
Eastern Iowa Birdwatch



The Iowa City Bird Club Newsletter

Volume 32 Number 3

December 2012

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**, unless otherwise noted, 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 16, Sunday. Iowa City Christmas Bird Count. With winter finches and Snowy Owls showing up in Iowa in recent weeks, this could be an exciting count. To participate in the field or as a feeder watcher, Contact Diana Pesek at (319) 560-8393 or keesiemom@yahoo.com by December 12. See page 4 for more information.

January 6, Sunday, 8–10 a.m. Bird Feeder Watch Social hosted by Jim and Karole Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll north of Iowa City. Come for coffee and rolls, and watch the winter birds visiting the feeders. Directions will be posted on our web site.

January 13, Sunday, 1 p.m. Owl Prowl. We'll spend the afternoon searching for owls such as Northern Saw-whet, Great Horned, and Barred Owls, or possibly any Snowy Owls that have been reported in the area. Karen Disbrow, 430-0315.

January 17, Thursday, 7 pm. Meeting at the Coralville Library. A film, which has yet to be determined, will be shown. *Snow date January 24 – check our web site for weather postponement information.*

January 27, Sunday, 1-4 p.m. Annual Coralville WinterFest, Iowa River Landing. The club will have a viewing area with information about feeders for winter birdwatching – anyone interested in helping please call Karen at 430-0315. Other activities include horse-drawn wagon rides, eagle watching, ice sculptures, and more.

February 2, Saturday, 7 a.m. Amana Turkey Walk and Feast. Join us for an early morning hike through the woods to search for the elusive Wild Turkeys, Saw-whet Owls, and other winter species, followed by breakfast at the Ox Yoke Inn at approximately 9:30 a.m. Please contact Karen Disbrow at 430-0315 if you plan to attend, whether you are driving with us from Iowa City, meeting us for the hike, or meeting us for breakfast.

February 6, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk. Meet at the Conservation Education Center (CEC). Rick Hollis, 665-3141. See page 6 for more information.

February 9, Saturday, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Bald Eagle Watch and Expo. Exhibits and speakers will be at the Brown Deer Golf Club, 1900 Country Club Dr., Coralville. Bald Eagle watching will take place at the Coralville Dam Tailwater West Picnic Shelter. For more information see page 8 or contact Karen Disbrow, 430-0315.

February 20, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk. Meet at the CEC. Rick Hollis, 665-3141.

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Schedule (continued)

February 21, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting. “My Friend Rachel Carson: Shirley Briggs and the Iowa Connection to *Silent Spring*” by Liz Christiansen, Director of the UI Office of Sustainability, and Karin Mason, Curator of UI Iowa Women’s Archives.

February 24, Sunday, 8 a.m. Quad Cities for gulls, waterfowl, and other birds on the Mississippi River, and possibly winter finches in the cemetery. Chris Caster, 339-8343.

March 6, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk. Meet at the CEC. Rick Hollis, 665-3141.

March 9, Saturday, 6:30 a.m. Burlington Area for spring migration up the Mississippi Flyway including ducks, geese, pelicans, and more with local guides Chuck Fuller and John Rutenbeck. This will be an all-day trip with a stop for lunch. **Meet at the Fin & Feather parking lot on S. Riverside Drive.** Karen Disbrow, 430-0315.

March 20, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk. Meet at the CEC. Rick Hollis, 665-3141.

March 21, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting. “From Hummingbirds to Tanagers and Much More – Birding NW Ecuador” by Doug Harr, wildlife photographer, avian consultant, and President of Iowa Audubon.

March 26, Tuesday, 7 p.m. Beginning Birdwatcher Course: Basics of Birding I at the Conservation Education Center at Kent Park. See page 9 for more information. Advance registration is requested, and is free for club members. Call Brad Freidhof at 645-1011 to register.

March 30, Saturday, 8 a.m. Cone Marsh in Louisa County for Sandhill Cranes, migrating ducks, geese, and other water birds. **Meet at the Fin & Feather parking lot on S. Riverside Drive.** *BEGINNING BIRDER TRIP.* Rick Hollis, 665-3141.

Other Dates of Note

December 14 – January 5, National Audubon Christmas Bird Count Period. Nearly fifty CBCs are held in Iowa every year, many of them here in Eastern Iowa. If you would like to participate in any of these, visit www.iowabirds.org/Events/CBC.aspx for dates and contact information.

January 11-13, Friday-Sunday. Quad Cities Bald Eagle Days. Eagle watching events are also being held this winter at many other locations along the Mississippi River and elsewhere in Iowa. For a partial list, visit http://www.midwestweekends.com/plan_a_trip/nature/birds_wildlife/eagle_watching_mississippi_river.html.

February 8-10, Friday-Sunday, University of Iowa Museum of Natural History’s Darwin Days. See www.uiowa.edu/~nathist/ for more information.

February 15-17, Sax-Zim Bog Birding Festival in northern Minnesota, <http://sax-zimbog.com/birding-festival/>.

February 15-18, Great Backyard Bird Count, a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. See page 4 for more information.

March 7, Thursday, 6 p.m. Prairie Preview XXX at Parkview Church in Iowa City. Speaker: Dr. Thomas Rosburg, Drake University. Come early for the 5 p.m. potluck.

Third or Fourth Saturday in March, Annual Purple Martin Seminar and Workshop at the CAM Iowa Clothing Center, 1005 Nutmeg Ave., about 3 miles NE of Kalona. For more information call Jim Walters at 319-466-1134 or Evan Gingerich at 319-656-3629. Check our web site or local newspapers for the date.

May 3-5, Iowa Ornithologists’ Union Spring Meeting in Cedar Falls. For more information, visit www.iowabirds.org.

From the President's Desk

Karen Disbrow

Greetings! What a fall – already crossbills and other winter finches and several Snowy Owls have shown up across Iowa. This could be a great winter for all kinds of birds showing up within Iowa's borders. As always I am so excited by the possibilities of what might be just down the road or over the next hill.

This winter our club is partnering with the Coralville Army Corps of Engineers on a new project: the Bald Eagle Watch and Expo. There will be tons of information, great programs and a lot of exhibitors. You really need to check out the Otter Side of Nature Store that will be there. They have awesome products for kids and those of us who can never get enough of nature items. The birding organizations will be there, of course. The Songbird Project will have information on the Althea Sherman Tower Project. This project is so close to completion, but donations are still needed. Check out their new website at www.altheasherman.org for more information.

We are lucky that the Fullers are again hosting the Bird Feeder Watch Social at their home in January. If you have not been there, you need to go. They have a beautiful set-up of feeders, a view of the Iowa River and a nearby pond. This is always a great event for the eyes, the stomach and the soul with so many friends to share in our favorite activities. Also in January, since so many owls are heading to Iowa we are again going on an Owl Prowl to find them.

February starts with the Amana Turkey Walk and breakfast, followed by Rick Hollis's Wednesday Bird Walks at Kent Park, and a great program on the Iowa connection to Rachel Carson. I was nine when *Silent Spring* was published fifty years ago, and the impact on my life of that book and all that resulted from it is immeasurable. For a small state, Iowans are always involved and making a difference.

Never let anyone tell you that one person cannot make a difference...Iowans have done so and continue to do so.

Our course for beginning birdwatchers begins in March. It is so much fun meeting new people, sharing the birding experience, and always learning new things along the way. Come join us at the Conservation Education Center in Kent Park. Also in March, Doug Harr will share his trip to Ecuador at our regular meeting.

The Winter season is upon us. So as we prepare for the Christmas Bird Count and look for the winter birds at our feeders (remember the 10% discount for club members at Leno & Cilek North, 600 N. Dodge St., Iowa City), I hope you will feel the wonder of the season.

Good Birding,
Karen



Renewal Reminder

It's time to send in your membership dues for 2013. Our annual membership dues remain \$15 per household or \$10 for students. Your mailing label shows the most recent year you have paid for. Please complete the membership renewal form on the inside back cover and send it with your check payable to "Eastern Iowa Birdwatch" to Bruce Gardner, 3055 Wapsi Ave. NE, Iowa City, IA 52240. If you have any questions about your membership status, please contact Bruce at 643-2575 or woodsidefarms@juno.com.

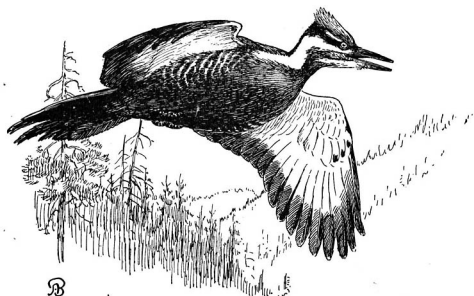
Christmas Bird Count Sunday, December 16

This year's Iowa City Christmas Bird Count will be held Sunday, December 16, unless extreme weather conditions require postponing the count to a later date. Co-compilers are Chris Edwards and Diana Pesek. If you wish to participate as a field observer or a feeder watcher, or if you have questions, please contact Diana at (319) 560-8393 or keesiemom@yahoo.com by Wednesday, December 12. This year we are not having a pre-count planning meeting.

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. Bring your own lunch. A dinner and updated compilation will be held 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 St.) 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 live in the count area, please contact Diana or Chris. Also, if you know others who may desire to participate as feeder watchers, please encourage them and have them call Diana or Chris.

Please visit the ICBC web site at www.icbirds.org for more information



Great Backyard Bird Count February 15-18, 2013

This year's Great Backyard Bird Count will be held February 15-18. It is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, National Audubon, and Bird Studies Canada. According to the GBBC web site, "The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds."

Locally, we would like to have eastern Iowa well-represented on the count, and we encourage everyone who is able to participate. Taking part is easy: count birds for at least 15 minutes, at as many places and on as many days during the four-day period as you like – just keep a separate list of counts for each day and location. You can count birds anywhere: in your yard, at a local park or wildlife refuge, or anywhere else. Then enter your results on the Great Backyard Bird Count web site, at www.birdsource.org/gbbc/. For a local checklist and reporting form, visit the ICBC web site.

Bird Club on Facebook

Taking a lead from the Iowa Ornithologists' Union and many other groups, we now have a Facebook page. This is intended to supplement our great web page. People can post sightings, ask for advice, and post pictures. It is our intention to keep the events calendar up to date and to include other non-bird club events of interest. Karen Disbrow and Rick Hollis are the administrators. Look us up and join the dialogue.

– Rick Hollis

Shirley Briggs Exhibition at UI Sciences Library

*November 15, 2012 through January 7, 2013,
University of Iowa Sciences Library*

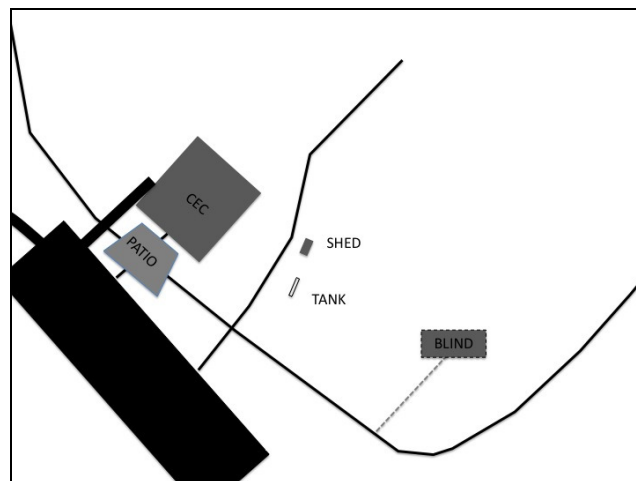
Fifty years ago, Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring*, a lucid and compelling book about how DDT and other pesticides were damaging the environment and human health. The book called for a change in the way humankind viewed the natural world and became an inspiration for the environmental movement. One of Carson's staunchest advocates and closest friends was Iowan Shirley Briggs, who met Carson when they worked together at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the 1940s.

To recognize this Iowa connection to *Silent Spring*, the University of Iowa Libraries and Office of Sustainability are presenting an exhibition, open Thursday, November 15 - Sunday, January 7 at the University of Iowa Sciences Library, inspired by the extensive collection of Briggs' diaries, letters, photos and artwork in the Iowa Women's Archives.

Briggs, an Iowa City native, was the author of *Basic Guide to Pesticides* (1992), inspired by the many requests for information about pesticides after *Silent Spring* was published in 1962. Briggs attended the University of Iowa earning a B.A. in art, art history, and botany in 1939 and an M.A. in art and art history in 1940. She studied with Grant Wood at UI. In 1945, she was hired by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as an artist. She became close, lifelong friends with Carson and with other noted naturalists, such as Roger Tory Peterson, through her work as editor of the *Atlantic Naturalist*, a publication of the Audubon Naturalist Society of the District of Columbia.

New Bird Blind Planned for Kent Park

At the November Johnson County Conservation Board meeting, I presented the Board with a proposal to build a bird blind at Kent Park. The proposal was made with sufficient donations from several club members to build the project. This has been on Johnson County Naturalist Brad Freidhof's wish list for a number of years. Brad, Johnson County Conservation Director Harry Graves, and I are all very excited about this project as it will add to the educational efforts of the Conservation Board and provide new learning experiences for school groups, casual learners, and the elderly. The three of us selected the site a few months ago. We intend this to be a pretty basic structure, with exterior finish like the Conservation Education Center and nearby shed. We do not intend to build the Taj Mahal of blinds, but we do intend to visit some other area blinds and learn from their mistakes. Because this will be a simple structure, it should not take long to build, and I hope to see it by next fall. The map below shows the close location of the blind to the CEC, and if you are out at Kent Park you will see the mowed path going down to the blind site. If anyone has any suggestions for things they would like to see, please let me know.



– Rick Hollis

Iowa Audubon Corner

I highly recommend that everyone visit the new and improved Iowa Audubon website at www.iowaaudubon.org. Ann Johnson and Doug Harr have been working since early summer to improve this website. In July Doug Harr completed “An Introduction to Birding” in Spanish which will be available at events along with the “Let’s Go Birding” booklet.

We are planning a fall 2013 fundraiser in the Des Moines area that is family-oriented. Items for a silent auction are being collected. If anyone in the club has something to donate, please contact Karen.

There is a long list of letters of support that have been written, and events that have been attended and supported by Iowa Audubon. Of note for our club, Iowa Audubon donated \$100 to the Iowa City Bird Club to help fund speakers for the Bald Eagle Watch and Expo in February. Iowa Audubon will be attending this event as well as Lake Red Rock Bald Eagle Day January 26, and the Winter Birding Festival at the O’Brien County Conservation Board January 19.

There is paperwork underway to have the Yellow River - Effigy Mounds Important Bird Area and Bird Conservation Area declared a “Globally Important Bird Area”.

Iowa Audubon is a very active partner with many other conservation and birding organizations in the state promoting birding education and conservation of vital habitat. If you are not a member, please check out their web site and consider joining.

– Karen Disbrow

Wednesday Bird Walks at Kent Park

We will be having more-or-less biweekly Wednesday morning field trips at Kent Park again starting in February. These will mostly be on the first and third Wednesday of each month, and we will meet at the Conservation Education Center at 8:00 a.m. We may decide to go somewhere else once all persons are present. We may go after something really exciting if there is a rarity in the area. While I do not think that our normal field trips are real high key, these Wednesday Walks are definitely lower key – just relaxing walks, looking at birds.

Changes in our Wednesday Bird Walk schedule will be posted on the Iowa City Bird Club and Johnson County Conservation Board Facebook pages and the Iowa City Bird Club web page.

I am looking for volunteers to lead some of these trips. One does not have to be an expert to lead one of these bird walks – mostly it takes a willingness to commit to showing up at the scheduled time. Please contact me if you are interested.

– Rick Hollis



In Memoriam: Linda Meyers Donelson

Long-time Iowa City Bird Club member Linda Donelson passed away on October 8, 2012. Over the years she served as field trip leader, meeting presenter, and newsletter contributor. In the September 2007 *Eastern Iowa Birdwatch*, she wrote about her first Iowa City Bird Club event: “I attended a warbler walk in Hickory Hill Park with James Huntington. This was a life-changing event for me. I had always wanted to learn about birds, but never found someone to show the birds to me before. When I go to Heaven I will be walking the trails of Hickory Hill Park at dawn.” Our condolences go out to Linda’s husband John and the rest of her family. Her obituary is below.

When 20-year-old Linda Meyers met a fellow Iowan at a summer Peace Corps training session in 1964, she couldn’t have known that her life’s adventure had just begun.

She knew she was responding to President Kennedy’s call for American college students to share their knowledge and gifts with the world. But the UI French major didn’t know then that she and the Iowa State student she was shaking hands with, John Donelson, would start taking turns following and leading each other across the globe for the rest of her life.

She didn’t know that he would travel a thousand miles from his Peace Corps post just to visit her in Cameroon. She didn’t know that before her 2-year commitment was up, she would ask for a transfer and the two would marry and serve out the rest of their time in Ghana.

She didn’t know that his biochemistry postdoc would have him in England while she began medical school in Iowa City — while pregnant with their first child, a daughter, for most of that first year.

She didn’t know that Iowa City would become the family’s home base as one, two and then three sons came on the scene.

She didn’t know that while spending a year at the foot of the Ngong Hills in Kenya, her medical training would make her so fascinated with the death of Karen Blixen that she would begin a lifelong study of the Danish writer and self-publish the award-winning book, “Out of Isak Dinesen in Africa.”

She didn’t know how her years would be filled with RAGBRAIs, triathlons, summers in Cape Cod, bird-watching tours on all seven continents and being in the delivery room when her first granddaughter came into the world.

Nor could she have known what a wonderful caregiver her husband would turn out to be for the 2½ years after she discovered several lumps in her neck that meant ovarian cancer had spread through her body.

Linda Grace Meyers Donelson M.D., died October 8, 2012, nearly a month after her 69th birthday. The daughter of Roman Meyers and Lois Seuser, Linda grew up in Clinton, but called Iowa City home for more than four decades.

She is survived by her husband, John; her brother, Paul; her sister, Mary; her children, Christina (Jeff) of Iowa City, Loren (Keegan) of San Diego, Calif., Lyn of Paris, France, and Emory (Kelly) of Santa Monica, Calif.; her grandchildren, L’Engle, Lucy, Miles, Leif and Ames; more than 50 of her first cousins; and many friends.

Memorial donations can be made in Linda’s memory to Iowa City Hospice and the Ovarian Cancer Research Fund.

Bald Eagle Watch & Expo

February 9, 2013

Saturday, 10 am - 3 pm



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Indoor Expo Location:
Brown Deer Golf Club
1900 Country Club Dr.
Coralville, IA
Refreshments - Marriott Hotel

Outdoor Viewing Site:
Coralville Lake
Tailwater West Picnic Shelter
Refreshments - Boy Scout Troop 218

Exhibitors:

- ▶ Iowa Ornithologist's Union
- ▶ Iowa Young Birders
- ▶ Iowa Wildlife Federation
- ▶ Artist, wood carver
- ▶ Johnson Co. Conservation Board
- ▶ Johnson Co. Songbird Project
- ▶ Linda & Robert Scarth, nature photographers
- ▶ Pella Wildlife Company
- ▶ The Otter Side of Nature Store

Speakers:

- ▶ 10:30 am – **BALD EAGLES**, Ty Smedes, IA author & photographer
- ▶ 12:00 noon – **HAWKS**, Lube Hart, Macbride Raptor Project
- ▶ 1:30 pm – **OWLS**, Mihe Havlik, Des Moines Y Camp

Hosts

- ▶ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Coralville Lake
- ▶ IA Dept. of Natural Resources
- ▶ Iowa City Bird Club
- ▶ IA Audubon



For more information call the Coralville Lake office at 319.338.3543 x6300



Introduction to Birding Course March 26 – April 30, 2013 at Kent Park



The Iowa City Bird Club and the Johnson County Conservation Department are offering a 6-week Introduction to Birding Course at the Conservation Education Center in Kent Park. There will be six Tuesday evening sessions along with six weekend field trips to area birding hot spots.

Tuesday evening sessions are \$5 for adults and free for children accompanied by an adult. Iowa City Bird Club members receive free admission (a one-year membership is \$15 per household or \$10 for students). Participants may attend all sessions or pick one or more to attend. Classes can hold 30, and advanced registration is requested – please call Brad Freidhof at (319) 645-1011 by noon of the Tuesday session. Handouts and refreshments will be provided. Come to class early and bird the loop path near the Conservation Education Center.

Weekend field trips are free. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Bring binoculars to all field trips; if you don't have a pair let us know in advance and loaners can be arranged. If you have a spotting scope, you are welcome to bring it. Club members will have several spotting scopes available to share on those field trips requiring one. All field trips will depart from the N Dodge Street Hy-Vee in Iowa City unless otherwise noted; meet in the SW corner of the parking lot. For more information, call Karen Disbrow at (319) 430-0315.

Tuesday, March 26, 7 p.m. BASICS OF BIRDING I by Rick Hollis. This will include field identification of birds, field guides, and equipment every birder needs, or might someday need.

Saturday, March 30, 8 a.m. Field Trip to CONE MARSH. Located about 25 miles SE of Iowa City, Cone Marsh is an excellent place to view migrating ducks, geese, and other water birds. Wear boots for walking in wet areas, and bring a spotting scope if you have one. **Meet at the Fin & Feather parking lot.**

Tuesday, April 2, 7 p.m. BASICS OF BIRDING II by Rick Hollis. Continuation of first session topics.

Saturday, April 6, 8 a.m. Field Trip to KENT PARK near Tiffin. We will explore the trails in Kent Park looking for migrating songbirds and resident woodland birds. **Meet at the CEC in Kent Park.**

Tuesday, April 9, 7 p.m. WHERE TO BIRD IN JOHNSON COUNTY by Rick Hollis. Well known, lesser known and secret places to watch birds and study nature in and around Johnson County.

Saturday, April 13, 8 a.m. Field Trip to HAWKEYE WILDLIFE AREA near North Liberty. We expect to see ducks, geese, American White Pelicans, and other early spring migrants. Wear boots for walking in wet areas, and bring a spotting scope if you have one.

Tuesday, April 16, 7 p.m. BACKYARD AND FEEDER BIRDS by James Scheib. This session will cover the common birds found in our area's backyards during the year, and what types of feeders and food to use to attract them.

Sunday, April 21, 8 a.m. Field Trip to MACBRIDE NATURE-RECREATION AREA. Visit the Raptor Center, observe birds up close from the bird blind, and hike the nearby trails.

Tuesday, April 23, 7 p.m. BIRDS OF HICKORY HILL PARK AND WATERWORKS PARK IN IOWA CITY by Jim Scheib. Learn the variety of birds that are found throughout the year at these nearby parks.

Saturday, April 27, 8 a.m. Field Trip to HICKORY HILL PARK and WATERWORKS PARK. Visit these two Iowa City parks with great trails for woodland, prairie, and wetland species.

Tuesday, April 30, 7 p.m. WARBLER IDENTIFICATION AND SHOREBIRD REVIEW by Karen Disbrow. Warblers are among our most colorful birds. Compare and contrast similar species within these two interesting and challenging groups.

Sunday, May 12, 8 a.m. Field Trip to HICKORY HILL PARK. May is prime time for viewing warblers in Iowa, and this park is an eastern Iowa hot spot for viewing migrant warblers and other songbirds.

Field Trip and Meeting Reports

September 5, Kent Park Bird Walk. CEC; 8:00-9:00 a.m., 0.7 mile. Trip cut short by thunder and downpour.

Participants: John Erickson, Rick Hollis (leader).

Birds: (9 species): Green Heron 1, Common Nighthawk 1, Olive-sided Flycatcher 3, Eastern Phoebe 1, Yellow-throated Vireo 2, Red-eyed Vireo 1, American Robin 7, Gray Catbird 5, Cedar Waxwing 6.

– Rick Hollis

September 9, Pelican Festival at Hawkeye Wildlife Area. This year's Pelican Festival was a great success, with many people (500) and American White Pelicans (1100) present. It was a beautiful day with sunshine and pleasant temperatures. This year, with a silent auction added as a fundraiser for Iowa Audubon, we raised approximately \$500 which will be used for bird conservation and education projects.

The event was hosted by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iowa Audubon, Johnson County Conservation Board, and the Iowa City Bird Club. Eighteen organizations participated, including Eastern Iowa Beekeepers Association, Iowa Native Plant Society, Iowa Ornithologist's Union, Iowa Wildlife Federation, Iowa Young Birders, Johnson County Heritage Trust, Songbird Project, Macbride Raptor Project, Prairie States Mushroom Club, Swisher Fire Department, UI Museum of Natural History, and UI Astronomy Club. All these organizations had information on hand, and many provided activities. Boy Scout Troop 218 kept visitors well fed and hydrated throughout the day.

Presentations during the day were well attended, and included Basics of Birding by Iowa

Audubon's Doug Harr, Bird Banding by UI School of the Wild's Meredith Caskey, American White Pelicans by IDNR's Pat Schlarbaum, Macbride Raptor Project by Director Jodeane Cancilla, Fire Safety for Kids by the Swisher Fire Department, and Purple Martins by the Songbird Project's Jim Walters.

I would like to thank everyone from the various groups for participating. We had great fun putting this together and showing off Hawkeye Wildlife Area and the pelicans.

– Karen Disbrow

September 15, Hickory Hill Park. It was a super morning to be out, but the birds were scarce. We started at the north shelter and walked trails heading east and south for about fifteen minutes. We had managed only a flicker and a catbird, when we got a call from James and Diana who had an Olive-sided Flycatcher in St. Joseph's Cemetery. We hustled over there with Jerry Denning and his Pacemakers bringing up the rear. To be fair, the hill was steep and the conversation engaging. Fortunately the flycatcher was extremely cooperative and everyone got great looks at the white patches behind the wings. The cemeteries held other birds as well. There was a large flock of waxwings with a few finches in the evergreens. Bluebirds were numerous and we located some warblers in the deciduous trees. We even had a cormorant fly over.

Heading back into the park, there wasn't anything until we got down to the magic corner and the dam. A lone Broad-winged Hawk was seen heading out. We also found a Barred Owl and wondered why it was perched in the open at the field-edge. The answer became clear when it fell to snatch a poor critter from below and was quickly off to enjoy it in the privacy of the wood.

But we didn't spend more than ten minutes at the dam. A number of our party had already decided they had enough and with good reason, the birding was really slow. But the remaining

participants got a nice bonus on the way back through the south canyon. We found a few Red-eyed Vireos foraging along the creek and there was a lone Philadelphia Vireo with them. For all of us, that was at the very least, the first we had seen all year. Thanks to everyone for making the morning fun.

Participants: Chris Caster (leader), Jerry Denning, Jonni Ellsworth, John Erickson, Tony Franken, Peter Hansen, Barbara Haring, James Huntington, Dave Kyllingstad, Gerry Peterson, Diana Pesek, Viana Rockel, Carol and Tom Rosenberger.

Birds (27 species): Double-crested Cormorant, Broad-winged Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Barred Owl, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Red-headed Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Philadelphia Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Gray Catbird, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, Tennessee Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, House Finch, House Sparrow.

– *Chris Caster*

September 19, Kent Park Bird Walk. CEC; 8:00-9:30 a.m., 1.2 miles; clear, 50s, wind SW 20 mph. Species numbers probably down because of wind.

Participants: Jess Alexander, John Erickson, Rick Hollis (leader), Joni Jones, Kathleen Kuenstling, Gerald Peterson, Sally Anne Seabury.

Birds (14 species): Canada Goose 1, Red-tailed Hawk 2, Solitary Sandpiper 1, Northern Flicker 7, Eastern Phoebe 1, Blue Jay 10, American Crow 1, Black-capped Chickadee 5, Tufted Titmouse 2, White-breasted Nuthatch 1, American Robin 8, European Starling 8, Common Yellowthroat 2, warbler sp. 1, American Goldfinch 20.

Other: Red Admiral, Monarch.

– *Rick Hollis*

September 20, Meeting. Johnson County Conservation Board Director Harry Graves gave a presentation on Ciha Fen, an 81-acre preserve in NE Johnson County near Sutliff. It is a sand prairie-savanna complex on a wind-deposited sand ridge. The north half, which was acquired primarily to buffer the south forty, has rolling topography and is currently in agricultural production and contains three small wetlands which have not been studied to any great extent. The south half is partially forested with some magnificent specimens of open grown white oaks and black oaks, has open pasture, and contains two ponds and a small wetland. The largest pond contains the most salient feature of the entire property: the amazing nutrient-poor fen. It has a floating mat of vegetation, which is a wet peat deposit.

Studies of the preserve have been ongoing this year. Many rare plants, animals and reptiles have been documented already. Rick Hollis and Chris Edwards have been documenting the birdlife. The fen's largest pond is being cored to determine its depth. At this point in time its depth is still unknown, but 80 feet has been reached and more pipe is being purchased.

This report does not do justice to the wonderful talk that Harry gave, but the Fen is a remarkable place that is a true treasure to be visited again and again.

Attendees: Jack and Ann Bagford, Mark Brown, Karen Disbrow, Jonni Ellsworth, Bruce Gardner, Peter Hansen, Rick Hollis, Lauren and Doina Johnson, Jane Knoedel, Dave Kyllingstad, Kristen Lawton, Mike Lindum, Nancy Lynch, Gerald Peterson, Ed Rolenc, Tom and Carol Rosenberger, Jim and Sharon Scheib, Dick and Marcia Shaffer, Kai Weatherman.

– *Karen Disbrow*

October 3, Kent Park Bird Walk. CEC; 7:38-9:48 a.m., 1.0 mile; partly sunny to start, then overcast and intermittent light rain, 50°-65°.

Participants: Barb Fisher-Krueger, Peter Hansen, Rick Hollis (leader), Kathleen Kuenstling, Nancy Lynch, Sally Anne Seabury.

Birds (11 species): Canada Goose 11, Northern Flicker 11, American Robin 50, European Starling 50, Yellow-rumped Warbler 16, Eastern Towhee 4, Song Sparrow 1, Lincoln's Sparrow 5, White-throated Sparrow 4, Red-winged Blackbird 200, Common Grackle 150.

– Rick Hollis

October 6, Hawk Watch at Stainbrook Preserve. Our annual hawk watch was held later than usual this year due to the home football schedule. As a result, we missed two regularly-seen species, Broad-winged Hawk and Osprey. The weather made it an interesting day – at 9 a.m. it was 34° with clear skies, and steady 10-15 mph northwest winds brought increasing cloud cover and a high temperature of only 45°. The morning flight was somewhat slow, but at noon the Turkey Vultures started pouring through under heavy cloud cover, moving fast with the wind rather than lazily circling on thermals like we usually see them.

The largest group contained 48 birds, and we ended with a total of 163, smashing the old record of 65. We also had 23 Red-tailed Hawks, the highest total since 1995, and 11 Bald Eagles. Given the conditions, the low number of accipiters (three Sharp-shinned Hawks, one Cooper's Hawk, and one unidentified accipiter) was surprising. The only other raptor was a single Northern Harrier moving past very high up. Several kettles of Franklin's Gulls were an interesting non-raptor highlight. It seemed to get colder and windier as the day progressed, and those of use who stayed for the duration were ready to leave by 2 p.m.

Participants: Elizabeth Aubrey, Jerry Denning, Karen Disbrow, Chris Edwards, Mike Feiss, Rick Hollis, Karl Kahler, Pat Kieffer, Li-Hsien

Lin, Ron and Sue Neil, Linda Quinn, Ben Rowold, Linda Rudolph, Ed Saehler, Sharon Somers, Jeni Zieser.

Raptors: (6 species, 203 individuals): Turkey Vulture 163, Bald Eagle 11, Northern Harrier 1, Sharp-shinned Hawk 3, Cooper's Hawk 1, *accipiter* sp. 1, Red-tailed Hawk 23.

Other Birds (18 species): Wood Duck, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Egret, Franklin's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Northern Cardinal, American Goldfinch.

– Chris Edwards

October 14, Cedar County. This field trip was rained out.

October 17, Kent Park Bird Walk. CEC; 8:04-9:14 a.m., 0.95 mile; 60°, partly sunny early then overcast, intermittent rain.

Participants: Aruna Doshi, Rick Hollis (leader), Pat Kieffer, Nancy Lynch.

Birds (18 species): Red-tailed Hawk 1, Mourning Dove 4, Red-bellied Woodpecker 5, Downy Woodpecker 1, Blue Jay 1, Black-capped Chickadee 4, Eastern Bluebird 1, American Robin 30, European Starling 20, Red-winged Blackbird 10, Common Grackle 10, American Goldfinch 12.

– Rick Hollis

October 18, Meeting. Jim Durbin presented a program on his efforts to document the moths of Iowa. He provided the following summary.

Frank Olsen, I, and a couple hundred other people have added to the database we have of the moth populations in Iowa. We have documented over 1,800 species in the state. The moths range from ¼-inch to over 6 inches in

wingspan. They come in a variety of colors and patterns. The moths fly at various times throughout the year from a couple weeks to a couple months.

We have over 26,000 records in the database, with records from 81 of the 99 counties, and species from 57 of the 74 families that have been documented in the United States. We have records from 506 locations and 2,500 collecting times. We have 28,000 photos in the database of specimens that have been collected or photographed. These numbers are through the time of the presentation as I have several hundred records from 2012 to add to the database.

I have downloaded records and photos from <http://BugGuide.net> of Iowa records. I have also documented specimens from several collections at the universities. Mark Brown and I have documented 430 species in Johnson County. Frank Olsen, myself and a few other people have documented 1335 species in Linn County.

This year I collected over 40 times and averaged 150 specimens a night. This was a combination of photos taken and specimens of moths that I collected that I didn't recognize. I have started taking pictures of moths on the sheet and if it is a species that I recognize, then I do not collect a specimen. This has enabled me to do a better job of documenting what comes into the sheet without having to collect a lot of common moths.

If you are interested in viewing the data, go to <http://insectsofiowa.com> and go to the moth page. On that page are links to photos of the moths and collection data. I have a map of Iowa for each species, showing in which counties the species has been documented. There is also a file showing the flight times of the moths. The site has all the families listed with pictures that link to individual pages for each species.

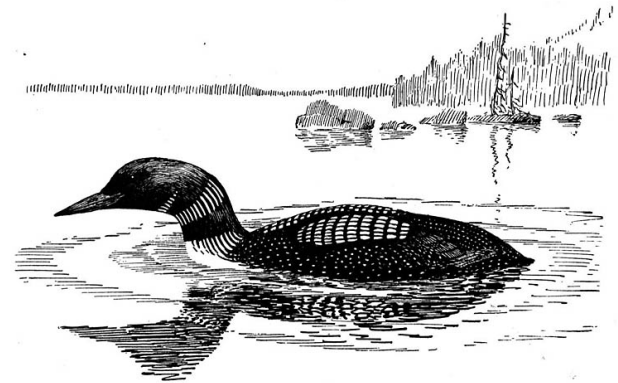
– Jim Durbin

November 7, Kent Park Bird Walk. North end of lake; 8:04-9:14 a.m.

Participants: John Erickson, Rick Hollis (leader), Kathleen Kuenstling.

Birds (15 species): Canada Goose 50, Wild Turkey 11, Red-tailed Hawk 2, Red-bellied Woodpecker 3, Downy Woodpecker 1, Blue Jay 3, American Crow 1, Black-capped Chickadee 4, Eastern Bluebird 1, Fox Sparrow 4, Song Sparrow 1, White-throated Sparrow 6, Dark-eyed Junco 30, Northern Cardinal 10, American Goldfinch 6.

– Rick Hollis



November 11, Sandy Beach Recreation Area. Our planned destinations for the morning were Pleasant Creek State Recreation Area and Cedar Lake in Linn County, with waterfowl, loons, and grebes among our target birds. We gathered at the Hy-Vee parking lot on a windy, 58° morning with a large storm front barreling down on us. With a smart phone we checked the weather – bad news, our first two stops are in the middle of a deluge! It is pouring at Pleasant creek and Cedar Lake. How's Sandy Beach? This is where I have to wonder how crazy birders are. It's not raining there...yet. So we head off to Solon trying to beat the front. We arrive ahead of the front and find a Red-tailed Hawk, Ring-billed Gulls, two American White Pelicans, some mystery flying ducks, a flock of goldfinches, and... thanks to Ben, one Common

Loon. Yes – success! And right on cue, it starts to rain. Counting the birds at the Hy-Vee parking lot and along the drive, we saw a grand total of 12 species, not counting the mystery ducks.

Participants: Jerry Denning, Karen Disbrow, Therese Guedon, Ben Rowold, Sharon Somers (leader).

Birds (12 species): Common Loon, American White Pelican, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Ring-billed Gull, Blue Jay, American Crow, Carolina Wren, European Starling, Northern Cardinal, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– Sharon Somers

November 15, Meeting. During the business portion of the meeting, Linda Rudolph suggested that members bring the latest issues of any birding magazines that they no longer want, to share with anyone in the group who would like them. There was a general discussion of places where magazines could be donated rather than recycling them, such as hospitals, schools, and nursing homes.

Karen Disbrow discussed the financing of the upcoming Bald Eagle Watch & Expo, and the amount needed to pay for the speakers and the Brown Deer Golf Club for the day. She has a list of potential donors that she will be contacting. At the time of this writing, she has collected \$220 of the \$588 required. If anyone is interested in donating or has a donor suggestion please contact her.

Mark Brown then presented a program on “Kauai; Exotic and Native Fauna”. He provided the following summary of his presentation.

I presented a PowerPoint that showcased wildlife photos from a family trip to Kauai in September 2008. I first showed a sampling of exotic birds, since this represents such a high percentage of the bird fauna in all of the Hawaiian islands. Most originated from Asia

and include such species as Chestnut Munia, Common Myna, Japanese White-eye, Zebra Dove, Spotted Dove, White-rumped Shama, Java Sparrow, and Red Junglefowl.

Following this set, I focused on native wildlife, starting with marine life. A single Monk Seal, one of only two endemic mammals, was seen basking on one the beaches. There are only about 1,100 of these seals left and they are protected by strict laws. They cannot be approached closer than 100 feet and harassment of any seals is punishable by up to a \$50,000 fine. Next I showed several species of very colorful tropical fish that I photographed with a waterproof camera on several snorkeling outings. There are approximately 540 species in the shallow water within 200 feet of shore, and 25% of these fish are endemic to Hawaii.

Most of the remainder of my presentation focused on native birds, of which there are only 56 regular migrants and residents. One Hawaiian Owl, a subspecies of our Short-eared Owl, was seen and is the only native raptor on Kauai. Other species encountered were Wandering Tattler and Pacific Golden-Plover, both common in the non-breeding season.

Next I discussed native wetland birds, which can be seen in places like Smith’s Tropical Paradise and Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge. Hawaiian Stilt and Hawaiian Moorhen are subspecies of their respective birds in the United States, while Hawaiian Coot and Hawaiian Duck are both distinct endemic species. They have done well on Kauai compared to the other islands due to lack of exotic mongoose. However, recent captures and sightings of the mongoose in the past year have increased concerns that they could be establishing themselves on Kauai.

My next set of pictures featured close-ups of a number a seabirds at Kilauea National Wildlife Refuge, including White-tailed Tropicbird, Red-tailed Tropicbird, Great Frigatebird, Red-footed Booby, and Wedge-tailed Shearwaters. Another

bird seen there was the endemic Hawaiian Goose, or Nene. Hunted to near extinction 60 years ago, captive breeding has helped the population rebound to a healthy 2,000 birds!

My final set of pictures focused on the endemic passerine forest birds. There are 13 known forest birds that have existed on Kauai, most of them being Honeycreepers, a group of specialized songbirds that originated from the Rosefinches of Europe and Asia. The arrival of the Polynesians and Westerners have significantly contributed to the decline of these birds. Of course forest clearing for agriculture reduced these birds' breeding areas. Also the introduction of land mammals, birds, mosquitoes, and exotic plants have all contributed to their demise. Today there are eight surviving species and I was able to photograph three of them in Kokee State Park: Apapane, Kauai 'Elapaio, and Kauai Amakihi. The Kauai Forest Bird Recovery Project is a group that has been dedicated to research, education and conservation of these birds since 2002, and there is a lot of information at their website: <http://kauaiforestbirds.org/>. I am hopeful that their efforts will allow many future

generations to continue to enjoy these special birds!

– *Mark Brown*

November 21, Kent Park Bird Walk. CEC, Valley View Prairie, and Evergreen Landing; 1.0 mile, 8:04-9:00 a.m.; fog.

Participants: Rick Hollis (leader), Kathleen Kuentstling, Nancy Lynch.

Birds (13 Species): Canada Goose 50, Red-bellied Woodpecker 3, Downy Woodpecker 3, Northern Flicker 1, Blue Jay 6, American Crow 20, Black-capped Chickadee 6, White-breasted Nuthatch 2, Cedar Waxwing 25, American Tree Sparrow 2, Dark-eyed Junco 20, Northern Cardinal 10, American Goldfinch 20.

After leaving Kent Park, two of us continued on to check out the evergreens at Oakhill Cemetery west of Tiffin, where we found no birds, and then to Goose Lake in North Liberty, where we saw: Canada Goose 30, Gadwall 1, Mallard 15, Redhead 20, Lesser Scaup 30, Bufflehead 1, Red-tailed Hawk 1.

– *Rick Hollis*

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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.

Eastern Iowa Birdwatch is published three times per year, in April, September, and December. Members are encouraged to send submissions and comments to the editor, Chris Edwards, 4490 Daniels Cir. NE, Solon, IA 52333. You may contact Chris at (319) 430-4732 or credwards@aol.com.

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