
Eastern Iowa Birdwatch



The Iowa City Bird Club Newsletter

Volume 33 Number 3

December 2013

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 15, Sunday. Iowa City Christmas Bird Count. To participate in the field or as a feeder watcher, contact Diana Pesek at (319) 560-8393 or keesiemom@yahoo.com by December 11. See page 4 for more information.

January 5, 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. Check our web site for directions.

January 16, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting. The film “Backyard Birds of Quinta Mazatlan” will be shown. *Snow date January 23 – check our web site and Facebook for weather postponement information.*

February 1, Saturday, 7 a.m. Amana Turkey Walk and Feast. Join us for an early morning hike through the woods to search for Wild Turkeys, Saw-whet Owls, and other winter species, followed by breakfast at the Colony Inn at approximately 9:30 a.m. Please contact Karen Disbrow at 430-0315 if you plan to attend.

February 8, Saturday, 10 a.m.–3 p.m. Bald Eagle Watch and Expo. Exhibits and speakers will be at North Central Jr. High School. Bald Eagle watching will take place at the Coralville Dam Tailwater West Picnic Shelter.

February 9, 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. There will be many other fun activities.

February 20, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting. “Birding Madagascar” by Ken Lowder. Five mammal families, five bird families, and 120 bird species are endemic to this unique and fascinating island off the coast of Africa.

February 23, 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 5, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Wednesday Morning Bird Walk. Meet at the Kent Park CEC. Rick Hollis, 665-3141.

March 8, Saturday, 6:30 a.m. Burlington Area for spring migration along the Mississippi River including ducks, geese, pelicans, and more. **Meet at the Fin & Feather parking lot on S. Riverside Drive.** Karen Disbrow, 430-0315.

Continued on next page →

Schedule (continued)

March 19, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Wednesday Morning Bird Walk. Meet at the Kent Park CEC. Rick Hollis, 665-3141.

March 20, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting. “Swans, Swifts & Ceruleans: Why Citizen Conservation Counts” by Doug Harr, wildlife photographer, avian consultant, and President of Iowa Audubon. A look at the things any citizen can do to help conserve our avian life, from buying the right kind of coffee to assisting with bird surveys.

March 25, Tuesday, 7 p.m. Introduction to Birding Course: Backyard Birding at the Conservation Education Center at Kent Park. Advance registration is requested, and is free for club members. Call Brad Freidhof at 645-1011 to register. See page 6 for more information.

March 30, Sunday, 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.** 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 10-12, 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.

January 18, Saturday. Iowa Young Birders field trip to the Mississippi River and Quad Cities, www.iowayoungbirders.org.

February 14-16, Sax-Zim Bog Birding Festival in northern Minnesota, <http://sax-zimbog.com/birding-festival/>.

February 14-17, Great Backyard Bird Count, a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. See page 4 for more information.

February 15, Saturday. Iowa Young Birders field trip at Iowa City, www.iowayoungbirders.org.

March 13, Thursday, 6:30 p.m. Prairie Preview at Parkview Evangelical Church in Iowa City. The featured speakers at 7:30 p.m. are Lon Drake and Judy Joyce, who will present “Small is Beautiful: The Value of Small Conservation Properties”.

From the President's Desk Karen Disbrow

Happy holidays everyone! This promises to be a most interesting season. I always wonder what birds will be blown into Iowa during the winter. Already the weather is extremely cold and the birds are in need of more food and water. Luckily we now have two local businesses offering a 10% discount on bird seed and suet to club members – Forever Green Garden Center at 125 Forevergreen Road in Coralville joins N. Dodge Street Ace Hardware. All you need to do

is show your blue membership card or a copy of your newsletter at checkout. Don't forget that fresh water is also important for birds in the winter, as well as grit or sand for the small birds – I have a supply available at Ace Hardware.

In addition to the upcoming Christmas Bird Count, we have several exciting activities planned for this winter, including the Eagle Watch and Expo on February 8. The expo portion will take place at North Central Junior High School. Nature photographer and author Ty Smedes will be speaking on his book, “The

Return of Iowa's Bald Eagles". A great program for kids is Mike Havlik's "Big Owls Hoot and Little Owls Toot", accompanied by guitar, audience participation, and a live owl. The Macbride Raptor Project will have a live hawk program. And the Wildlife Diversity Program of the Iowa DNR will be at the Tailwater West area of the Coralville Reservoir to assist with Bald Eagle viewing.

We are also doing the Introduction to Birding Course at Kent Park again this spring. We have rearranged the order of the presentations somewhat this year. As always, the course is free to all club members, and you may attend any or all sessions.

In January the Fullers are again hosting a Feeder Watch Social. February features our annual Amana Turkey Walk and Feast, and a trip to the Quad Cities to look for gulls and other water birds. And in March we will welcome back spring with trips to Burlington and Cone Marsh. If anyone wants to lead a trip at the spur of the moment, let me know and we will post it on our website and Facebook page and send it to our email list; just give me two or three days' notice.

Rick Hollis provided this summary of our recent activity on Facebook: 46 people posted, commented, or liked us; 159 people regularly followed our postings; and 238 people visited our page.

The Songbird Project is looking for monitors for Purple Martin colonies and bluebird trails in the Johnson County area for the 2014 nesting season. This work usually starts in April and continues through early August. It consists of weekly (or slightly more often for martins) nest checks and record-keeping. Substitutes are provided for vacation times. If interested, please contact Jim Walters (319-466-1134 or jcmwalt@infionline.net) for more information.

Stay warm and keep looking up...you never know what you might see. Good Birding!

Iowa Audubon Corner

Karen Disbrow

At the November 17 Iowa Audubon board meeting, we voted to assist the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation in a fundraising effort to help the Iowa DNR acquire a 368-acre addition to the west side of the Paint Creek Unit of Yellow River State Forest. The new addition will include more than a mile of Paint Creek, one of the state forest's most important watershed streams. Also on the property are some algific talus slopes and their very rare resident plants and animals. Although this parcel of land has been partially logged, with time the forest should produce additional habitat for Cerulean Warblers, and in the interim perhaps could host Blue-winged Warblers and other rarer birds. The tract lies adjacent to part of the state forest currently housing one of the densest-known concentrations of Cerulean Warbler territories in the Midwest, if not the nation.

The dedication of the Globally Important Bird Area that includes Yellow River State Forest and Effigy Mounds National Monument will be held in May 2014. Stay tuned as it promises to be a great event. Jon Stravers has located a Mississippi River island that may hold more Cerulean Warblers than anywhere previously found. Jon has a friend with a boat who can lead trips there for 30 people at a time to experience being surrounded by Ceruleans during the dedication celebration.

The "Fall Into Birds" Family Birding Event near Des Moines on October 26 was not well attended, but \$920 was raised. The positive comments from those who did attend attested to the appropriateness and value of the event. We hope to hold it again, but not so close to Halloween as there were many other competing activities scheduled that weekend.

Membership Renewal Reminder

It's time to send in your membership dues for 2014. 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 15

This year's Iowa City Christmas Bird Count will be held Sunday, December 15, unless extreme weather conditions require postponing the count to a later date. Co-compilers are Diana Pesek and Chris Edwards. 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 11. 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 B 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. Also, if you know others who may desire to participate as feeder watchers, please encourage them and have them call Diana. Please visit the ICBC web site at www.icbirds.org for more information.

Great Backyard Bird Count February 14-17

This year's Great Backyard Bird Count will be held February 14-17. It is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, National Audubon, and Bird Studies Canada. According to the GBBC web site at www.birdsource.org/gbbc, "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 to do so. 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. For a local checklist and reporting form, visit the ICBC web site.



How to Save Birds from Flying into Windows

Reprinted from the American Bird Conservancy

Millions of birds die every year flying into windows, because they can't tell reflections from trees, plants and sky. Most of those windows are on houses. Never had a bird hit your window? Perhaps you have been lucky—so far. More likely, you haven't been around to see or hear it when it happened, and the bird has either flown off to die or been scavenged by a neighborhood cat, raccoon, or crow. But the odds are that sooner or later, your windows will kill a bird.

Not all windows are equally hazardous. Check to see which of your windows are most reflective, and closest to areas where you see birds when they are active. Collisions happen more frequently during spring and fall migration periods. Even small windows can be dangerous, as many birds fly into small spaces such as tree cavities or between branches.

Research has identified solutions to alert birds to windows. The easiest of these involve applying visible markings to the outside of windows in patterns that the birds can see while requiring minimal glass coverage to keep your view unobscured. Although we don't yet have all the answers, we know that most birds will avoid windows with vertical stripes spaced four inches apart, or horizontal stripes spaced two inches apart. More complicated or irregular patterns will also work as long as they follow these general spacing guidelines.

Here are some quick and affordable ways to protect birds from your windows. These should be applied to the outside of the glass to break up reflections.

1. Use tape to create patterns that help prevent collisions. American Bird Conservancy (ABC) recommends ABC BirdTape (www.abcbirdtape.org) for this purpose. Duck brand tape comes in a range of colors and tears easily, to make lines of different widths. Chart tape (www.magnatape.com) comes in a range of widths. Tape may require a utility knife to remove.
2. Apply Tempera paint (available at most art supply and craft stores) freehand with brush or sponge, or use a stencil. Tempera is long-lasting, even in rain, and non-toxic, but comes right off with a damp rag or sponge.
3. Most window films designed for external use are not patterned and will not deter birds. However, interior window films come in many colors and styles, and can be applied on the outside of windows to prevent collisions (www.thesunshieldpros.com, www.fauxdecorandmore.com). Collid-Escape, designed for external use, is see-through from the inside, opaque from the outside (www.collidescape.org).
4. If you don't want to alter the glass itself, you can stretch lightweight netting, screen, or other material over the window. The netting must be several inches in front of the window, so birds don't hit the glass after hitting the net. Several companies (www.birdbgone.com, www.birdscreen.com) sell screens that can be attached with suction cups or eye hooks (www.nixalite.com, www.birdmaster.com).
5. What about prefabricated decals? Decals are a well-known alternative to the techniques listed above. However, to be effective, they must be spaced more closely than recommended by manufacturers and so may block more of the glass surface than other options (www.windowdressingetc.com). Or make your own! Arti Stick Window Color paints come in 18 colors and are marketed for children. Drawings on sheets of plastic become translucent as they dry, and can be peeled off and applied to windows (www.dickblick.com, www.artsuppliesforartists.com).

For more information, or to donate to ABC's Collisions program, visit www.abcbirds.org.



Introduction to Birding Course March 25 – April 29, 2014 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 North 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 25, 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, 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 1, 7 p.m. RARE AND UNUSUAL BIRDS FOUND IN IOWA by James Scheib. Information about rare and unusual birds that have been observed in Iowa, including irruptions of northern species.

Sunday, April 6, 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 8, 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, April 12, 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 15, 7 p.m. BASICS OF BIRDING II by Rick Hollis. Continuation of previous session topics.

Saturday, April 19, 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 22, 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 26, 8 a.m. Field Trip to TERRY TRUEBLOOD RECREATION AREA and WATERWORKS PARK. Visit these two Iowa City parks with great trails for woodland, prairie, and wetland species.

Tuesday, April 29, 7 p.m. WARBLER IDENTIFICATION by Karen Disbrow. Warblers are among our most colorful birds. Compare and contrast similar species within this interesting and challenging group.

Sunday, May 4, 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.

Books for Birders

Rick Hollis

Don't Be Such a Scientist: Talking Substance in an Age of Style. Randy Olson. Island Press, 2009. 216 pages. Paperback, \$19.95. Available at the Iowa City Public Library.

My background is science. I always wanted to be a scientist (well, after I gave up on cowboy and professional football player). When I see logical, fact-filled arguments lose to nutty discussions by the people who do not believe in global warming or evolution, I am speechless. I cannot understand how this can be. In this book, Olson explains what we as scientists (and science-oriented laypersons) are doing wrong when communicating with the general public. Anyone who has ever tried and failed to convince someone that global warming is happening, or that lead shot is killing eagles, should read this book.

The author's background is rather unique; after working as a marine biologist, he ended up working in Hollywood. And there is a certain amount of exaggeration and full-blown hyperbole and repetition throughout this book. Olson does point out that there are some scientists who are very good communicators, Stephen Jay Gould and Carl Sagan being the most well-known, but I personally have known many others. (For all the wonderful things Carl Sagan did by way of publicizing science, and despite the fact that he was a fine scientist in his own right, when he was nominated for election to the National Academy of Science he was voted down.)

Part of the problem is the way scientists think. This is how most scientists view arguments: all one has to do is to say the message and the audience will get it; the facts speak for themselves and an instant victory is the outcome. In reality arguments, except with other scientists, do not work this way. Olson

says we should arouse and fulfill others – get them interested, then educate them to the truth.

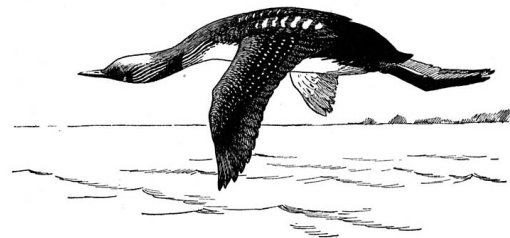
He talks about the four organs of communication: the brain, the heart, the gut, and the lower organs (sex). People who rely on only the brain come off as cold, while people who employ the latter three come across as warm and friendly, and win arguments even if their logic is wrong and their facts are lies.

He points out that we (scientists) have a tendency to come across as condescending, arrogant, and irritating (“You probably don't understand this, but I'm going to tell you anyway.”) Scientists are trained to pay attention to the substance. The general public is not used to this way of thinking and will pay much more attention to style.

In a table near the end of this short book, Olson summarizes his main ways of communicating with the public. Audio, visuals, and stories really help the public understand science. The public's mode of response is visceral, whereas the scientist's mode of response is cerebral. Sincerity, humor and sex appeal help in the public eye, while the scientist tends to be suspicious and fearful of the use of these tools, and believes information alone is sufficient. The organs the public responds to and with are the heart, gut and gonads. The scientist responds with his head.

This book should help anyone who speaks or is interviewed in the public eye.

This book and one of Olson's movies, *A Flock of Dodos: the Evolution and Intelligent Design Circus*, are available at the Iowa City Public Library.





Crow Brains

Birders and ornithologists have long known about the intelligence of crows. Recent studies of the crow brain shed light on how the birds accomplish this with a different brain structure than intelligent mammals. A group of crows was trained to perform a variety of tasks, requiring high levels of concentration and mental flexibility. In mammals this occurs primarily in the layered neocortex. The researchers observed activity in single neuronal units, in the nidopallium caudolaterale. Intelligence in birds is realized in endbrain circuitries that developed independently via convergent evolution with mammalian brains. Birds and mammals are long separated in evolutionary history. Although the brains are different, the cells regulating decision-making are very similar.

Owl Wings

Bird wings are rather noisy. Back when we had more bobwhites and pheasants, having a covey burst into flight near your feet was enough to stop your heart. One structural feature that produces wing noise is a stiff trailing edge. Owls are remarkably quiet flyers. I once had the privilege of helping to rehab a screech-owl, and we flew it up and down the long halls in our biology building. If you were walking away and someone flew the owl towards you, you wouldn't know it until the owl landed on your shoulder. Owls possess a soft flexible fringe on the trailing edge of the flight feathers, and that is a factor in their silent flight. Recently scientists found two other factors that contribute to owls' silent flight. The top surface of owl wings are covered by a velvety down. Owls also have a stiff leading edge on their wings. The authors believe that all three of these features are 'tuned' together to mute the sound of wings.

Tit Personalities

Great Tits are very well studied, especially in the breeding season. Researchers are now studying their winter behavior. Birds were tracked using PIT tags carried in bands, which allowed researchers to track individual birds every time they landed on special perches at 65 feeder stations. Birds were first assigned personality types in indoor experiments. Researchers rated the birds as shy or bold depending on how quickly they explored novel environments in their indoor surroundings. The real experiment then came when the birds were released back into the wild. Shy birds were more likely to stay in the same flock over the winter, while bold birds opted for quantity rather than quality by foraging with several different groups and having more short-term associations with a greater number of birds. In other words, shyer birds tended to have much more stable associations that were stronger and persisted over a long period of time, but associated with fewer groups.

Female Plumage

The ventral plumage in Barn Swallows develops on the wintering grounds. It is known that reproductive status varies with ventral plumage color. Natural darker females are thought to have lower natural resistance to oxidative stress through several mechanisms, including the direct suppression of melanization by oxidative stress. The fascinating thing is that females that were artificially colored to have darker ventral plumage also had decreased oxidative stress, adopting the physiological state of naturally darkened birds. There are many studies in which birds that have been artificially colored were thought to change the responses of other birds to these signals. This study, along with one in Harris's Sparrows in which darkened birds exhibited behaviors associated with social dominance, is a case where the plumage effects physiology.

Field Trip and Meeting Reports

July 20, Iowa City Butterfly Count. Our fifteenth annual count, conducted as part of the North American Butterfly Association's Fourth of July Butterfly Count program, was held on Saturday, July 20, with five participants. Areas visited included Kent Park, Hawkeye Wildlife Area, Macbride Nature-Recreation Area, and Lake Macbride State Park. The weather was sunny with temperatures ranging from 78-88F and variable light winds.

Butterfly populations in Eastern Iowa in spring and early summer 2013 were the worst that I've experienced in 15 years of record-keeping. I strongly suspect this was due to the severe drought in 2012 followed by a wet, cool spring in 2013. By mid-summer things started to rebound a bit, and the results of this count, while still below average, exceeded my expectations. In 10.0 hours of effort we found 33 species and 726 individuals. In comparison, the count's 15-year average is 34 species and 994 individuals.

About one-third of the total butterflies were from one alfalfa field where sulphurs were plentiful. The big surprise of the day was seven fairly fresh Southern Dogfaces, all flying at a recent prairie restoration at Lake Macbride State Park. Southern Dogface is a rare immigrant to Iowa from the southern states. We saw Dion Skipper, a new species for the count, and Black Dash at wetlands at both Kent Park and at Lake Macbride State Park.

A few species were seen in above-average numbers: Black Swallowtail (record high count), Southern Dogface (record high count), Cloudless Sulphur, Eastern Tailed-Blue, Great Spangled Fritillary, Pearl Crescent, and Least Skipper. Some species were seen in significantly below average numbers: Summer Azure, Red Admiral, Common Wood-Nymph,

Monarch, and Silver-spotted Skipper. Prominent misses included Giant Swallowtail, Bronze Copper, Question Mark, Eastern Comma, and Dun Skipper.

Sadly we did not find any Byssus Skippers at Macbride Nature-Recreation Area, and I believe they are no longer present there. This state-threatened species was found annually on the count from 2001 to 2009, with high counts of 32 in 2003 and 19 in 2009.

For more information about the NABA butterfly count program, visit www.naba.org.

Participants: Mark Brown, Chris Edwards (leader), Tom Jantscher, Mark Madsen, Marcia Shaffer.

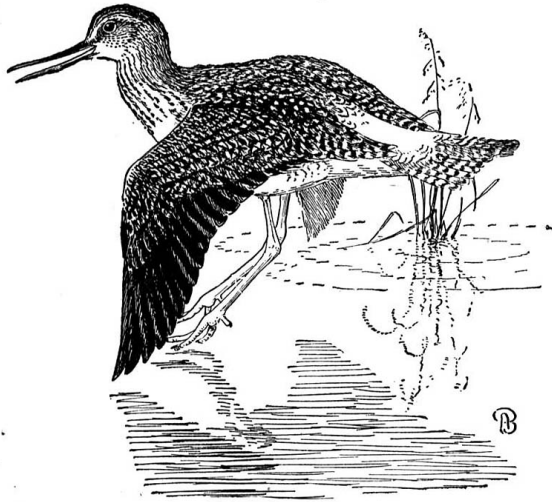
Butterflies (33 species, 726 individuals): Black Swallowtail 47 (record high count), Eastern Tiger Swallowtail 5, Cabbage White 75, Clouded Sulphur 234, Orange Sulphur 72, Southern Dogface 7 (record high count), Cloudless Sulphur 7, Little Yellow 17, Dainty Sulphur 3, Gray Copper 2, Coral Hairstreak 1, Eastern Tailed-Blue 66, Summer Azure 11, Variegated Fritillary 5, Great Spangled Fritillary 30, Meadow Fritillary 1, Pearl Crescent 29, Mourning Cloak 1, American Lady 1, Painted Lady 1, Red Admiral 5, Common Buckeye 17, Red-spotted Purple 2, Viceroy 12, Common Wood-Nymph 8, Monarch 16, Silver-spotted Skipper 3, Common Sootywing 2, Least Skipper 36, Peck's Skipper 3, Sachem 2, Dion Skipper 3 (new count species), Black Dash 2.

– Chris Edwards

July 27, Moth Week Event. I gave a Saturday evening program at Sugar Bottom Campground for National Moth Week. More than forty people showed up for the talk. I started the program around 8:15 p.m. and discussed moths in Iowa. I commented on the fact that we have documented 57 of the 75 moth families known in the U.S. in Iowa. We have found over 1,850 species for the state. With some displays, I showed people various moths that could be

seen. We turned the lights on around 9 p.m. and had a few moths come to the sheet. The temperature was in the low 60s and not very conducive to moth collecting. Most of the people left by 9:30 p.m. and went back to their campers to enjoy their fires and s'mores.

– *Jim Durbin*



August 25, Hawkeye Wildlife Management Area. It was a hot one. Hot enough to stifle the fall migration for our outing. Our first stop at Swan Lake was quiet. A lone Pied-billed Grebe, a few Wood Ducks and some cormorants were all to see. The Swan Lake Woods were just as quiet. Only some of the common local breeders like robin, catbird, and bluebird were found. The Mourning Doves were flocking up in pretty good numbers though in the weedy field nearby—probably for protection.

We did not walk out to Sand Point despite recent listserv posts. James had walked out the previous night and hadn't found the shorebird habitat to be very good. So we caravanned over to Greencastle Ave. The water at Half Moon Lake was extremely low and sizeable mudflats were exposed. Fortunately there were some shorebirds to be found. Killdeer, Pectoral and Least Sandpipers dominated, but there were a number of Baird's to be seen as well. Also small numbers of Semipalmated Sandpipers and Semipalmated Plovers were present. A Spotted Sandpiper and Short-billed Dowitcher rounded

out the list. An immature Peregrine Falcon eventually came along to scare off all the shorebirds, but it made up for it by perching for lengthy looks. Later it stooped upon the yellowlegs at the Gun Club Ponds only yards from where the group was standing. A Solitary Sandpiper was also a new bird at the Gun Club Ponds.

We headed to Round Pond, but found it completely choked with vegetation. A stop at Madsen Pond at the west end of the HWA was also non-productive as the vegetation was almost to the water's edge. So, the next stop was back to Caseys for some cold drinks.

Thanks for the tremendous turnout. Sorry there weren't more birds.

Special thanks to Karen for riding with Jerry so he wouldn't miss the North Liberty exit this year. I don't know if you remember, but last year Jerry completely spaced off the exit and the group had to wait at the Caseys for him to drive all the way to Swisher and back so he could turn around. Boy was that ever embarrassing.

Participants: Chris Caster (leader), Cathy Cole, Jerry Denning, Karen Disbrow, Chris Edwards, Mike Feiss, Jim Forde, Peter Hansen, James Huntington, Karl Kahler, Andy and Katie Long, Jason McCurdy, Ramona McGurk, Gerry Peterson, Linda Quinn, Carol and Tom Rosenberger, Brenda Sens, David and Patrick Weiss.

Birds (46 species): Wood Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Green Heron, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Peregrine Falcon, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Greater Yellowlegs, Baird's Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Mourning Dove, Rock Pigeon, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher,

Eastern Kingbird, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, House Wren, Gray Catbird, American Robin, Eastern Bluebird, Cedar Waxwing, European Starling, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Dickcissel, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– *Chris Caster*

September 8, Pelican Festival at Hawkeye Wildlife Area. This is an annual Iowa Audubon event co-hosted by the Iowa City Bird Club, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the Iowa DNR. Over 300 people attended this year's event. The exhibitors were set up at the bottom of the hill, which allowed people to visit the booths without walking uphill. Many groups participated and we hope to add more next year. New groups this year included the Eastern Iowa Hunting Retriever Association and the West High Trap Shoot Club, which served sandwiches and drinks for a fundraiser. We had the best viewing of American White Pelicans that we have ever had at this event, and twice during the day a group of about 250 pelicans came in close to the shoreline to feed. Save the date of Sunday, September 7, 2014 for next year's Pelican Festival.

– *Karen Disbrow*

September 19, Meeting. Merle Ihne and Lois Hughes presented "Birds of the Southern Rio Grande Valley". Lois and Merle leave in October each year to live in Salineño, Texas and volunteer at Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge. They set out lawn chairs for visiting birders and photographers to observe the birds that Lois attracts using a mixture of lard, cornmeal and peanut butter. Merle showed pictures of some of the birds that have visited the site. In April they go to Corpus Christi to help with the roundup of sea turtle eggs, and then the release of the young turtles that head back to the ocean. Merle showed fantastic pictures of exhausted warblers and other birds on the shore, and Painted and Indigo Buntings bathing in a stream. This is a place that is

definitely on my bucket list to visit during the winter season sometime soon.

In club news, Rick Hollis spent \$476.23 for picture frames, hand-made from walnut harvested in Kent Park, for three photographs of Fred Kent to be placed in the Kent Park Conservation Education Center. This was an Iowa City Bird Club project that we wanted to complete before the June retirement of Johnson County Conservation Director Harry Graves. Please send any donations to help fund this project to Treasurer Bruce Gardner, marked "Kent Pictures". The bird club has worked on many projects with Harry over the last twelve years and he has always been a delight to work with.

Construction of the new bird blind near the Kent Park Conservation Education Center has started. Land has been cleared near the NW corner of the parking area and it is hoped that the concrete foundation can be poured before cold weather sets in. The blind will be built in sections over the winter by JCCB staff and will be put together next year. The blind is being built with donations from several members as a memorial for living and departed members of the Iowa City Bird Club.

A motion was approved to spend \$50 towards the face painting children's activity at the 2013 Pelican Festival.

Attendees: Dean Abel, Gerald Denning, Karen Disbrow, Vic and Nola Edwards, Linda Fisher, Jim and Karole Fuller, Bruce Gardner, Lois Hughes, Merle Ihne, Kristen Lawton, Mark Oxley, Damian Pieper, Tom and Carol Rosenberger, Richard Tetrault.

– *Karen Disbrow*

September 22, Hickory Hill Park and Johnson County Heritage Trust Properties. The group met at 8 a.m. at the North Dodge Hy-Vee on a gorgeous Sunday morning. We went to Hickory Hill Park first, where we saw about ten Broad-winged Hawks perched in the large

trees around the park. These individuals along with many others began organizing themselves into a kettle right in front of us. Soon there were more than 50 Broad-winged Hawks spiraling upward into a near perfect blue sky.

We moved from Hickory Hill Park to the adjacent Pappy Dickens Preserve which was purchased by the Friends of Hickory Hill Park and donated to the JCHT to create a 16-acre buffer woodland. We didn't spend much time there, but did find a walking stick insect just before we left.

The next stop was the JCHT's Turkey Creek property where we were greeted by two Pileated Woodpeckers and joined by Robert and Connie Mutel. Connie informed the group about several of the characteristic woodland plants that are found at the Turkey Creek property and the importance of protecting such areas.

From Turkey Creek, we traveled down the road several miles to the final stop of the day, Big Grove, another JCHT property. Because it was getting close to noon, we didn't have much time to explore the newly marked trails, but near the parking lot James found a nice flock of warblers that added to our list.

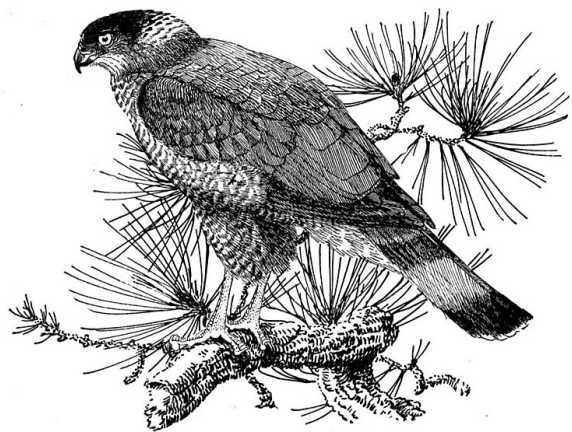
Altogether we saw 42 species including all seven woodpecker species, three vireo species, and five warbler species.

Participants: Isabelle Bach, Peg Bousha, Chad, Colleen and Sophia Davis, Jerry Denning, Bruce Gardner, Peter Hansen, James Huntington, Lauren and Doina Johnson, Lucy Luxenburg, Mark Madsen (leader), Ramona McGurk, Robert and Connie Mutel, Linda Quinn.

Birds (42 species): Wild Turkey, American White Pelican, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Cooper's Hawk, Broad Winged Hawk, Mourning Dove, Common Nighthawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy

Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, *empidonax* sp., Yellow-throated Vireo, Philadelphia Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Carolina Wren, House Wren, American Robin, Gray Catbird, European Starling, Nashville Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, American Redstart, Chipping Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Common Grackle, House Finch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– Mark Madsen



September 28, Hawk Watch at Stainbrook Preserve. The morning started mostly clear and cool, but an approaching front soon brought a heavy blanket of clouds. These conditions stifled any kind of hawk migration, and the few raptors we did see were probably local breeders. Our final raptor tally was 20 individuals and four species. Late in the morning a passerine flock moving through the area provided some momentary interest. At 12:15 a light rain started, and we called it a day. Although the birding was slow, the conversation among participants made it an enjoyable morning.

Participants: Elizabeth Aubrey, Adam Ciha, Chad, Colleen, and Sophia Davis, Karen Disbrow, Chris Edwards, Joe Gaglioti, Therese Guedon, Lois Hughes, Merle Ihne, Gerry Peterson, Linda Quinn, David and Patrick Weiss, and several others.

Raptors (4 species, 20 individuals): Turkey Vulture 14, Osprey 1, Bald Eagle 3 (1 adult, 2 immature), Red-tailed Hawk 2.

Other birds (22 species): Canada Goose, Mallard, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Egret, Ring-billed Gull, Mourning Dove, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Thrasher, Nashville Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Northern Cardinal, American Goldfinch.

Postscript: the next morning was sunny and clear and looked more favorable for migration, so I headed back to Stainbrook. In three and a half hours I saw 72 raptors of eight species, plus 350 Blue Jays, 240 American White Pelicans, and 150 Franklin's Gulls on the move. In hawk watching, as in many other pursuits, timing is everything.

– *Chris Edwards*

October 17, Meeting. Judy Felder of The Songbird Project presented a program on the Althea Sherman Chimney Swift Tower. This historic tower was repaired and erected at the Bickett-Rate Preserve owned by the Cedar County Historical Society near Buchanan. Photographs documenting the initial finding of the tower, its history, and the work of repairing and erecting it at Bickett-Rate were particularly interesting. Edgewood Hall, a large home built in 1848, is being renovated and will provide living space for an on-site manager and space for the Chimney Swift Tower library and research area. The site is not yet open to the public except for special events. The Raptor Resource Project (of Decorah eagle-cam fame) has set up a camera to go live whenever Chimney Swifts return to the tower.

Forever Green Garden Center at 125 Forevergreen Road in Coralville has offered

10% off regularly-priced seed and suet to bird club members. We now have two stores that carry a good selection of the Des Moines Feed Company's excellent, fresh bird seed and suet, and both stores carry a nice selection of bird feeders as well. Forever Green also offers programs during the growing season and is looking to add more bird related workshops/programs. In the past they have had a butterfly specialist speak, and they sponsored a butterfly house at the Johnson County Fair.

Attendees: David and Cindy Brown, Karen Disbrow, Jim and Karole Fuller, Peter Hansen, Rick Hollis, Lois Hughes, Merle Ihne, Jane Knoedel, Lucy Luxenburg, Nancy Lynch, Ramona McGurk, Mary Noble, Gerald Petersen, Linda and Robert Scarth, Marcia Shaffer, Blossom Perkins Shaw, Donna Warner.

– *Karen Disbrow*

October 20, Cedar County. Eight of us, including one young birder, ventured out to the River Valley Wetland area in Cedar County on a chilly morning hoping for sparrows and late migrants. Some of the expected sparrow species were surprisingly hard to find. Many played hide and seek in the small prairie patch but we did see Song Sparrow and White-throated Sparrows and heard a Swamp Sparrow chip before it zipped away. A few of us saw skulking Fox Sparrows but most were forced to listen to their distinctive smacking chip calls in vain. If the bird blind feeders had been stocked we'd have probably had a better shot at seeing these. Early on we heard a Northern Flicker which got us talking about the differences in the calls of Pileateds and Flickers (and how I often confuse them), and of course that meant we'd shortly see a Pileated Woodpecker! This one was curiously chasing a blackbird flock.

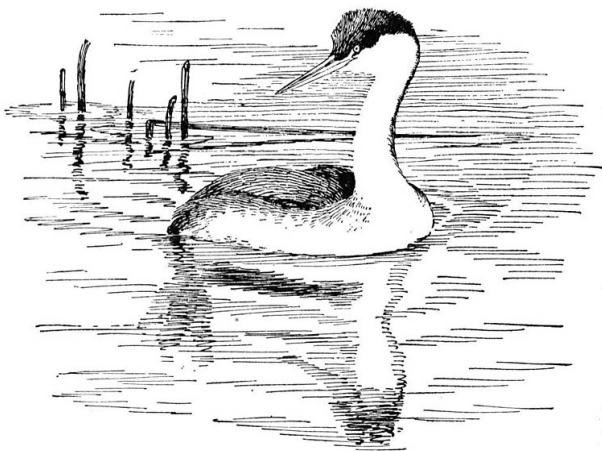
Eastern Bluebirds and Yellow-rumped Warblers were easy to pick out along the trail walk. The "best" bird was found by our young birder and her father who spotted a sandpiper on the edge of the wetland pond. After fiddling with the scope we were able to identify a very late

Solitary Sandpiper. All participants got great looks in the scope and we followed it up with some perched Rusty Blackbirds in the trees above. I believe it was our young birder who also spotted the flyby Northern Harrier at this stop! We had good looks at Hermit Thrushes and Purple Finches eating some late fruit near the bird blinds. We ended the trip with glimpses of both kinglet species and an Orange-crowned Warbler in the forest understory along the path.

Participants: Chad, Colleen, and Sophia Davis, Jamie McCoy, Jason Paulios (leader), Gerry Peterson, Linda Quinn, Ben [?].

Birds (35 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Northern Harrier, *accipiter* sp., Bald Eagle, Killdeer (heard), Solitary Sandpiper, Mourning Dove, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Rusty Blackbird, Common Grackle, Purple Finch, American Goldfinch.

– Jason Paulios



November 17, Pleasant Creek State Recreation Area. Due to rain and storms to the north, we decided to forego the trip to Pleasant Creek and bird locally. The temperature was close to 60° when we started, but a cold front passed through and by noon the wind chill was closer to 40°. We also endured a very brief rain shower, but all things considered it was a pleasant morning for mid-November.

Our first stop was Terry Trueblood Recreation Area (formerly Sand Lake) at the south edge of Iowa City. From the northeast corner we had nice looks at two winter-plumaged Horned Grebes, and saw a small flock of Eurasian Tree Sparrows which have become reliable there. We moved to the southeast corner to have better lighting, and enjoyed scoping through a flock of about 200 waterfowl. These were mostly diving ducks including Redhead, Canvasback, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and others. We also spotted a Common Loon there.

We made a brief stop at the Colonial Lanes pond, and then headed up to Goose Lake in North Liberty, where a Long-tailed Duck had been reported the day before. We weren't able to find that bird, but we did find a number of interesting waterfowl to add to our day list, including Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, and Gadwall.

Next we headed to Swan Lake, where there were very few birds aside from a lingering American White Pelican. A walk around Swan Lake Woods produced a few passerines including White-throated Sparrow, and we spent several minutes watching a perched Sharp-shinned Hawk. Our last stop was Greencastle Avenue. Again there were very few birds on the water, but a close male Green-winged Teal was nice.

Participants: Chris Edwards (leader), Jamie McCoy, Gerry Peterson, Linda Quinn.

Birds (38 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck (heard), Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Green-

winged Teal, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Ruddy Duck, Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, American White Pelican, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Coot, Ring-billed Gull, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, American Crow, American Robin, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, American Tree Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Eurasian Tree Sparrow.

– *Chris Edwards*

November 20, Meeting. Jeff Potts, Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist for Linn, Jones, and Johnson counties, talked about the programs of Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever. Pheasants Forever is a non-profit organization established in 1985, with more than 700 chapters and 130,000 members nationally. Iowa has 104 chapters. Its sister organization Quail Forever is centered in southern states, and Iowa has three chapters. Pheasants Forever operates on a grassroots model where 100% of the money stays in local control. More than 1 million acres have been

set aside, and of that total 80,000 acres have been in public land acquisition, and 500,000 acres of prairie planted. Across the country, projects have helped preserve and improve habitat for the Greater Sage-Grouse and the Greater Prairie-Chicken, both species that are in trouble. Jeff showed photographs of several sites that PF biologists have worked on in Iowa. Jeff is one of nine Farm Bill Wildlife Biologists in Iowa, but he is moving to Minnesota, and whether his position is filled will depend on funding.

Karen asked for a motion, which was passed, to use \$100 towards speakers at the upcoming Bald Eagle Watch and Expo. The club needs volunteers for our booth at this year’s Coralville WinterFest; let Karen know if you are available.

Attendees: Barry Buschelman, Karen Disbrow, Linda Fisher, Bruce Gardner, Therese Guedon, Rick Hollis, Pat Kieffer, Jane Knoedel, Dave Kyllingstad, Khristen Lawton, Nancy Lynch, Mark Oxley, Gerald Peterson, Susan Puhl, Marcia Shaffer, Donna Warner.

– *Karen Disbrow*

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For general bird club information, or to lead or suggest a field trip, contact our president and field trip coordinator Karen Disbrow at (319) 430-0315 or k_disbrow@yahoo.com.

Our club web site is located at www.icbirds.org. You may contact webmaster Jim Scheib at (319) 337-5206 or jim@tenlongview.net. Also visit us on Facebook.

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