
Eastern Iowa Birdwatch



The Iowa City Bird Club Newsletter

Volume 30 Number 2

September 2010

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.

September 11, Saturday, 8 a.m. Hickory Hill Park for warblers, sparrows, and other migrants. Wear boots for walking in wet areas. Jason Paulios, 331-6115.

September 16, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting. Backyard Gardening and Birding. Jim Durbin will talk about creating a backyard habitat for the birds and show some of the birds that you can attract.

September 18, Saturday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Annual Hawk Watch at Stainbrook Preserve, located along Mehaffey Bridge Rd. just north of Sugar Bottom Recreation Area, about three miles north of North Liberty. Bring a lawn chair and join us on the hill to watch for migrating raptors. Karen Disbrow, 339-1017 or Chris Edwards, 430-4732.

October 9, Saturday, 7:30 a.m. Belva-Deer Recreation Area and Fuller Green Valley in Keokuk County for sparrows and other migrants. Co-leaders Bill Scheible and Chris Edwards, 430-0372.

October 17, Sunday, 8 a.m. Hawkeye Wildlife Area. We will be looking for fall migrants such as Nelson's and LeConte's Sparrows. Chris Caster, 339-8343.

October 21, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting. Jim and Sharon Scheib will take you on a trip into the Sierra Madre mountains in west-central Mexico and through the coastal area around San Blas. See the habitat along the Durango Highway and enjoy photos of 92 bird species, many endemic to that area.

October 22-24, Friday-Sunday. Iowa Ornithologists' Union Fall Meeting at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge near Des Moines. See www.iowabirds.org for more information. Local contact Karen Disbrow, 339-1017.

November 14, Sunday, 8 a.m. Mystery Field Trip to wherever the best birds are being seen. Come prepared for anything, and bring a spotting scope if you have one. Mark Brown, 358-8765.

Continued on next page →
Schedule (continued)

November 18, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting. Jon Stravers of Iowa Audubon's Mississippi River Initiative will give a program on Red-shouldered Hawk and Cerulean Warbler surveys currently underway in the Effigy Mounds/Yellow River Bird Conservation Area of Northeast Iowa.

December 19, Sunday. Iowa City Christmas Bird Count. More details will be provided in the December newsletter.

Other Dates of Note

September 10-12, Friday-Sunday. Natural History Weekend at Iowa Lakeside Lab. This year's schedule features field trips to see birds, fens, and streams, an introductory talk about the geology of Iowa's wetlands, and a program about the prehistoric sloths that once inhabited Iowa. For more information visit www.lakesidelab.org/News.html.

September 12, Sunday, 1-3 p.m. Johnson County Heritage Trust's Family Day at Belgum Grove, located four miles west of Hills on the south side of 500th Street. The event is free and all are welcome. For more information, visit www.jcht.org, call 319-338-7030, or email info@jcht.org.

September 22, Wednesday, 7 p.m. Lepidopterist and nature writer Robert Pyle will appear at Prairie Lights Bookstore, reading from his latest book, *Mariposa Road: The First Butterfly Big Year*.

From Our President Karen Disbrow

Here we are with fall migration already underway. The summer flew past for me, and I am sure for you too. The temperatures for the last month have been way too hot and the rain...well, everything is very green and lush, especially the weeds in the garden.

This fall we are going to some old places and new places in search of migrants. We are visiting Hickory Hill Park for those "confusing fall warblers". We have a trip planned to Keokuk County, which is nearby but not often visited by birders. Our annual hawk watch at Stainbrook Preserve is again scheduled for the third Saturday in September.

This is of course an election year, and this November's ballot features a state constitutional amendment for sustainable conservation funding, called Iowa's Water and Land Legacy

by its supporters. I encourage you to vote and to remember that developing a funding mechanism that is stable has always been the hardest part of protecting and developing conservation projects. If you want to learn more visit: www.YesOn1forIowa.com.

The Fall IOU Meeting is at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge in October. If you have never been there, this is a great opportunity to see this marvelous area. You do not need to be a member of the IOU to attend. I have always thought this was one of the best parts of IOU meetings – you can go and do all the fun things and not have to be involved with the operations of such a great organization. I did this for many years before actually getting more involved.

Here is to lovely cool days with not too much rain and a plethora of great migrants coming through our "Neck of the Woods".

Good birding!

Adventures in Atlasing – Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas 2010 Kirsten Winter

My mom and I spent part of June surveying breeding bird atlas blocks. I've lived in San Diego for many years. I rarely attempt, or have the opportunity to attempt birding in the rain. Back in Iowa, with another year of above average rainfall and dramatic storms, Mom and I adopted a motto based on the unofficial slogan of the post office: "Neither rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these atlasers from the swift completion of their appointed surveys."

On our trip to Jackson County, we drove into Bellevue right before a major thunderstorm. On the way into town we stopped at Bellevue State Park and found a few birds braving the oncoming storm. Undeterred by a few sprinkles, American White Pelicans soared over the Mississippi River. American Robins and Eastern Phoebes were attending nests in the eaves of park shelters, and Gray Catbirds, Red-eyed Vireos, and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were going about their business and singing in the rain. We took cover during the heavy rain, then ventured out again to Spruce Creek Park where Baltimore Orioles, Chipping Sparrows and Tree Swallows were foraging. Near the river's edge, we spotted several pairs of Canada Geese collectively guarding their fledglings in a crèche, or what we humans might call a babysitting co-op.

In Iowa County, we spent some time in the Simmons Timber block looking around at Gateway Park along the Iowa River, and checking for birds in the town of Marengo. The noon hour approached and the temperature rose, but not enough to deter a swoop of Chimney Swifts that zoomed around downtown buildings. While watching the swifts to see if they were visiting any of the chimneys, we spotted a Common Nighthawk sitting on a nest on a roof nearby

Tallying up our sightings, we temporarily abandoned our motto and adjourned to the local coffee shop for sandwiches and ice cream. The local entertainment, recalling our youth, was a bevy of kids chanting the old rhyme, "I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream."

We also visited Lake Darling State Park in Washington County. This park was named in honor of "Ding" Darling, a Pulitzer Prize winning cartoonist and the first chief of the U.S. Biological Survey. The lake is being drawn down to allow for repair of the dam, so people were scarce and birds were abundant. We stayed in one of the camping cabins overnight, and enjoyed leisurely birding from the porch overlooking the lake. My mom was up late at night and heard an Eastern Screech-Owl calling. I got up early to take a pre-dawn walk on the prairie trail and was greeted by a dozen Henslow's Sparrows singing and a couple of American Woodcocks passing by in silence.

The modified post office motto served us well—in spite of challenging conditions we persisted, and were rewarded with some excellent bird sightings. The Breeding Bird Atlas project inspired us to visit many less-frequently birded parts of eastern Iowa and we saw new birds or behaviors every day. I encourage everyone to visit a nearby atlas block next year to make new discovery.

Further Adventures in Atlasing – Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas 2010

Carol Winter

As my daughter's faithful traveling companion and scribe, we composed a list of birds we hoped to find. Unsuccessful in locating Ring-necked Pheasants for the past two summers, we were pleased to find one in a pouring rainstorm in Cedar County. We later found them in greater numbers in Johnson and Jackson counties as well.

In Bellevue we carried our binoculars into a restaurant facing the river. Located on the grounds was a Purple Martin house. The martins were generously sharing their abode with some persistent House Sparrows. In a tree visible from the window, we noticed a flurry of activity. We identified a pair of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, another bird on our target list. We had hoped to see a Mississippi Kite, but none appeared.

Driving a gravel road in Jackson County, we were pleased to find bluebird houses at regular intervals. Hopeful of finding eggs or nestlings, we checked each one. To our dismay, the first had become a mouse's nest and the second also had a mouse occupant. At the third, a mouse jumped out. Undaunted, we continued our search and were rewarded with Eastern Bluebirds and Tree Swallows on nests in the remaining ones. At the Big Mill Creek block there was a large wetland area. Our finds here included a Great-blue Heron, a Green Heron, a pair of Trumpeter Swans, Willow Flycatcher, Song Sparrow, American Redstart, and a Wood Duck with seven ducklings.

A common sight on many country roads were families of Killdeer. The young, apparently too young to fly, were completely oblivious to people and cars. We waited patiently for them to get off the road. Red-winged Blackbirds were numerous in every county we visited along with Dickcissels. We had high hopes of finding raptors, but they were scarce with the exception of Turkey Vultures. Usually plentiful on the rocks by the Coralville Dam, they were trying to dry their wings by perching on the radio tower at the visitor's center.

Yes, rain was the centerpiece of our adventures. For nineteen days, it rained every day except one, but Kirsten and I were prepared for anything. In the evenings we would reflect on our findings and the best bird of the day. This is a great way to spend a few hours and have the satisfaction of adding to the Breeding Bird Atlas database. It is fun and exciting no matter how little or how much time you spend in the field.



Borneo vs. New Guinea: The Great Divide

Linda Donelson

We take for granted the large number of species of woodpeckers that exists in Iowa, South America, Europe, Africa and Asia. A map of the world shows the distribution of woodpeckers throughout several continents, right up to the far east edge of the Malaysian island of Borneo. Here the population of woodpeckers ends, and no more woodpeckers are found east of Borneo—through New Guinea and Australia, all the way across the Pacific Ocean, until you reach the west coast of North America.

The first person to note the absence of woodpeckers from the Pacific islands was Alfred Russell Wallace. Twenty years younger than Charles Darwin, Wallace was inspired by Darwin's journey to the Galapagos, and decided to go out exploring on his own. He first went to the Amazon, where he collected thousands of specimens, but his ship sank on his way home to England and he lost all his work. Undeterred, Wallace next determined to explore the Malay Archipelago off the southeast coast of Asia. The archipelago is bounded by New Guinea on the east, the second largest island in the world (behind Greenland) and Borneo on the west (the world's third largest island). Overall, the many small islands that lie between these two large ones cover a horizontal area nearly the length of South America.

In the 1850s Wallace spent eight years puddle-jumping across these islands by fishing boats and ferries, traveling over 14,000 miles. He and Darwin corresponded while Wallace was in Malaysia and both contributed to the new theory of evolution. Eventually, Wallace coined the phrase, "the survival of the fittest," and the two men presented a joint paper to the Royal Geographical society. While in Malaysia, Wallace made an astounding discovery. Although a gap exists of only 15 miles between the two small islands of Bali and Lombok—with plenty of woodpeckers on the west in Bali—no woodpeckers exist on Lombok to the east. Wallace was able to trace a line north and south through the islands of Indonesia across which no woodpeckers can be found. This famous line is known as the Wallace Line.

Wallace could only speculate on what caused the dramatic change of fauna across the line. He did suspect that continents were in motion. Today the theory of tectonic movement confirms his suspicion. A map of the continental shelves under the islands along the Wallace Line shows the separation between the Asian tectonic plate and the Australian tectonic plate. The two plates are divided by a deep trench in the ocean. The plates have never been joined at any time in geological history. No one knows why woodpeckers will not cross this deep ocean trench only 15 miles wide.

A look at a map of the ancient southern continent of Gondwana, which existed 175 million years ago at the beginning of the age of the dinosaurs, shows how the continent broke up and the fragments floated to their current locations, with South America bumping into North America, Africa into Europe, and India into Asia. Australia and New Guinea, on the other hand, remained isolated, never touching the other continents. A completely different set of fauna thus developed in Australia and New Guinea. The niche filled by woodpeckers in other continents seems partly filled by hundreds of varieties of honeyeaters, which can be found on Pacific islands at least as far east as Fiji.

In 2009 John and I birded islands on both sides of the Wallace Line: Borneo on the east and Papua New Guinea on the west. Both islands are larger than the state of Texas. New Guinea is divided between the independent nation of Papua New Guinea on the east and Indonesia on the west. New Guinea lies directly north of the horn of Australia, and was connected to it in ancient geologic times.

Borneo, which lies off the Malaysian peninsula and is only slightly smaller, is divided politically by Malaysia, Indonesia, and Oman. Birders often visit the northern province of Sabah at three locations: the Borneo Rainforest Lodge in the difficult to reach Danum Valley, Sukau on the Kinabatangan River—where all the hotels are reached by boat—and Mt Kinabalu. Both Sukau and the Danum Valley offer breathtaking looks at mammals as well as birds, including orang utans, gibbons, proboscis monkeys and maroon langurs. At Sukau herds of Asian pygmy elephants are often seen.

The Malaysian rainforest is heavily logged, and much land has been converted to oil palm plantations. Yet enough rain forest remains for thrilling looks at the local species, including 8 species of hornbills, 13 species of pittas, and 18 species of woodpeckers. Mt Kinabalu offers endemic birds like yuhinas, flowerpeckers, and colorful broadbills. Leaders on this trip were Phil Maher (an expert on the Plains Wanderer and other Australian endemics), and Dennis Yong, the foremost birding guide in Malaysia. The trip took place in June 2009.

The birding trip to Papua New Guinea, in April 2009, was guided by Phil Gregory, one of the world experts on the birds and bird calls of New Guinea. Common areas to bird are the area around the capital city, Port Moresby, in the southeast, including Varirata National Park; the small west central town of Kiunga, along the Fly River on the Indonesian border; and the vicinity of Mount Hagan, a large city and mountainous region in central New Guinea. New Guinea is celebrated for its over twenty species of birds-of-paradise—outrageously fancy birds with long tails, gorgeous colors, weird topknots, and unique mating behavior. In contrast to Borneo, the island has only one species of hornbill, 3 pittas, and no woodpeckers. The most beautiful bird we photographed was the brilliant red Flame Bowerbird in its U-shaped bower.

Iowa Audubon Corner

At the July meeting the Board endorsed funding for a brochure for Saylorville similar in content and style to the Iowa River brochure. It should be completed by September.

Iowa Audubon is partnering with the IA DNR for a viewing platform at Otter Creek Marsh. This will be followed with the building of a boardwalk that includes a photography blind. Audubon MN (which has the funds raised by Iowans for National Audubon) will fund \$3,000 to be matched by the IA DNR.

The Pelican Gala will be held 6-9 p.m. September 11 at McFarland Park Conservation Center in Ames. Though we tried to avoid the Iowa vs. Iowa State game, we did not. Due to publicity already out there we are going ahead and hoping for 75 participants. Anyone wishing to donate money to Iowa Audubon in lieu of

attending the Pelican Gala can contact Karen before September 10.

The Pelican Festival next year will be in the Coralville Reservoir area. The ICBC will help find a location with lots of pelicans. (Karen's note: I need people to census the pelicans this fall at Sugar Bottom, Sandy Beach, and Lake Macbride.)

We have several IBA signs to put up across the state. Karen Disbrow has several for SE Iowa. Doug Harr, Shane Patterson, and various other members have taken signs for their areas.

Doug Harr has written an excellent editorial covering the past history and the importance of the Natural Resource Amendment that I encourage all of you to read, at www.IowaAudubon.org.

May 2010 Hickory Hill Park Warbler Walks

Day of Week	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	S	M	T	W	Th	
Species / Date	3	4	5	6	7	10	11	12	13	14	17	18	19	20	21	22	24	25	26	27	Days
Blue-winged Warbler	X			X			X														3
Golden-winged Warbler		X	X	X	A	X	X	X	X	X											9
Tennessee Warbler	X	X	X	X	A	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	A				16
Orange-crowned Warbler	A	X	X	X																	4
Nashville Warbler	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	X	X	X		X									11
Northern Parula	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	A	X	X	X	X	19
Yellow Warbler										X		X	X								3
Chestnut-sided Warbler					A	A		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			A				10
Magnolia Warbler		X								X			X								3
Cape May Warbler																					0
Yellow-rumped Warbler	X	X	X	X	A			X		X											7
Black-throated Gr. Warbler			X	X		X	X			X			X								6
Blackburnian Warbler										X		X	X								3
Yellow-throated Warbler															X						1
Palm Warbler	A	X	X	X					X	X											6
Bay-breasted Warbler																					0
Blackpoll Warbler		X												X							2
Cerulean Warbler																					0
Black-and-white Warbler	X	X	X	X		X			X	X			X								8
American Redstart	X			X	A	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	X	X	17
Worm-eating Warbler				X								X	A	X	X						5
Ovenbird	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		A					15
Northern Waterthrush						X				X											2
Kentucky Warbler																					0
Connecticut Warbler										A			A		X						2
Mourning Warbler						X	X				X					A					4
Common Yellowthroat	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		A	X	X	X	X	19
Hooded Warbler																A					1
Wilson's Warbler										X			X								2
Canada Warbler													A								1

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

Other highlights: Pileated Woodpecker 5/3; Olive-sided Flycatcher 5/19; "Brewster's" Warbler 5/10; Clay-colored Sparrow 5/10; Summer Tanager 5/12, 5/14, 5/17.

2010 Johnson County Spring Count

Chris Caster

The Spring Count was held on Saturday, May 8. The morning low was 38 degrees and the temperature barely reached 50 in the afternoon. It was overcast most of the day and winds were out of the northwest at nearly 20 mph. This was in stark contrast to the warm temps we experienced for most of April. The species total was 141, well below our count average of 150. Only seven waterfowl species could be found. Shorebirds were a bright spot as seventeen species were found. Twenty-three warbler species were excellent considering the weather.

We really had a number of tremendous birds. I will give the edge for best bird to James Huntington for the Piping Plover he discovered on the north side of the Hawkeye Wildlife Area. Nearly as good was the Worm-eating Warbler that Jason Paulios heard at Linder Point and the Black-billed Cuckoo Jason found at Hickory Hill Park. Other great birds included Bonaparte's and Franklin's Gulls, Hudsonian and Marbled Godwits at Hawkeye Wildlife Area, Great-tailed Grackles at Sycamore Bottoms, a Hooded Warbler at Sugar Bottom Recreation Area, and a Cerulean Warbler at Macbride Nature-Recreation Area. Mark Madsen had a Veery to top a six-thrush day at Turkey Creek and Big Grove Preserves. White-eyed Vireos were at two locations.

This year's birds-that-got-away were many: Northern Bobwhite, American Woodcock, Eastern Screech-Owl, Whip-poor-will, Loggerhead Shrike, Blue-headed and Bell's Vireos, Sedge and Marsh Wrens, Northern Mockingbird, Magnolia Warbler, and many sparrow species

Thanks to everyone that was able to help this year.

Participants: Mark Brown, Chris Caster, Bob and Dara Dick, Chris Edwards, Linda Fisher, Jim Forde, Rick Hollis, James Huntington, Mark Madsen, Jason Paulios, Diana Pesek.

SPECIES LIST

Canada Goose	156	Red-tailed Hawk	14	Wilson's Phalarope	1
Wood Duck	37	American Kestrel	3	Franklin's Gull	7
Mallard	54	Sora	7	Bonaparte's Gull	12
Blue-winged Teal	100	American Coot	45	Ring-billed Gull	58
Northern Shoveler	4	Black-bellied Plover	11	Forster's Tern	10
Green-winged Teal	1	Semipalmated Plover	18	Black Tern	14
Ruddy Duck	4	Piping Plover	1	Rock Pigeon	15
Ring-necked Pheasant	3	Killdeer	20	Eurasian Collared-Dove	1
Wild Turkey	9	Greater Yellowlegs	53	Mourning Dove	45
Pied-billed Grebe	2	Lesser Yellowlegs	46	Black-billed Cuckoo	1
American White Pelican	22	Solitary Sandpiper	4	Great Horned Owl	1
Double-crested Cormorant	23	Willet	2	Barred Owl	3
Great Blue Heron	5	Spotted Sandpiper	6	Chimney Swift	1
Green Heron	2	Hudsonian Godwit	1	Ruby-thrted Hummingbird	2
Turkey Vulture	37	Marbled Godwit	1	Belted Kingfisher	2
Osprey	1	Semipalmated Sandpiper	2	Red-headed Woodpecker	6
Bald Eagle	3	Least Sandpiper	3	Red-bellied Woodpecker	18
Northern Harrier	1	Pectoral Sandpiper	5	Downy Woodpecker	21
Cooper's Hawk	2	Dunlin	74	Hairy Woodpecker	5
		Dowitcher sp.	5	Northern Flicker	12

Pileated Woodpecker	1	Veery	1	Northern Waterthrush	8
Eastern Wood-Pewee	1	Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	Common Yellowthroat	25
Least Flycatcher	5	Swainson's Thrush	4	Hooded Warbler	1
<i>Empidonax</i> sp.	1	Wood Thrush	3	Wilson's Warbler	1
Eastern Phoebe	8	American Robin	117	Scarlet Tanager	12
Great Crested Flycatcher	13	Gray Catbird	44	Eastern Towhee	9
Eastern Kingbird	15	Brown Thrasher	4	Chipping Sparrow	34
White-eyed Vireo	2	European Starling	125	Field Sparrow	9
Yellow-throated Vireo	9	Cedar Waxwing	15	Lark Sparrow	3
Warbling Vireo	15	Blue-winged Warbler	4	Song Sparrow	22
Red-eyed Vireo	8	Golden-winged Warbler	9	White-throated Sparrow	22
Blue Jay	25	Tennessee Warbler	26	White-crowned Sparrow	4
American Crow	39	Orange-crowned Warbler	1	Northern Cardinal	100
Horned Lark	1	Nashville Warbler	15	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	26
Purple Martin	3	Northern Parula	15	Indigo Bunting	22
Tree Swallow	290	Yellow Warbler	11	Bobolink	3
N. Rough-winged Swallow	22	Chestnut-sided Warbler	2	Red-winged Blackbird	305
Bank Swallow	127	Yellow-rumped Warbler	29	Eastern Meadowlark	12
Cliff Swallow	37	Black-thrted Green Warbler	4	Meadowlark sp.	15
Barn Swallow	166	Blackburnian Warbler	4	Common Grackle	175
Black-capped Chickadee	43	Yellow-throated Warbler	4	Great-tailed Grackle	2
Tufted Titmouse	18	Palm Warbler	3	Brown-headed Cowbird	42
White-breasted Nuthatch	10	Blackpoll Warbler	2	Orchard Oriole	1
Carolina Wren	1	Cerulean Warbler	1	Baltimore Oriole	36
House Wren	79	Black-and-white Warbler	3	House Finch	4
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3	American Redstart	36	American Goldfinch	66
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	27	Worm-eating Warbler	1	House Sparrow	53
Eastern Bluebird	21	Ovenbird	9	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	4

25 Years Ago in *Eastern Iowa Birdwatch*

Ed and Jean Allgood, Bud Gode, Rick Hollis, Ramona McGurk, and Mary Noble were participants on an August 25, 1985 field trip to the Coralville Reservoir. The first stop was Swan Lake, where various waterfowl, herons, and other water birds were seen. Several Green Herons were seen sitting on the water's surface like ducks. The group then drove through tall vegetation to Sand Point, where the water level was extremely low and confined to the river channel and several small ponds. (A trip to Sand Point now requires a mile-long walk, as the road has been closed to vehicles for many

years.) Later, 10 shorebird species were found at an oxbow along DuPont Bridge Road.

The issue featured a report on the American Kestrel Nest Box Study. Beginning in 1983, the Iowa Conservation Commission and the Iowa DOT worked with various service groups to build, install, and monitor artificial kestrel nest boxes along interstates. After three nesting seasons the program was considered a success.

The fall 1985 schedule included trips to Hickory Hill Park and the Coralville Reservoir, the IOU Fall Meeting at Lake Rathbun, and a canoe trip on the Wapsipinicon River.

– Chris Edwards

Field Trip and Meeting Reports

April 3, Kent Park. The group met at the Conservation Education Center. The morning was a bit chilly, but a beautiful day nonetheless with blue skies and light breezes. We hadn't gotten but around the corner of the building when some birds in the large oak caught our attention. There we stayed for the next twenty minutes as different species came and went. Most interesting was a sapsucker. He was pecking holes into a young tree that had been obviously visited many times in the past. He was also somewhat aggressive in running off a Red-bellied Woodpecker.

Our next stop was at the nearby pond. We enjoyed a pair of phoebes, and marveled at how the Canada Geese can keep up their racket so incessantly. After heading away from the pond and up the hill, we spied a Ruby-crowned Kinglet flashing its cap and listened to a Field Sparrow sing. We also watched as a flicker called from the top of a nearby tree.

We followed the trail to the northeast corner of the park and walked the northern border westwards. On the way we found White-throated Sparrows, a Brown Creeper, and a small group of Golden-crowned Kinglets. There wasn't much more to see until we had returned to the prairie behind the Conservation Education Center. There we found Tree Swallows and an Eastern Bluebird defending his nest box.

About half of the group called it a morning, as we had now returned to our vehicles. The rest of us continued on another trail heading south towards some other ponds. We managed to find another sapsucker. New for the morning were a Brown Thrasher and an Eastern Towhee. Lastly we chanced upon another group of Golden-crowned Kinglets before breaking for home. It was a really nice bird-walk.

Participants: Jess Alexander, Chris Caster (leader), Jerry Denning, Geri Dull, Bruce Gardner, Therese Guedon, Peter Hansen, Ken Hunt, Brenda Nations, Elizabeth Swain, Jack Wichess.

Birds (30 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Eastern Towhee, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird.

– Chris Caster

April 15, Meeting. Christopher Brochu, Associate Professor of Geoscience at the University of Iowa, gave a presentation titled "Where Birds Came From". It reviewed the current evidence on the origin of birds from among small predatory dinosaurs. It included a discussion of the history of the subject, which actually dates back to the 19th century, and the reasons why this issue—which is considered settled by most scientists, since the evidence that birds are dinosaurs is overwhelming at this point—is still treated as controversial in the media. He brought casts of some key fossils, including Archaeopteryx (usually considered the earliest known bird).

During the business portion of the meeting, a motion was made and passed to send \$100 to Iowa Audubon in support of their conservation projects in Iowa.

Attendees: Jack and Anne Bagford, Barry Buschelman, Nancy Carl, Chris and Benjamin Caster, Jerry Demming, Karen Disbrow, John Erickson, Roger and Linda Fisher, Bruce Gardner, Peter Hansen, Rick Hollis, Ken Hunt,

Dave Kyllingstad, Mike and Ruth Lindeen, Mark Madsen, Gail McLure, Sally Moore, Ed and Mary Rolene, Jim Scheib, Dick and Marcia Shaffer, Blossom Shaw.

– *Karen Disbrow*

April 17, Cone Marsh. This was a special trip to Cone Marsh near Lone Tree to experience the sights and sounds of the marsh at dusk. We drove first to the boat ramp in the NW corner, where we found American Coots, Blue-winged Teal, and Red-winged Blackbirds. As the sun was setting we drove to the old caboose in the NE corner in the hopes of spotting a Sandhill Crane. Success! A single crane was foraging in corn stubble and the group had great looks at this spectacular bird. We returned the boat ramp area, but the geese were so noisy that it was difficult to hear anything else, so we moved on to the dike. The geese were noisy there too – each time they started to settle down, another goose flew in, setting off another round of cackling and honking. We did hear one Great Horned Owl far in the distance. On the way home we stopped at Terry Trueblood Recreation Area on Sand Road (the old S&G sandpit), where we heard Chorus Frogs and a Northern Leopard Frog.

Participants: Jess Alexander, Barbara Beaumont, Judy Buline, Nancy Carl, Karen Disbrow (leader), John Erickson, Therese Guedon, Kurt Hamann, Peter Hansen, Sally Moore, Damian Pieper, Naomi Schedl.

– *Karen Disbrow*

April 18, Macbride Nature-Recreation Area. A dozen birders enjoyed a beautiful, cool morning birding at the Macbride Raptor Center and Bluebird Trail

Wild Turkeys were seen on the drive out, and at Mehaffey Bridge we found Wood Ducks, Northern Shovelers, Pied-billed Grebes, and a Great Blue Heron. Around the Raptor Center we encountered Hermit Thrushes, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and a Pileated Woodpecker. We then headed towards the Bluebird Trail,

seeing Red-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and Broad-winged Hawk along the way. A pair of nesting bluebirds were seen along the trail itself, along with Field, American Tree, and Swamp Sparrows, Tree Swallows, Red-tailed Hawk, and Turkey Vultures. Several birds, including Yellow-throated Warbler and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, were heard but not seen.

Participants: Jess Alexander, Judy Buline, Jerry Denning, Karen Disbrow (co-leader), Tony Franken, Ken Hunt, Lauren and Doina Johnson, Kathleen Kuenstling, Ed Linz, Terry Mangold, Damian Pieper, Jim Scheib (co-leader), Elisabeth Swain, Jack Widness.

Birds (39 species): Wood Duck, Northern Shoveler, Wild Turkey, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Tree Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, American Tree Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, American Goldfinch.

–*Jim Scheib*

April 25, Hickory Hill Park. We started out at Hickory Hill Park, but before we had gotten far, James Huntington walked up and said he had seen no warblers as he walked through the park. We did see and hear a Brown Thrasher and American Robins. We then decided to leave and go out to Swan Lake where several White-faced Ibis had recently been seen. We saw a few duck species there, but it was a really slow day.

Participants: Karen Disbrow (leader), Therese Guedon, James Huntington, Patricio Otero.

–*Karen Disbrow*

May 15, Beam Woods. This was a joint field trip of the Iowa City Bird Club and Cedar Rapids Audubon. Beam Woods is a 37-acre woodland along Buffalo Creek, north of Stone City in Jones County. It was purchased by my grandparents, Lester and Gail Beam, in 1963 and has been maintained as a nature preserve by our family since then. It features steep bluffs with limestone outcroppings, covered by oak-hickory and maple-basswood forest.

We arrived at Beam Woods at 8:45 a.m. to pleasant conditions, with sunshine and temperatures in the sixties. Before hiking in, while waiting for the group from Cedar Rapids to arrive, we enjoyed the birds along the roadside. They included a singing White-eyed Vireo which allowed brief glimpses, a Ruby-throated Hummingbird perched on a power line, and a pair of Broad-winged Hawks, one adult and one juvenile, circling overhead. The rest of our group arrived shortly, and now assembled, we hiked in along the abandoned railroad right-of-way to our cabin. From there, we spent the rest of the morning on a walking tour of most of the hiking trails on the property.

One of the first birds we encountered was a singing male Scarlet Tanager. He at first proved rather difficult to see, but eventually everyone enjoyed a view of this stunning bird. A short time later, while walking through a grove of mature red pines, we encountered a small flock of birds which included Black-throated Green, Blackpoll, and Palm Warblers. High in some nearby oak trees we heard a high-pitched song that I suspected was a Bay-breasted Warbler, but despite many eyes searching the treetops we couldn't spot the songster. Finally after about ten minutes we spotted a beautiful male Bay-breasted Warbler which everyone got to see.

It was a good morning for migrant thrushes. As we continued to walk the trails we saw and/or

heard multiple birds of all four expected species, Veery, Swainson's Thrush, Gray-cheeked Thrush, and Wood Thrush. Tennessee Warblers and American Redstarts were frequently encountered. We heard a male Blackburnian Warbler singing high in the canopy but could never spot it. In all we tallied thirteen warbler species.

Our walk took us to a small hill prairie on a bluff overlooking the creek, where we spotted several Rough-winged Swallows which nest on the limestone cliffs. Along the creek we heard a Louisiana Waterthrush, and an Acadian Flycatcher which had just arrived back on its nesting grounds.

In addition to the birds, many participants also enjoyed the numerous wildflowers and ferns seen along the trails. The morning passed quickly, and after enjoying a snack at the cabin, we headed for home. It was a pleasure for me to share our property with others who love nature and wild places as much as I do.

Participants: Nora Becker, Diane Bradbury, Becky Dewald, Chris Edwards (leader), Bruce Gardner, Therese Guedon, Ken Hunt, Andrea Novak, Bill Scheible, Bobbie Shaffer, Tom Taylor.

Birds: (52 species): Canada Goose, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Veery, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Golden-winged Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler,

Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Palm Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Chipping Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch.

– *Chris Edwards*

May 20, Meeting. Linda Donelson spoke on the Wallace Line in southeast Asia and its significance for birders. (*See the accompanying article on page 5.*)

During the business portion, Karen reported that she received an inquiry about whether the club would like to sponsor a showing of the award-winning documentary *Ghost Bird*. This 84-minute film covers the history of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, its apparent rediscovery, and the resulting controversy. For \$150 the club can screen one showing to use as a fund raiser. A motion was made and passed that Karen look into the possibility of doing this.

Attendees: Ed and Jean Allgood, Don and Joan Alton, Barry Buschelman, Karen Disbrow, John and Linda Donelson, John Erickson, Jim and Karole Fuller, Bruce Gardner, David Gilchrist, Therese Guedon, Peter Hansen, Pat Kieffer, Dave Kyllingstad, Khristen Lawton, Ken Lowder, Gail McLure, Viana Rockel, Jim and Sharon Scheib, Dick and Marcia Shaffer, Richard and Gerry Tetrault, Carol Winter.

– *Karen Disbrow*

May 21-23, IOU Breeding Bird Atlas Blockbusting Weekend. Friday evening I attended the training session in Burlington and picked up recording cards, which I feel are essential because the cards delineate very clearly what is required. On Saturday and Sunday participants explored three SE Iowa counties: Des Moines, Louisa, and Muscatine. I picked several blocks in Louisa County in which to concentrate our efforts.

May 22, Block 627: Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Rock Pigeon (probable, courtship behavior), Mourning Dove, Red-headed Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Barn Swallow, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin (confirmed, adult attending young), Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Common Yellowthroat (probable, 7 or more singing males), Chipping Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting (probable, 7 or more singing males), Red-winged Blackbird (confirmed, nest building), Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird.

May 22, Block 631 (Oakville): Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Killdeer, Mourning Dove, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, American Robin, European Starling, Chipping Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting (probable, 7 or more singing males), Eastern Meadowlark (probable, 7 or more singing males), Common Grackle, House Sparrow.

May 23, Block 623: Canada Goose, Wood Duck (confirmed, recently fledged young), Great Blue Heron, Great Egret (probable, courtship behavior), Turkey Vulture, Killdeer (confirmed, recently fledged young), Mourning Dove, Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher (confirmed, nest building), Eastern Kingbird, Blue Jay, Horned Lark, Cliff Swallow (confirmed, adult on nest), Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

May 23, Block 626: Turkey Vulture, Eastern Phoebe (confirmed, adult on nest), Great Crested Flycatcher (confirmed, adult attending young), Barn Swallow, Red-winged Blackbird (confirmed, nest).

Participants, May 22: Karen Disbrow (leader), John Erickson.

Participants, May 23: Karen Disbrow (leader), Bruce Gardner, Ramona McGurk.

– *Karen Disbrow*

May 31, Cedar County. We had a great turnout for this Breeding Bird Atlas trip to Cedar County, so we decided to split into two groups to cover more territory. Bill Scheible led the first group ("The American Coots") to Block #788, which includes River Valley Wetland and the Fuller property. Meanwhile, Chris Edwards took the second group ("The Wild Turkeys") to Block #787, which includes Rock Creek Timber and Red Oak Park.

The American Coots first visited River Valley Wetland along the Cedar River, using Delta Road as our route. We encountered a nice mix of woodland and open country species with confirmed breeding of Yellow-throated Vireo, Cliff Swallow and Baltimore Oriole. Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Gray Catbird, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Chipping Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting and Red-winged Blackbird were seemingly everywhere. We enjoyed nice looks at a male Scarlet Tanager and both an adult and a first summer male Orchard Oriole. Grasshopper Sparrow was a good find for us. We then visited the Fuller property just east of the Cedar River, where we added a few species, including Ovenbird and, finally, an Eastern Towhee. A nice selection of wildflowers was a highlight here, with Mark and Mary Beth providing on-site education.

Perhaps our biggest surprise was a flyover Sharp-shinned Hawk, a rare finding in Iowa on a day in late May, and presumably a straggler migrant rather than a potential breeder.

At Rock Creek Timber, the Wild Turkeys endured knee-high rain-soaked vegetation and constant harassment by mosquitoes with nary a complaint. This 152-acre woodland features nice, wide trails but they are not maintained and get quite overgrown in the summer. We heard many more birds than we saw, but one early highlight was a male Scarlet Tanager singing out in the open near the top of a large oak.

House Wrens were the most abundant bird, followed by Eastern Wood-Pewees, Common Yellowthroats, Indigo Buntings, Northern Cardinals, and Gray Catbirds. We flushed a Great Horned Owl while exploring an abandoned barn in the middle of the timber, and briefly glimpsed a Yellow-billed Cuckoo. At the small pond near the NE corner of the property we found a Willow Flycatcher and a Wood Duck.

After leaving the timber we surveyed some of the area roadsides. At one stop, there were Bobolinks and Dickcissels singing in a pasture, and in the adjacent trees were a pair of Orchard Orioles, Brown Thrashers, Eastern Kingbirds, and Baltimore Orioles. In a distant tree, a pair of Red-tailed Hawks sat together but we couldn't locate a nest. We then made a brief stop at Red Oak Park, where we found an Eastern Phoebe nest and added American Redstart and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher to our list.

For the day, the American Coots tallied 58 species, with 5 confirmed and 21 probable nesters. The Wild Turkeys recorded 54 species, including 3 confirmed and 15 probable nesters. This round may have gone to the Coots, but the Turkeys are already training hard for next year's rematch and their captain has guaranteed a victory.

Participants: Jerry Denning, Chris Edwards (co-leader), Bruce Gardner, Pat Kieffer, Mark Madsen, Jamie McCoy, Bill Scheible (co-leader), Mary Beth Stevenson, Carol Winter.

Birds (66 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Ring-necked Pheasant, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Killdeer, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Great Horned Owl, Chimney Swift, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Willow Flycatcher, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Yellow-throated Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American

Crow, Horned Lark, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern Bluebird, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, House Finch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– *Chris Edwards and Bill Scheible*

June 5, Coralville Reservoir. Rained out.

June 13, Indiangrass Hills. We had a great turnout for our annual foray into one of the better birding locations in Iowa County. It was overcast with a nice breeze. We parked on the west side of the road next to the pole barn. Our walk had just begun when we heard a mockingbird south of the horse barn. He was too far away for a good look though. Also heard nearby was a Willow Flycatcher. As we started down the mowed path we flushed a juvenile Eastern Meadowlark. It could fly, but not well.

Shortly we heard our first Henslow's Sparrow. If folks didn't get a good enough look at this one, they certainly had many more chances. I estimated that there had been 8-10 singing males on the morning and many perched at length. We also had not gone far when we heard our first Bobolink. It was doing a display flight and a life bird for one person on the trip. As we proceeded down the hill we heard Field Sparrows and saw some juveniles with their parents.

Amazingly we had what we believed to be a second mockingbird singing from the large dead

tree on the opposite side of the creek. We forged the swollen creek without incident and some sat to observe the mocker a while. Other birds nearby were Eastern Kingbird, Indigo Bunting and House Wren. A Mallard was a surprise fly-over. The group got a bit spread out as we headed south along the east bank, but a cooperative male Towhee allowed the stragglers to catch-up. It was definitely on territory. And from that location the group also sighted Red-headed Woodpeckers and the cutest little Blue Jay we'd ever seen. It calmly sat in a shrub about two feet off the ground and close enough that there was no need for binoculars. It was fully feathered, but its primaries and tail feathers were extremely short, and its mouth looked two sizes too big. It did finally get nervous enough to leave its perch to get lost in the surrounding grass.

We hadn't seen a warbler, when finally a Common Yellowthroat made an appearance. We chased it around for a bit and were having a look at a nearby pewee, when Ken asked, "Is that thunder?" It obviously was and we headed back without delay. Tony had a Blackberry with him—soon to be standard birding issue, and he pulled up the local radar. Fortunately we were in something of a pocket with the storm front all around us, so we didn't have to run for it. We did actually stop and look at some birds on the way and managed to hear a Grasshopper Sparrow singing not far from the main road. We even had some time to chat back at the cars. But something told us we had soon better call it a day. I don't think we were more than three miles down the road when the clouds absolutely burst and it continued much like that down I-80. Eventually we got ahead of the front and when we arrived back in Iowa City we found our cars still dry. Our species list was a bit short of what it usually would be for this outing, but considering the forecast we were lucky to go at all. Thanks to everyone for showing up and making it a fun trip.

Participants: Barry Buschelman, Chris Caster (leader), Jerry Denning, John and Linda

Donelson, Tony Franken, Therese Guedon, Ken Hunt, Pat Kieffer, Elizabeth Swain.

Species (28): Mallard, Mourning Dove, Red-headed Woodpecker, Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Wood Pewee, Eastern Kingbird, Barn Swallow, House Wren, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, American Robin, White-breasted Nuthatch, Blue Jay, European Starling, House Sparrow, American Goldfinch, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Towhee, Field Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Brown-headed Cowbird

– Chris Caster

June 27, Southern Johnson County. Bruce Gardner reported that the main area to be explored was under water. The rain fell and fell. We waited for almost two hours before deciding that no birding was going on that day.

Participants: Karen Disbrow, Bruce Gardner, Therese Guedon, Ken Hunt.

– Karen Disbrow

Note: July and August field trip reports will appear in the December issue.

Wednesday Bird Walks Rick Hollis

Despite having a number of people tell me they would be very interested in going on weekday bird walks, the attendance this summer was very poor. I blame a good deal of this on the weather, as it was too hot for many people to bird. Heck, I did not want to go. I am going to evaluate this at our September meeting and then make plans for the fall. Whatever plans are made will be posted on my Wednesday Bird Walks website even if the trips are on a different day:

<http://home.earthlink.net/~rjhollis/wednesdaybirdwalks/>.

June 9, Sycamore Bottoms. It was very hot, and high water in the marsh made travel

difficult. After an hour, we quit. We found some neat places south of the wastewater treatment plant, as we looked for (and did not find) Oxeye Prairie.

Birds (12 species): Canada Goose, Ring-necked Pheasant, Killdeer, Mourning Dove, Warbling Vireo, Barn Swallow, Common Yellowthroat, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, American Goldfinch.

Participants: Linda Donelson, Rick Hollis (leader), Ramona McGurk.

June 20, Kent Park. A thunderstorm caused this trip to be cancelled.

June 14, Turkey Creek Preserve and Hawkeye Wildlife Area. After birding Turkey Creek Preserve for an hour, the trip went to the south side of Hawkeye Wildlife Area, going as far west as the high water let us go.

Birds (41 species): Canada Goose, Mallard, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Willow Flycatcher, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Yellow-throated Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Cliff Swallow, House Wren, American Robin, Gray Catbird, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

Participants: Linda Donelson, Jim Fuller (leader).

July 28, Waterworks Prairie Park. Another hot, muggy day, which coupled with the late season, made birding slow.

Birds (24 species): Wood Duck, Turkey Vulture, Ring-billed Gull, Mourning Dove, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted

Kingfisher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Warbling Vireo, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Bank Swallow, Cliff Swallow, House Wren, American Robin, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Common Yellowthroat, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

Birders Jessica Alexander, Judy Ellyson, Rick Hollis (leader), Eric Miller.

August 11, Frytown Conservation Area. Yet another hot, steamy day. The progressing season made the woods very quiet. Most of the birds were noted based on bits of song.

Birds (13 species): Wild Turkey, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Black-capped Chickadee, House Wren, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

Participants: Jonni Ellsworth, Rick Hollis (leader).

Songbird Project Purple Martin Results

This summer, volunteer martin house monitors for the Songbird Project helped fledge 448 Purple Martins at eight active nesting colonies in Johnson County. This was a dramatic increase from last year when 270 nestlings fledged at seven colonies. Colonies with nesting martins were located at Brown Deer, Finkbine, and Pleasant Valley golf courses, the Solon Nature and Recreation Area, the Capri Lodge Motel and Clocktower Plaza in Coralville, and Casey's General Store in Hills.

Martins have been aggregating at roosting sites in the upper Midwest in preparation for their migratory trip to winter in Brazil. They return to their North American nesting sites in early spring.

The Songbird Project is looking for additional volunteers to help monitor martin colonies next year. If interested please contact Jim Walters at 319-466-1134.

IOWA CITY BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Please send this form with your annual membership dues to Bruce Gardner, 3055 Wapsi Ave. NE, Iowa City, IA, 52240. Annual dues are \$15 per household or \$10 for students. Members receive a 10% discount on bird seed at Birds Eye View, 410 First Ave. in Coralville's Riverview Square.

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Iowa City Bird Club

For general bird club information, or to lead or suggest a field trip, contact our president and field trip coordinator, Karen Disbrow at (319) 339-1017 or k_disbrow@yahoo.com.

Annual membership dues are \$15 per household or \$10 for students, payable by January 1st for the coming year. Check your mailing label for the year you have paid through. Make checks payable to Eastern Iowa Birdwatch and mail to Bruce Gardner, 3055 Wapsi Ave. NE, Iowa City, IA 52240. You may contact Bruce at (319) 643-2575 or woodsidefarms@juno.com.

Our club web site is located at www.icbirds.org and is maintained by Jim Scheib. You may contact Jim at (319) 337-5206 or jim@tenlongview.net.

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