burlington at 8 a.m. and will return to Iowa City by 5 p.m., so bring a sack lunch or snack. Karen Disbrow, 339-1017.

Continued on next page →

Schedule – continued

March 20, Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. Beginning Birdwatcher Course: Basics of Birding I at the Conservation Education Center at Kent Park. This is the first of six classes which are free to club members. Advanced registration is requested – call Brad Freidhof at 645-2315 to register. Contact Karen Disbrow at 339-1017 for more information. A full schedule will be listed in the next newsletter.

March 22, Thursday, 7:00 pm. Meeting. Chris Caster will present on Color and Mechanics of Iridescence in Birds.

March 25, Sunday, 7:00 a.m. Cone Marsh in Louisa County for Sandhill Cranes, ducks, geese, and other early spring arrivals. Chris Edwards, 626-6362.

March 27, Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. Beginning Birdwatcher Course: Basics of Birding II at the Conservation Education Center at Kent Park.

March 31, Saturday, 8:00 a.m. Hawkeye Wildlife Area for waterfowl and other spring migrants. Karen Disbrow, 339-1017.

Other Dates of Note

March 20, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. Annual Prairie Preview at Montgomery Hall at the Johnson County 4H Fairgrounds. This year's program is "Private Conservation and Restoration – why am I so busy when I'm supposed to be retired?" by Dick Baker. There will be information and displays from local environmental organizations and agencies, and refreshments will be provided.

From Our President Chris Caster

Well I don't have too much to say this time around—just some of the usual reminders. From each club mailing I always get a number of bounce-back messages indicating an undeliverable address—yours could be one of those. If you have not been receiving any of my e-mail reminders of club meetings, but would like to, please send me an e-mail message at cjcaster@earthlink.net and I'll get that corrected.

Thanks to those helping with refreshments at meetings—Bernie Knight in September, Nancy and Richard Lynch in October, Therese Guedon and Jeanne and Larry Bonde in November. If you would be willing to help at a future

meeting, please give Bernie Knight a call at 337-9140.

If you would be willing to lead an outing, please give Karen Disbrow our field trip coordinator a call at 339-1017. Although our spring schedule won't be posted until the next newsletter, it will be a busy one and we need help now in putting that together.

I am always looking for topics and most importantly speakers for future meetings. If you have any ideas or would be willing to do a presentation, please contact me ASAP. Out of necessity I am often planning for meetings a year in advance. So if you have something you'd like to do, I can give you the time to put it together. We just need to get it on the schedule.

Thanks to the Fullers for hosting Larry Stone, our September presenter. Thanks to Dick

Lynch for recruiting Mike Apicella, our October presenter. Thanks to Jerry White for making himself available to present in November.

I think the club is enjoying terrific support from many individuals—thank you all. I hope that even more of you will think of our club as you make your New Year's resolutions.

Christmas Bird Count December 17, 2006

This year's Iowa City Christmas Bird Count will be held on Sunday, December 17th, unless extreme weather conditions require moving the count to a later date. Co-compilers are Bob Dick and Chris Edwards. If you wish to participate as a field observer or a feeder watcher or if you have questions, please call Bob between 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. at 337-4945 or 321-0706 (cell), or email at bobd555@earthlink.net.

The pre-count planning meeting will be Monday, December 4th, at 7 p.m. at the home of Jim and Karole Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll NE, located off Dubuque St. north of Iowa City. Call Jim at 338-3561 if you need directions. As an added attraction this year, Chris Caster will present a slide show about common CBC identification challenges, including Loggerhead and Northern Shrikes, Canada and Cackling Geese, and others. Note: You do not need to attend the planning meeting to participate in the CBC. Your group leader will have information for you on the count day.

On count day, we will meet at noon for a mid-day compilation and lunch in Meeting Room C at the North Liberty Community Center, 520 W. Cherry St. in North Liberty. (This is the same location as last year.) Bring your own lunch.

Dinner and an updated compilation will be at The Brown Bottle Café, 125 Zeller St., North

Liberty. Our private room is available beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Please note that the count area is a 15-mile diameter circle with the center located at Highway 965 and County Road F-28 (Penn Street) in North Liberty. This includes all of North Liberty and Coralville, but not all of Iowa City. If you plan to participate as a feeder watcher and are not sure if you are in the count area, please contact Bob. Also, if you know others who may desire to participate as a feeder watcher please encourage them and have them call Bob.

Please visit the ICBC web site at www.icbirds.org for more information that Jim Scheib has provided. Note: At the time of this printing, CBC information and forms on the web site may still be in process of being updated.

Let's have a great 2006 Christmas Bird Count!

Renewal Notice

It is time to renew your annual membership for 2007. Our annual membership dues are \$15 per household, or \$10 for students. Your mailing label indicates the most recent year for which you have paid, next to your name. Please complete the membership renewal form on the inside back cover and send it with your check payable to "Eastern Iowa Birdwatch" to Bernie Knight, 425 Lee St., Iowa City, IA 52246.

Your dues are used to pay for the expenses of publishing and mailing our club newsletter, operating our web site, reimbursing speakers for travel costs, and printing fliers to distribute throughout the community to promote our activities. As an added bonus, members receive a 10% discount on bird seed at Bird's Eye View in Coralville.

Thoughts of an Iowa Birdwatcher

Rick Hollis

PULLING OUR SHARE OF THE LOAD

Currently it is possible do the following things to help wildlife habitat in Iowa:

Buy a Federal Migratory Waterfowl Stamp for \$15.00. All residents and nonresidents 16 years old and older must have a valid federal migratory waterfowl stamp (duck stamp) on their person while hunting geese and ducks. Some of the money from the purchase of Duck Stamps goes back to the states. It goes mostly to support hunting areas, but hey, we watch birds there.

Buy a Natural Resources License Plate. Starting in September 2005, the revenue (after the actual license fees) goes into the REAP funds and a portion of the price goes directly into the Wildlife Diversity Program to match grant funds available from Congress (the Conservation and Restoration Act, or "CARA" monies). These State Wildlife Grants are used to support non-game wildlife.

Buy an Iowa DNR Non-Game Support Certificate. The certificate is a photograph costing \$5.00, which goes to support the Wildlife Diversity Program. Available from the Department of Natural Resources, Attn: Non-game Support Certificate, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0034.

Contribute through the Chickadee Checkoff on your income taxes.

I think you can also purchase a Wildlife Habitat Fee (\$8.50). This is basically required of anyone who wishes to hunt in Iowa. You get a stamp like a Duck Stamp. It is not clear to me whether they still have a stamp. It is also not clear whether anyone can buy it, or if it is only available as a hunting license add-on.

I suspect you could also pay the Iowa Migratory Game Bird Fee (\$8.50). An additional fee is paid if one wishes to hunt wild geese, brant, ducks, snipe, rail, woodcock, gallinule or coot. It is also not clear whether anyone can buy it, or if it is only available as a hunting license add-on.

One estimate of the monies generated by these programs, chiefly paid by non-birders, is that the Wildlife Habitat Stamp program generates \$600,000 per year, while the Duck Stamp program generates \$150,000 per year for use for habitat acquisition and management in Iowa. The Chickadee Checkoff program has generated less and less money since its inception in 1981, \$135,000 in recent years.

Bird watchers and other non-consumptive wildlife users have long tried to find ways to contribute to habitat restoration and preservation. One proposal was Teaming with Wildlife. Originally this would have been a tax added on to the things that bird watchers use, making it the equivalent of the Pittman-Robertson Tax on hunting and fishing gear. This got bogged down over whether it was supported by various manufacturers and what exactly would go on the list. The Conservation and Restoration Act (CARA), which required matching funds from the states, would come out of some pre-existing fund or were value added taxes like the monies created by TWW. This I believe morphed into the State Wildlife Grants program and provides federal dollars to every state and territory to support conservation aimed at preventing wildlife from becoming endangered. Congress created the program in 2001. Funds appropriated under the State Wildlife Grants Program are allocated to every state according to a formula

based on each state's size and population. The five-year track record of the State Wildlife Grants Program can be seen in a lengthy file which can be downloaded at www.teaming.com/pdf/SWG_Report.pdf. Despite success, this program received a major cut in funding in the House this year.

IOWA SONG BIRD STAMP PROPOSAL

There is a proposal floating around which would create an Iowa Song Bird Stamp. This is a different approach than other past proposals in that it would be from Birdwatchers for Birds.

Let me start by describing what it is not. This would not be a stamp that would actually grant permission to do anything. Game wardens would not stop birders and ask to see it. It is purely a voluntary contribution. There would be no question that monies are coming from fishermen or hunters; you would be identifying yourself as a birder. You would be saying that "I am a Birdwatcher, and I bought a Bird Stamp to Contribute Money to the Cause of Bird Conservation and Education."

This movement was started by Bill Smith of Sioux City. Bill is not connected with any particular legislator, but believes if the desire to do this can be demonstrated, it would be possible to persuade the legislature to pass it. I am not sure this will fly, but am willing to back it, to give it a shot.

This would be a voluntary purchase program for non-consumptive users. The money would go to the restoration, enhancement and protection of Iowa's native song bird habitats. A price of \$5.00 dollars has been suggested, but to me if duck stamps cost \$15.00, we should be willing to spend that much once per year.

Revenues are envisioned as going to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and from there to support the conservation objectives of Iowa's Habitat Fund.

The success or failure of this depends on being able to convince the possible legislative sponsors that there is sufficient support for this within the bird watching community, and being able to convince your own legislators to vote for it. It will be interesting to see what happens.

SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCE FUNDING

The Iowa legislature finally is moving towards funding natural resources in a sustainable manner, that is not paid only by consumptive users and dedicated to their hobbies.

The bill passed last year established a committee charged with providing the following:

- A sustainable funding plan for the conservation of Iowa's natural resources;
- A summary of sustainable funding initiatives implemented in surrounding states;
- The estimated revenue needed to implement the plan and accomplishments that would be achieved if it is implemented; and
- An analysis of Iowans' willingness to pay for identified conservation actions.

The committee has been holding public meetings around the state, and has a deadline of having a completed report submitted to the legislature before it convenes again on January 10, 2007.

For more of Rick's thoughts, visit his blog at <http://iowabirdwatcher.blogspot.com>.

Johnson County Birding Highlights, Fall 2006

Mike Dooley

AUGUST

Birding highlights in the county for the month of August began in the same way that July had ended, with migrating shorebird reports. On the 2nd, a remarkable pairing of four LEAST TERNS and five PIPING PLOVERS were on the upper Coralville Reservoir, seen from the Half Moon Avenue spot. The next day one PIPING PLOVER still lingered, along with a WILLET and five RUDDY TURNSTONES. A couple of EURASIAN TREE SPARROWS were identified along the walk out to the water. That same day on the north side of the reservoir, five AMERICAN AVOCETS and a WESTERN SANDPIPER were gleaned from the gatherings along the shoreline. The Half Moon Avenue location continued to be fruitful on the 22nd, producing 14 species of shorebird and including BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER, SANDERLING, BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER, and RED-NECKED PHALAROPE. On the 27th, both BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER and AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER were seen from the Half Moon spot, along with two COMMON TERNS.

SEPTEMBER

Two weeks later, a WHITE-EYED VIREO and an uncommon fall GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH were passing through Hickory Hill Park on a rainy September 10th. A few days later, on the 13th, fifteen warbler species at the park included GOLDEN-WINGED and CAPE MAY. Also present along the creek was a WINTER WREN. A representative of the annual fall grail bird at Hickory Hill, a male BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER, revealed itself on the 22nd.

Back up north, a COMMON TERN was identified on the 27th off Mehaffey Bridge on the lower reservoir, closing out the reports for September.

OCTOBER

A stroll through Waterworks Park on October 6th turned up a juvenile BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON along one of the ponds. The heron continued the following day. On the 15th, both HENSLOW'S and NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROWS were discovered on a search around Hawkeye Wildlife Area. An AMERICAN BITTERN was found at Water Works Park on the 18th. On the 20th an IBIS SPECIES was discovered along Greencastle Avenue at Hawkeye, but could not be narrowed down definitively. A few days later, on the 24th, four WESTERN GREBES were on Lake Macbride. A rare Johnson County GOLDEN EAGLE made an appearance over northwest Iowa City on the 29th.

NOVEMBER

There were no notable reports from Johnson County for the month of November.

Field Trip and Meeting Reports

July 23, Amana Nature Trail. This was a joint field trip with the Prairie States Mushroom Club. The weather could not have been more perfect. So many wonderful discoveries interrupted our progress down the trail, that we stayed more than twice as long as we had planned. Although we did not see or hear as many birds as we had hoped and expected, a Red-headed Woodpecker remained in sight long enough for all of us to watch, including its splendid red, white, and black display in flight. None of us were able to see or hear a Pileated Woodpecker, although the work of that bird was evident in many large, vertically elongated excavations in dead snags at several places along the trail. Before leaving, we also had a chance to delight in the colorful display of prairie flowers near the parking lot. We found about 65 fungi species that we could identify, and at least a dozen more beyond our knowledge. Walking across the parking lot to retrieve a white plastic coffee cup upside down on the grass, I was astounded and pleased to see it turn into a very large, young, nearly white *Amanita* just beginning to expand its cap. It was the most robust specimen of that species that I have ever observed. The following day I noticed that unlike the other *Amanita vaginata* that we had seen, the striations on this huge cap were divided or forked somewhere in the middle third of their length. I plan to scan, dry, and mail this specimen to Rod Tulloss. Other scanned and dried specimens were mailed to Rosanne Healy.

Participants: Dean Abel, Mark Bowman, Drew Dillman, Karen Disbrow, Therese Guedon, Peter Hanson, Roger Heidt, Chris McCarthy, Damian Pieper, Glen Schwartz, Mark Walton.

Birds (18 species): Turkey Vulture, Red-headed Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Kingbird, Blue Jay, Bank Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, House Wren, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern

Towhee, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, American Goldfinch.

– *Damien Pieper*

September 16, Hawk Watch at Stainbrook Preserve. The weather for this annual event was pleasant for hawk-watching, which temperatures in the 70s, but the southerly winds and mostly cloudy skies were not conducive to a big migration day. In fact, in terms of total raptor numbers, it was our worst count since 1998. Our turnout was also no doubt affected by another kind of hawk-watching, as the big game between Iowa and Iowa State kicked off at 11 a.m. in Iowa City.

Although large numbers of Broad-winged Hawks had been seen migrating through the area on the previous day, only a small number were seen during the hawk watch. Both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks were seen. The Turkey Vultures, Ospreys, Bald Eagles (both adult and immature), and Red-tailed Hawks may have been local resident birds.

It was interesting to see the new bird blind that was built at the preserve last year. Staff members and volunteers from the Macbride Raptor Project and Cornell College conduct raptor banding studies there during the fall months. Club member and banding volunteer Dave Kyllingstad gave us an inside look at the blind and showed us several new mechanical lures that the group is experimenting with.

Participants: J. J. Bell, Bob Black, Colleen Brems, Laura Brindle, Barry Buschelman, Bob and Dara Dick, Karen Disbrow, Linda Donelson, Chris Edwards, Jonni Ellsworth, Julie Englander, Del Holland, Dave Kyllingstad, Mary Noble, Brenda O'Brien, Mitch and Mary Otto, Diana Pesek, Viana Rockel, Jim Scheib, Bob Stearns, Rebecca Zahavias, and several others.

Raptors (7 species, 44 individuals): Turkey Vulture 10, Osprey 3, Bald Eagle, 9, Sharp-shinned Hawk 3, Cooper's Hawk 2, accipiter sp. 3, Broad-winged Hawk 8, Red-tailed Hawk 6.

Other Birds (26 species): American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Ring-billed Gull, Caspian Tern, Forster's Tern, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Yellow-throated Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Swainson's Thrush, Chestnut-sided Woodpecker, Magnolia Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Northern Cardinal, American Goldfinch.

– Chris Edwards

September 21, Meeting. Larry Stone, freelance writer, photographer, and naturalist from Elkader, gave a presentation based on the Earth Year 2000 Iowa Department of Natural Resources book *Iowa—Portrait of the Land*. Larry was the lead writer on this award-winning book.

The purpose of the book was to give Iowans a sense of this land's heritage, the changes we have imposed upon it, and a call to act thoughtfully in the future. From the book, "The land is our infrastructure, the physical basis for all we are and for whatever we may become... Both our past and our future are rooted in Iowa's land and in its ability to work for us and with us. If we understand its geological history and its natural processes, then we can use that knowledge to conserve and renew the land... Whether we choose to treat our land gently and with respect or harshly and callously, we are shaping the legacy we leave for our children. Will we decide upon clean water, clear air, sustainable farms, vigorous forests and prairies, diverse wildlife, and vibrant cities—or something else?"

Larry's slideshow was fast paced and took us through a bit of geologic history, changes made to our land, waters and wildlife since settlement, and some of our scenic wonders. We began with the Devonian period murals at the Iowa Museum of Natural History that gave us our

limestone bedrock and then discussed the retreat of the glaciers only 15,000 years ago. In 1673 Marquette and Joliet were the first Europeans to see Iowa when they came down the Wisconsin River to its confluence with the Mississippi. At that time Larry says there may have been more elk than bison in Iowa. Eastern Iowa was home to Passenger Pigeons and Prairie Chickens. The Mississippi became an important fur trade route and Iowa was an important center for coal mining. Settlement occurred rapidly after 1830. Settlers first cut the forests. When the settlers discovered that the prairie wastelands, when drained and plowed, made for rich farmland, Iowa would never be the same. By 1900, nearly all of Iowa had been cut, tiled, and plowed. Conservationists like Thomas Macbride, Louis Pammel, Samuel Calvin, and Bohumil Shimek were already pleading for restraint. These efforts did lead to the establishment of the State Board of Conservation in 1917 and our first state park, Backbone, in 1920. In the 1930s, the next generation of conservationists included J.N. "Ding" Darling, J. George Wyth, Ada Hayden, and Aldo Leopold. In 1933, a 25-year Conservation Plan was adopted which called for a halt to the abuses and would attempt to rebuild the resource base for future generations. In 1955 Iowa's county conservation board system was legislated, which was a model for the nation.

According to Larry, we have to decide how we want to look at things and gave some examples. Deer were once extirpated, but we brought them back as never before. We used to broadcast spray our roadsides, but now we use brush cutters – which certainly isn't an aesthetic solution. Wind power is clean and renewable, but it is unattractive and a hazard to our birds. A controversial access road to open the Mines of Spain natural area near Dubuque resulted in habitat fragmentation. How are we going to balance preservation and recreation?

This book is a call to action. As in the past, Iowans will continue to make decisions that have consequences for the land. What kind of a place do we wish to make it? How will we rank

our priorities? Larry is concerned that we are leaving very large footprints. Development is and will continue to be a problem. How will we control development? Things are still happening to our land and we really need to think seriously about our actions and make thoughtful decisions. And we should have some sense of urgency about it.

Thanks Larry for sharing your appreciation and concern for Iowa.

Attendees: Ed Allgood, Ann and Jack Bagford, John Broz, Chris Caster, Dean Colton, Robert Dick, Lois Dunlap-Beasley, Jim and Karole Fuller, Bruce Gardner, Paula Griffin, Therese Guedon, Del Holland, Bernie Knight, Jane Knoedel, Dave Kyllingstad, Kristen Lawton, Dick Lynch, Ramona McGurk, Darlyne and John Neff, Gail Nichols, Jim and Sharon Scheib, Lynette Seigley, Marcia and Richard Shaffer, Mary Suchomel, Gerry and Richard Tetrault, Gerald White, Wetherill Winder, Luke Wright.

– *Chris Caster*

September 24, Coralville Dam Area. Six members of the Iowa City Bird Club explored birding areas at Waterworks Park (on north Dubuque Street), Devonian Fossil Gorge (at the Coralville dam), West Overlook trail (a half-mile paved bicycle path along the Iowa River), Tailwater East (east of the dam), West Overlook beach and campground, and Squire Point (north of the dam on F-28). Forty-eight species were seen, plus a few unidentified shorebirds. The birders were enthusiastic about the cool, sunny weather and delighted to find new birding vistas—even though there were few warblers and the wind hid many common species.

Colder temperatures (56 degrees at 7 a.m., 66 degrees at noon) and north winds (about 5-15 mph) seemed to have ended the warbler season; we spotted only a Wilson's Warbler, two Philadelphia Vireos, and several Yellow-rumped Warblers. (Only two days before, a large variety of warblers was seen.) The birdiest area was Waterworks Park, where we found thirty species plus a kettle of about 25 Blue

Jays. Highlights there were Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Cormorant, Osprey, American Kestrel, and Sedge Wren, plus two Broad-winged Hawks – and a few shorebirds on the large pond (probably a Pectoral Sandpiper and Least Sandpipers). Passers-by reported seeing a Great Horned Owl. Sharon and Jim Scheib were a big help in exploring the park, where they had located many of the species on earlier visits.

Near the dam, highlights included kettles of American White Pelicans, Caspian Tern, Great Egret, two Red-tailed Hawks, a Bald Eagle, Brown Thrasher, Wilson's Warbler and Least Flycatcher. Several Turkey Vultures were sunning themselves, with their wings outstretched, on the south side of the dam. We did not find Belted Kingfisher, a common bird in this area.

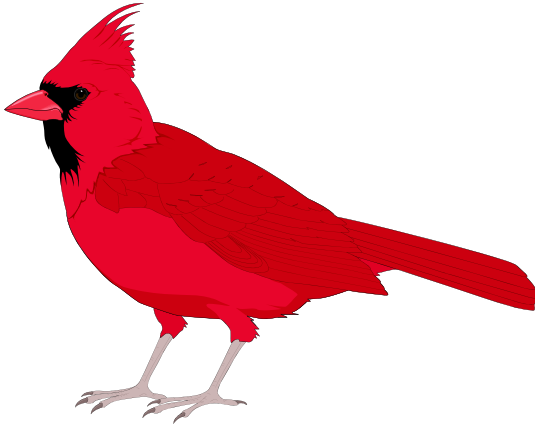
On the west side of North Liberty we checked out the cow pasture on west Forevergreen Road, but the mother lode of birds that was present two days previously had blown away. Several Horned Larks were seen west of Jones Boulevard—in an area where the ground has been disturbed for a new subdivision.

Participants: Linda Donelson (leader), Vicki Eaton, Therese Guedon, Linda Rudolph (recorder), Jim and Sharon Scheib.

Birds (48 species): Canada Goose, Mallard, Pied-billed Grebe, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Killdeer, Ring-billed Gull, Caspian Tern, Mourning Dove, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Philadelphia Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, House Wren, Sedge Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Cedar Waxwing, European Starling, Northern Cardinal, Red-

winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Brown-headed Cowbird, American Goldfinch, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

—Linda Donelson



October 19, Meeting. Mike Apicella, MD, Professor and Head of the U of I Dept. of Microbiology gave a talk entitled, “Birds, Pigs, Humans and Influenza: A consequence of the domestication of animals.”

There are a number of significant human diseases that are the consequence of the domestication of animals, e.g., tuberculosis and small pox originated in cattle, measles in the horse, and Q fever in sheep. In each case, an innocuous organism mutated to a form capable of causing human disease.

Avian flu is an RNA virus of the Influenza A species—although the ‘A’ does not stand for avian. Avian flu is highly prevalent in seabirds and they tolerate it very well. Approximately 40 to 50 percent of ducks are infected, but most are asymptomatic. The virus is present in the intestinal tract and therefore the feces, which when dry, can produce airborne dust particles capable of transmitting the virus. It can then be transferred to other creatures including humans.

A slightly different organism causes the flu each year. The first wave of disease usually occurs in the spring. These minor changes are evidence of antigenic ‘drift’ and they are

responsible for recurrent epidemics in 2-3 year cycles. Antigenic ‘drift’ also implies that vaccination must be repeated every fall. For a vaccination to be most effective, it must be tailor made to the new virus. The World Health Organization is responsible for identifying the strains most likely to produce disease in the coming year. The process of isolating, identifying and producing antisera to the new virus is extremely laborious. It usually takes a full six months and when the second wave of disease occurs during the fall/winter season, sometimes the new vaccine is in short supply.

Periodically, the virus will undergo a major change, termed antigenic ‘shift’ resulting in a new viral strain. Avian flu viruses are tracked by two proteins on their outer coat, hemagglutinin and neuraminidase. The hemagglutinin is the factor that enables the virus to enter a host cell and there are 15 known types. The neuraminidase is the factor that enables the replicated viruses to get back out to infect additional cells and there are 9 known types. Scientists use these types to identify the different influenza strains. The H5N1 strain, originating recently in Southeast Asia, is important because it infects more species than any previous strain, is deadlier than any previously known strain, and continues to evolve becoming more widespread and more deadly.

The H5N1 strain was first recognized when birds started dying in Hong Kong markets in the fall of 1996. It is believed that the market birds contracted the disease from seabirds. Thirty people were hospitalized and 7 died. They had to destroy all the birds in the markets to stop it. Since 2003 the cases of human infection reported to the WHO has steadily increased. Cumulatively since 2003, there have been 258 cases of infection and 153 deaths in 10 countries from Egypt and Azerbaijan in the west to China and Viet Nam in the east. The largest numbers of cases have occurred in Viet Nam and Indonesia with 93 and 74 respectively.

Although deadly, the H5N1 strain is not yet capable of causing a pandemic, because it does not infect humans easily and it cannot be transmitted easily from human to human in its current form. An event termed reassortment may be needed to produce the feared pandemic. Pigs carry an influenza virus capable of human-to-human transmission. If a pig contracts the H5N1 strain and the H5N1 genetic material gets mixed with genetic material from the swine flu, then what may result is an H5N1 strain capable of human to human transmission. This is what is so greatly feared and what some experts feel is inevitable. There have been findings of H5N1 infection among pigs in China and tigers and leopards in Thailand. In March 2006, Germany reported H5N1 infection in a stone marten (a weasel-like mammal).

According to the WHO, one study found that ducks infected with H5N1 virus are now shedding more viruses for longer periods without showing symptoms of illness. This finding has implications for the role of ducks in transmitting disease to other birds. As we know birds migrate with other species along flyways—the flyways overlap and flocks are in random movements. Birds using the East Asian Flyway may journey to the North American coastal tundra to mingle with breeders using the Atlantic American Flyway. Additionally there is evidence that the virus can even over-winter in northern bodies of water. It seems just a matter of time before the H5N1 virus becomes endemic in bird populations outside of Southeast Asia. In this event, measures to vaccinate domestic flocks and prevent contact with wild flocks may become important.

The last time such a deadly flu occurred was in 1918 (H1N1). The 1918 “Spanish Flu” pandemic actually began in Ft. Riley, Kansas. The first wave of disease was in the spring and it spread to Europe with American GIs. It got its name, because the papers in Spain, uncensored as Spain wasn’t in the war, were the ones to publicize it. Over 675,000 died in the US alone. The second wave of disease during the fall and winter killed an estimated 30-50

million people worldwide. The disease was unusual in that adolescents and young adults had the higher susceptibility than did small children and the elderly. Horrifying stories abound of healthy individuals leaving for work in the morning and being too feeble to walk by lunchtime; many died the next day. Other flu pandemics have occurred, notably in 1957 (H2N2) and 1968 (H3N2). These pandemics, although not nearly as devastating as the one in 1918, have been shown to have arose through reassortment between human and avian viruses.

There are Iowa connections to all of this. J. S. Koen, a veterinarian and inspector for the US Bureau of Animal Industry in Ft. Dodge, IA, observed a disease in pigs that resembled the raging human influenza of 1918-1919. He noted that an outbreak in the hogs would be immediately followed by an outbreak in the family and vice versa. Richard Shope, MD, a Univ. of Iowa grad working in the Department of Animal Pathology at the Rockefeller Institute, was the first to isolate flu virus from swine in 1931. He showed that people who were alive during the 1918-1919 epidemics had antibodies against the “pig” virus, but those born after 1920 lacked such antibodies.

Johan Hultin represents the most astonishing Iowa connection. He has been described by some as the Indiana Jones of the scientific set. Hultin emigrated from Sweden to Decorah as a young man. He attended graduate school in microbiology at the University of Iowa. In 1951 he led a team to Teller Mission, Alaska to recover the live 1918 flu virus from the graves of Eskimos killed by disease and buried in the permafrost. For nearly two weeks, in frigid weather, Hultin dug through a mass grave on the outskirts of the village. He failed to find the virus, which in hindsight may have been a good thing. It could have potentially killed him and started another pandemic. He earned a master’s degree in microbiology, but now having nothing to write about for his doctoral thesis, Hultin decided to go to medical school and specialized in pathology. Having an interest in anthrax, clostridium botulinum and other poisonous

agents, the U of I allowed Hultin to set up a one-man diagnostic lab to study their effects on mice and guinea pigs. He was concerned that one day they might be used in biowarfare. In 1957, Hultin moved his family to the San Francisco area where he continued to indulge his interests. Following the death of a patient, automotive safety became an obsession and he tinkered endlessly with safety belts, dash padding and other features. In 1968, the US Department of Transportation commissioned him to set up a unit of automotive safety engineering at Stanford Research Institute. Hultin also became a proficient mountain climber and skier. In 1982, at the age of 57, he became the oldest person to ski Mustagh Ata, a 25,000-foot peak in China. At age 60 he reached the summit of a never-before climbed Pakistan mountain, Karakoram. When he retired in 1988 he got to finish the project he had been working on for 32 years, a precise replica of a 14th century Norwegian mountain dwelling called Vastveit Loftet. Hultin built it all, from felling the timbers to constructing the chimney. Then in 1997 Hultin's life came full circle when he learned of the work of Jeff Taubenberger, a molecular pathologist at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology who was attempting to map the 1918 virus using minute specimens collected in 1918. Hultin contacted Taubenberger asking if he would be interested in tissue specimens if he could dig them up. Taubenberger said yes and Hultin set out alone for Alaska the next week armed with his wife's pruning shears. With the help and consent of the local villagers, Hultin uncovered the buried remains of a number of flu victims. With the pruning shears he opened the rib cages of four of the flu victims and removed the desired lung samples, which he packed for shipping to Taubenberger. Ten days later a call came that they had indeed isolated the genetic material from the 1918 virus.

Unfortunately there could be another Iowa connection. The trend towards larger hog confinement operations and larger poultry operations near urban centers makes us

increasingly vulnerable to the development of a new virus of pandemic potential.

Thanks Mike for a really great presentation. Thanks to Dick Lynch for contacting our speaker and making the arrangements.

Attendees: Ed and Jean Allgood, Jeanne Bonde, Colleen Brems, John Broz, Chris Caster, Drew Dillman, Karen Disbrow, John and Linda Donelson, Tony Franken, Therese Guedon, Carol Hulbary, Ken Hunt, Bernie Knight, Jane Knoedel, Dave Kyllingstad, Kristen Lawton, Dick Lynch, Darlyne and John Neff, Mark Oxley, Jason Paulios, Rosmarie Petzold, Jim Scheib, Bill Scheible, Marcia and Richard Shaffer, Gerald White, Rebecca Zaharias

– *Chris Caster*

October 22, Hawkeye Wildlife Area. Seven ICBC members showed up on a blustery Sunday morning for a fall outing. We began the morning at James Avenue in the Hawkeye Wildlife Area. Hunters present precluded checking out the pond east of the parking lot there. Our group moved on to Swan Lake and then to Greencastle Avenue and finished the morning there. Following a lunch, three of the group went on to bird the Iowa City Waterworks Park.

A total of sixty-two species were tallied including eleven sparrow species. No LeConte's or Sharp-tailed, but our Harris's Sparrow was a life bird for one of the participants. At least two American Pipits were at Swan Lake. The lake was quite low allowing the group to walk well out on to the surrounding dry flat area to identify shorebirds there also. There were at least twenty Wilson's Snipe there in addition to a few Pectoral Sandpipers.

Nine of our sparrow species were tallied on a walk east of Greencastle Avenue. The group also found at least five Dunlin along the far shore west of the parking area there.

Participants: Chris Caster, Linda Donelson, Tony Franken, Ken Hunt, Ken Lowder (leader), Bill Scheible, Pete Wickham.

Birds (62 species): Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked Pheasant, Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, American Coot, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper, Dunlin, Wilson's Snipe, Ring-billed Gull, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, American Pipit, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Tree Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Harris's Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Meadowlark sp., Common Grackle, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– Ken Lowder

November 4, Pleasant Creek State Recreation Area. Waterfowl hadn't moved into Eastern Iowa in large numbers by our early November field trip to Pleasant Creek SRA in Linn County. The weather was cloudy and windy, and viewing conditions on the lakes were excellent, with good visibility and no sun glare. But the waterfowl just weren't there in big numbers. However, Pleasant Creek did have five Common Loons, which are always a crowd-pleaser. Four of those were resting together on the water, and were in scope-view at the same time.

Our trip began at Cedar Lake in Cedar Rapids, where there were a handful of ducks – Hooded

Mergansers, Ruddy Ducks, Mallards and one lone Canvasback. A Double-crested Cormorant and a Tree Swallow were lingering in the area despite the previous week's cold weather. Pied-billed Grebes were on the lake also.

We then headed northwest to Pleasant Creek, near Palo, where we found the Common Loons, some Lesser Scaup, Pied-billed Grebes and a Ruddy female. Far off in the SW corner of the lake, barely in scope view, were a Horned Grebe and a Hooded Merganser.

Since it was only 10:30 and we had finished checking out two lakes, we decided to circle around to the Amana Lily Lake for one last try at waterfowl and maybe some lingering shorebirds. We took the Linn/Benton Co. gravel road to get there, and shortly after getting on that road we spotted a flock of possible Lapland Longspurs flying back and forth over a field. It took a while to positively ID them – they were very active and when they would set down in the dirt their coloring made them disappear from view. And they frequently landed behind ridges where they weren't visible. But finally a few of them came out on the road and we were able to scope them and positively ID them as Laplands. We waited them out some more for everyone to get a view, and finally some flew in closer to us and we had two of the birds come within 20 feet of where we were standing on the side of the road. Everyone got great binocular looks, very close and clear. The Laplands were life birds for two people on the outing, which is always great!

We ended our trip at Amana Lily Lake. The water was low and only dabblers were present – Mallards, pintails and Green-winged Teal. Four Lesser Yellowlegs were feeding in the shallow water and a Killdeer was calling, but that was it for lingering shorebirds.

Participants: Karen Disbrow, Roger and Linda Fisher, Therese Guedon, Roger Heidt, Ken Hunt, Richard and Nancy Lynch, Diana Pesek (leader), Bob and Joan Stearns.

Birds (31 species): Canada Goose, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Hooded Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, American Coot, Killdeer, Lesser Yellowlegs, Ring-billed Gull, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, American Robin, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Dark-eyed Junco, Lapland Longspur.

– *Diana Pesek*

November 12, Allamakee County. Six intrepid birders braved the long drive and cool breezes for a tour of Allamakee County in extreme Northeast Iowa. Target birds were Tundra Swan, Golden Eagle, and Ruffed Grouse. Hundreds of Swans were seen and heard along Red Oak Road on Pool #9 of the Mississippi River north of Harper's Ferry. A juvenile Golden Eagle was soaring over a Mississippi River bluff at Harper's Ferry and two adults were flying over the Upper Iowa River bluffs along county road A-26 southwest of New Albin. And two Ruffed Grouse were seen flying into the woods along A-26. Other good birds were Carolina Wren found by Mary Noble and Pileated Woodpecker, both along Red Oak Road. Thanks to Dean Colton for driving.

Participants: Dean Colton, Karen Disbrow, Jim and Karole Fuller (leaders), Therese Guedon, Mary Noble.

Birds (44 species): Cackling Goose, Canada Goose, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Hooded Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Ruffed Grouse (flying only), Wild Turkey, Great Blue Heron, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle, American Kestrel, American Coot, Ring-billed Gull, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated

Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– *Jim Fuller*

November 16, Meeting. Jerry White was looking for something new in birding. He had already built up some nice lists, so that was no longer a strong motivator. He decided that he would try his hand at recording bird songs. He had always had trouble remembering songs and now found his hearing to be failing—maybe this new approach would help. It has proved a highly rewarding pursuit. Jerry now finds that when he closes his eyes and listens to one of his recordings the image of the moment comes to him even more fully than from a video.

After Jerry's presentation it became obvious that you could spend a great deal of money on this hobby—so Jerry suggested that interested persons should set some goals for themselves. If you want to record very quiet sounds you will need really good gear, but recording medium amplitude sounds can be accomplished with fairly modest gear. It would help to do some research beforehand and he recommended a book by Berne Krause, Wild Soundscapes—also the links found at the end of this article.

The first piece of equipment you will need is a microphone. He displayed three types, a parabolic dish, a shotgun microphone and two omni microphones used for stereo recording. The parabolic dish works to amplify sounds. It can make a far off sound appear very close. Jerry has often found that he was not aware of all the sounds around him until he was recording. Our brains tend to focus on the sound we are listening to, and eliminate the background noise. Microphones don't discriminate sounds. A shotgun microphone is useful for a narrow field. It can pick up whatever it is pointed at, but sounds coming from the sides are reduced. Also it can pull a

sound closer. Far away sounds will still appear far away. Some other things to consider when selecting a microphone are: 1) how well it handles humidity, 2) the noise of the microphone, 3) the price. Jerry built his own dish microphone based on a commercial dish and microphones plus items found at the hardware store and his own ingenuity.

Other necessary equipment is a recorder with a quiet pre-amp. Digital recorders have mostly replaced the tape recorders. Recording can be done in mono, stereo, or multi-channel. You will also need some headphones either over or in-ear and either closed or open. Closed shutout ambient sound and open lets it in.

Sound creates pressure waves in the air and those waves cause the diaphragm of the microphone to move. The diaphragm movement creates variations of an electrical current, which is then converted and recorded as digital figures. How often the signal is sampled has an effect on quality; 44,100HZ and 16-bit depth will produce CD quality recordings.

Jerry used Audition 1.5 to edit with and it seemed to be very powerful and easy to use. He demonstrated two of the uses he finds for the software. One is the editing of prerecorded material from CDs for his personal use. He can take any pieces of the digital file and instantly move it around or make it softer or louder. He uses this primarily to edit the voice announcement prior to the bird song. The other use is in the editing of noise out of a recorded file. Noise in the sound file can be easily seen and sampled by the software so that various filters can be tried to reduce it. Once the appropriate filter is found, it can be applied to the entire recording to improve the clarity. Jerry demonstrated this with a recording he made of the Painted Bunting at Brookside Park in Ames.

Interestingly Jerry used his recording of the Painted Bunting in an attempt to discover where the bird might have come from. Birds often have regional variations in their songs, so Jerry

compared his recording to files from other Painted Buntings around the country. He didn't come up with any matches, but Jerry did come to the conclusion that he was a wimp. Comparatively the Ames bird really didn't sing with a great deal of energy or frequency—must have been a Cyclone fan. Thanks Jerry for a very interesting presentation.

Some additional resources:

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/naturerecor-dists/> —group list for recordists

www.naturesound.org —check out all the links
www.telinga.com —the reflector dish Jerry uses
www.dpamicrophones.com —a microphone tutorial

audacity.sourceforge.net —free editing software
syrinxpc.com —free editing software

www.birds.cornell.edu/BRP/Raven/Raven.html —free editing software

Attendees: Jeanne and Larry Bonde, Mark Bowman, Chris Caster, Bob Dick, Karen Disbrow, Chris Edwards, Jim Fuller, Bruce Gardner, Therese Guedon, Dave Kyllingstad, Ramona McGurk, Suzanne Sarlette,

— Chris Caster



Bird Notes

WHOOPING CRANES SPOTTED IN IOWA

Early last May, rare Whooping Cranes were discovered feeding on corn in a farmer's yard in Winnebago County. Over the next three weeks, five cranes began developing regular feeding and movements within about a 3-square mile area laced with protected shallow wetlands and private conservation lands just south of the Minnesota border. After consultations with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the International Crane Foundation, Iowa DNR and Winnebago County Conservation Board officials decided to keep information about the big birds' presence confidential. With fewer than 300 Whooping Cranes in existence, conservationists could not risk putting the birds in jeopardy from vandals or careless observers.

The cranes were watched over daily by Greg Hanson, DNR Wildlife Biologist for that portion of Iowa, until they left after being startled by a farmer driving an ATV along a nearby road. Hanson believed that local habitat was adequate for the cranes – and suggested that this could be a site where Whoopers might return to nest after more than a century's absence.

In fact, three of the same five cranes returned to the neighborhood this fall, where they were again watched cautiously by the DNR and other conservation officials. It is known these are the same birds, as each wears a distinctive assortment of colored leg bands, radio tags and one even sports a GPS tag, tracked by satellite. The two missing birds actually were located not too far away in southern Minnesota.

These Whooping Cranes are from a reintroduced population in Wisconsin. The main wild population of Whooping Cranes migrates annually from their nesting grounds in Wood Buffalo National Park, Canada to Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, Texas. Since 2001 biologists have been attempting to establish a second migratory population which migrates from Wisconsin to Florida. As of

September 2006, there were 86 Whooping Cranes in this population.

Early scientific reports indicate that the area of northern Iowa between Clear Lake and Estherville once constituted a major portion of the species' U.S. range. Acquisition and protection of large wetland complexes in this area could prove key to the rare birds' chances for repopulating northern Iowa.

– *Iowa Audubon Newsletter*

AVIAN FLU UPDATE

The USDA and Department of the Interior announced on August 29 that they tested 13,000 migratory birds in Alaska this summer without finding the highly pathogenic variety of avian influenza known as H5N1. The tests are part of a \$29 million program designed to conduct surveillance for a feared bird flu pandemic. The two agencies plan to work with all 50 states this fall to collect and analyze 150,000 bird blood and fecal samples.

No bird or human cases of H5N1 have yet been detected in the Americas. While it is possible that wild migratory birds could bring H5N1 to the continent sometime in the future, American Bird Conservancy scientists believe that if it comes at all, it is more likely to originate from poultry shipments. Department of the Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, stated: "Although no high-path H5N1 virus has yet been detected, we must remain vigilant and thorough in this important detection and early warning program." Visit www.avianflu.gov.

– *Bird Calls, the newsletter of the American Bird Conservancy*

IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKERS REPORTED IN FLORIDA PANHANDLE

Another chapter in the Ivory-billed Woodpecker search saga has begun, this time in the bottomland swamp forests of the Florida Panhandle. Researchers from Auburn University published a paper in the September edition of the Canadian online scientific journal, *Avian Conservation and Ecology*, offering

evidence that the woodpecker lives on in the Choctawhatchee River basin.

The researchers claim to have seen Ivory-bills on 14 occasions but did not obtain any photographic evidence. They did, however, claim to have recorded 99 double knocks and 210 "kent" calls, and have photographs of tree cavities larger than those normally made by the Ivory-bill's smaller cousin, the Pileated Woodpecker. The research has sparked off new speculation about the existence of the so-called "Lord God Bird" but in the wake of recent, unsuccessful searches in the Big Woods of Arkansas, skeptics and the ever-hopeful alike will continue to demand conclusive proof before celebrating again. For more details, visit www.ace-eco.org.

–Bird Calls

DARWIN'S FINCHES IN CATASTROPHIC DECLINE

Darwin's finches, the group of birds that inspired Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, are in danger of extinction. In 1997, an introduced parasitic fly, *Philonis downsi*, was discovered in the nests of Darwin's finches in

the Galapagos. Subsequently, researchers on Santa Cruz Island found parasitism by the fly in 97% of Darwin's finch nests, with a mortality rate of 30%. By 2005, the death rate had jumped to 76%, posing an extremely serious threat to the survival of these species.

The fly was likely introduced to the islands on a cargo boat laden with fruit and vegetables to supply the growing tourism industry. In a comprehensive evaluation of invasive species affecting Galapagos biota, the fly was ranked among the most damaging. It is currently found on 11 out of 13 Galapagos Islands, with the highest density found in nests in the central part of Santa Cruz Island, which also has the highest human population. The fly was found in the nest of 18 bird species, including 11 species of Darwin's finches.

Urgent efforts are needed to protect the remaining Darwin's finches from the current massive threat of parasitism. A better understanding of all ages of the life cycle of this introduced fly is important to develop efficient methods to control it.

–Bird Calls

IOWA CITY BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Please send this form with your annual membership dues to Eastern Iowa Birdwatch, Bernie Knight, 425 Lee Street, Iowa City IA 52246. Annual dues are \$15 per household or \$10 for students. Members receive a 10% discount on bird seed at Bird's Eye View in Coralville.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____ Amount Enclosed _____

Check here for e-mail subscription only

Iowa City Bird Club

Eastern Iowa Birdwatch is published three times per year (usually April, September, and December). Members are encouraged to send articles, reviews, notes, and comments to editor Chris Edwards, 85 Whitman Ave., North Liberty, IA 52317, or e-mail at credwards@aol.com.

Annual membership dues are \$15 per household or \$10 for students, payable by January 1st for the coming year. Make checks payable to Eastern Iowa Birdwatch, and mail to Bernie Knight, 425 Lee St., Iowa City, IA 52246. Check your mailing label for the year you have paid through.

For general bird club information, contact Iowa City Bird Club president Chris Caster at 339-8343 or cjcaster@earthlink.net.

To lead or suggest a field trip, contact field trip coordinator Karen Disbrow at 339-1017.

The club web site is maintained by Jim Scheib and is located at icbirds.org.

Eastern Iowa Birdwatch

Chris Edwards, Editor
85 Whitman Avenue
North Liberty, IA 52317

