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# Eastern Iowa Birdwatch



The Iowa City Bird Club Newsletter

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Volume 33 Number 2

September 2013

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## 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.

**September 18, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk.** Meet at the Conservation Education Center.

**September 19, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting.** “Birds of the Southern Rio Grande Valley” by Merle Inhe and Lois Hughes.

**September 22, Sunday, 8 a.m. Johnson County Heritage Trust Properties,** including Turkey Creek, Big Grove, and Pappy Dickens Preserves, for warblers and other fall migrants. Mark Madsen, 356-3373.

**September 28, Saturday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Hawk Watch at Stainbrook Preserve.** Located three miles north of North Liberty along Mehaffey Bridge Road, just north of Sugar Bottom Recreation Area. Bring a lawn chair and join us on the hill to watch for migrating raptors. Hourly programs will be held at nearby Macbride Raptor Center from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Chris Edwards, 430-4732.

**October 2, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk.** Meet at the Conservation Education Center.

**October 16, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk.** Meet at the Conservation Education Center.

**October 17, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting.** Members of the Songbird Project will present on the Althea Sherman Chimney Swift Tower, which was recently renovated at Bickett-Rate Preserve in Cedar County.

**October 20, Sunday, 7:30 a.m. Cedar County** for sparrows and other fall migrants. Jason Paulios, 331-6115.

**November 6, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk.** Meet at the Conservation Education Center.

**November 17, Sunday, 7:30 a.m. Pleasant Creek State Recreation Area** in Linn County for loons, grebes, waterfowl, and gulls. Bring a spotting scope if you have one. Chris Edwards, 430-4732.

**November 20, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk.** Meet at the Conservation Education Center.

**November 20, Wednesday, 7 p.m. Meeting.** *Note different meeting day.* Jeff Potts, Wildlife Biologist for Pheasants Forever, will discuss developing habitat for upland birds including pheasant and quail.

**December 15, Sunday. Iowa City Christmas Bird Count.** Watch for details in the December newsletter.

## Other Dates of Note

**October 3, Thursday, 6 p.m. Regional REAP Assembly** at North Ridge Pavilion in Coralville, offering the opportunity for public comment and participation in Iowa's Resource Enhancement and Protection program.

**October 11-13, Friday-Sunday. Iowa Ornithologists' Union Fall Meeting at Clinton.** For more information visit [www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org) or call Karen Disbrow at 430-0315.

**October 12, Saturday. Iowa Young Birders Field Trip at Clinton,** for birders ages 8-18 and their parents. For more information and to register, visit <http://www.iowayoungbirders.org/>.

**October 26, Saturday, Noon – 4 p.m. "Fall Into Birds" Family Birding Event** near Des Moines, at Crown Point Community Center, 6300 Pioneer Parkway, Johnston. Speakers, exhibits, refreshments, silent auction, and raffle. This free event will benefit Iowa Audubon. Carpool from N. Dodge St. Hy-Vee in Iowa City. For more information contact Karen Disbrow at 430-0315.

### From the President's Desk Karen Disbrow

Another hot, dry fall is upon us. As always, I have tried to set up trips to take advantage of the seasons. We have an abundance of birding talent in the club, so for the novice to the more experienced birder there should be something for everyone. Our fall field trip schedule starts September 22 with a trip to several local preserves which should be good for warblers and other migrating songbirds. Our annual hawk watch the following weekend should be a good time to watch vultures, hawks, ospreys, and other raptors head southward. Related programs will be held 9-1 that day at the nearby Macbride Raptor Center.

The fall IOU Meeting in Clinton should be very interesting. It is an area that we do not bird often, and this is the first IOU meeting that I can recall in that part of the state. I encourage all of you to check out the events planned for Oct. 11-13 at [www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org). Some people think "sparrows" when fall migration is happening. Sparrows can be a challenge to identify, so the October 20 field trip should be a great time to learn about this group of birds.

We are continuing our Wednesday bird walks at Kent Park on the first and third Wednesday of

each month through November. Nancy Lynch, Marcia Shaffer, and Jim Fuller are taking turns leading these trips.

We have had many positive results from our Facebook page started by Rick Hollis. People are posting pictures and asking questions which Rick is answering. We are reaching a new audience and picking up new members as they find out what an awesome group we are. Thanks, Rick.

Last spring four club members, Jim Scheib, Jim Fuller, Ken Lowder and Rick Hollis, assisted with the senior UI program this past spring and gave their honorarium to the ICBC – thanks, guys! Thanks also to Bruce Gardner for staffing our booth at the Kirkwood Environmental Fair on Earth Day in April, and to Ramona McGurk for helping me with the Johnson County Historical Society's Nature Week program for kids in July. A big "thank you" as well to the Grant Wood AEA for the use of their facilities for our meetings, to Johnson County Conservation for the use of the CEC for our Wednesday Walks, and to Leno & Cilek North Dodge St. Ace Hardware for the 10% seed and suet discount for members.

Good Birding,  
Karen

## 2013 Johnson County Spring Count

### Chris Caster

The annual Johnson County Spring Count was held on May 11, 2013. The early morning temperature was 37 and the afternoon high was 57. A brief rain fell near sun-up, but things were dry thereafter. Cold northwesterly winds around 20 mph were pretty constant throughout the day, with gusts reaching 40 mph. Thanks to recent rains there was water in the fields and the ponds were full, but flooding across Swan Lake Road made Round Pond and areas to the west in the Hawkeye Wildlife Area inaccessible.

We had a pretty good crew in the morning and a few stalwarts battled the winds in the afternoon to add a few species, but the birds weren't always there. We managed 144 species, which was somewhat below what we usually do, but maybe pretty good given the windy conditions. Eleven species of waterfowl wasn't bad, but only eight shorebirds was pathetic. Twenty-three warbler species was good though

The most interesting bird goes to the Cinnamon x Blue-winged Teal hybrid found by Ken and Bill. It had the head of a Cinnamon with the white hind end of a Blue-wing. Other interesting birds were two Horned Grebes in breeding plumage on Swan Lake and a Common Loon at Sand Lake. A Peregrine Falcon was a fly-over at the Swan Lake Woods. An American Bittern was at Sycamore Bottoms. A Bell's Vireo was also at the Swan Lake Woods. A Northern Mockingbird was along the Iowa County line west of Swisher. Cape May Warblers were in five locations. A Prothonotary Warbler was found in the west of HWA. A Clay-colored Sparrow was along Amana Road. Getting tougher to find in the spring, Western Meadowlarks were found by our man in Kalona, Daryl Ropp. Daryl also had a Eurasian Collared-Dove and others were found in Solon and Lone Tree.

Unfortunately some very interesting birds that had been recently seen in our area were not found on count day. These included Mute Swan, Glossy and White-faced Ibis, Western Grebe, Common Tern, and Prairie Warbler. Tough misses included Upland Sandpiper, American Woodcock, Eastern Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, Whip-poor-will, Pileated Woodpecker, Loggerhead Shrike, Marsh and Sedge Wrens, Cedar Waxwing, and Savannah and Lincoln's Sparrows.

Participants were Kyle and Dena Belcher, Carl Bendorf, Mark Brown, Chris Caster, Brandon Caswell, Jerry Denning, Chris Edwards, Linda Fisher, Ken Lowder, Mark Madsen, Shannon and Susan McKernan, Jason Paulios, Diana Pesek, Daryl Ropp, Jim and Sharon Scheib, and Bill Scheible.

#### SPECIES LIST

Canada Goose	92	American White Pelican	138	American Coot	426
Wood Duck	19	Double-crested Cormorant	141	Killdeer	36
Mallard	32	American Bittern	1	Lesser Yellowlegs	39
Blue-winged Teal	35	Great Blue Heron	4	Solitary Sandpiper	7
Northern Shoveler	25	Great Egret	3	Spotted Sandpiper	9
Redhead	8	Green Heron	1	Semipalmated Sandpiper	8
Ring-necked Duck	2	Turkey Vulture	83	Pectoral Sandpiper	4
Lesser Scaup	11	Osprey	3	Dunlin	1
Hooded Merganser	1	Bald Eagle	3	Wilson's Phalarope	5
Ruddy Duck	11	Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	Ring-billed Gull	61
Ring-necked Pheasant	6	Cooper's Hawk	4	Caspian Tern	3
Wild Turkey	8	Red-tailed Hawk	11	Forster's Tern	5
Common Loon	1	American Kestrel	3	Black Tern	8
Pied-billed Grebe	4	Peregrine Falcon	1	Rock Pigeon	37
Horned Grebe	2	Sora	1	Eurasian Collared-Dove	4

Mourning Dove	55	White-breasted Nuthatch	26	Northern Waterthrush	7
Great Horned Owl	1	Carolina Wren	3	Common Yellowthroat	22
Common Nighthawk	1	House Wren	105	Wilson's Warbler	1
Chimney Swift	27	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	Scarlet Tanager	8
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	60	Eastern Towhee	8
Belted Kingfisher	4	Eastern Bluebird	6	Chipping Sparrow	66
Red-headed Woodpecker	9	Swainson's Thrush	4	Clay-colored Sparrow	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	28	Wood Thrush	6	Field Sparrow	5
Downy Woodpecker	29	American Robin	168	Vesper Sparrow	2
Hairy Woodpecker	7	Gray Catbird	68	Lark Sparrow	5
Northern Flicker	7	Northern Mockingbird	1	Grasshopper Sparrow	1
Eastern Wood Pewee	3	Brown Thrasher	12	Song Sparrow	35
Least Flycatcher	4	European Starling	68	Swamp Sparrow	2
Eastern Phoebe	5	Blue-winged Warbler	2	White-throated Sparrow	112
Great Crested Flycatcher	14	Golden-winged Warbler	9	White-crowned Sparrow	9
Eastern Kingbird	15	Tennessee Warbler	19	Northern Cardinal	127
Bell's Vireo	1	Orange-crowned Warbler	6	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	37
Yellow-throated Vireo	17	Nashville Warbler	32	Indigo Bunting	25
Blue-headed Vireo	10	Northern Parula	6	Dickcissel	3
Warbling Vireo	11	Yellow Warbler	14	Bobolink	1
Red-eyed Vireo	19	Chestnut-sided Warbler	3	Red-winged Blackbird	277
Blue Jay	68	Magnolia Warbler	10	Eastern Meadowlark	25
American Crow	61	Cape May Warbler	6	Western Meadowlark	4
Horned Lark	4	Yellow-rumped Warbler	176	Common Grackle	25
Purple Martin	32	Black-throated Green Warbler	8	Brown-headed Cowbird	82
Tree Swallow	131	Blackburnian Warbler	5	Orchard Oriole	1
N. Rough-winged Swallow	39	Yellow-throated Warbler	1	Baltimore Oriole	43
Bank Swallow	70	Palm Warbler	14	House Finch	6
Cliff Swallow	56	Blackpoll Warbler	3	Pine Siskin	3
Barn Swallow	101	Black-and-white Warbler	16	American Goldfinch	127
Black-capped Chickadee	58	American Redstart	76	House Sparrow	71
Tufted Titmouse	34	Prothonotary Warbler	1	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	16
Red-breasted Nuthatch	4	Ovenbird	12		

## In Memoriam: Roger Fisher & Dick Shaffer

Roger Fisher died August 26, 2012. Roger attended many club meetings and field trips with his wife Linda, who is the more serious birder. Many times Roger would be standing a few feet from the group searching for an elusive bird when he would indicate a bird behind us. He was a delight to be with and I continue to miss him. I neglected to write this for last fall and wanted to acknowledge his passing and contributions.

Richard "Dick" Shaffer passed away May 10, 2013 from cancer. Dick was an avid birder and attended many club meetings and outings. As a man who loved the outdoors, he became an avid bird watcher in his later years, traveling with his wife Marcia to Costa Rica, Ecuador, and many birding spots in the United States. He had a gift for photography and recorded their adventures on film. He introduced me to iBird for smart phones. Dick was great at sharing innovative new products and, of course, birds.

– Karen Disbrow

## **Bickett-Rate Preserve Breeding Bird Survey**

### **Chris Edwards**

This year the Iowa City Bird Club was invited to conduct a breeding bird survey at Bickett-Rate Preserve. This property near the town of Buchanan in Cedar County is owned and managed by the Cedar County Historical Society. It borders the Cedar River and includes approximately 340 acres of woodlands, 180 acres of row crops, and 40 acres of pasture and grassland. Also located on the property are Edgewood Hall, a home built in 1848 that is currently undergoing renovation, and several outbuildings including a barn. This is also the new location for Althea Sherman's original chimney swift tower, which has recently been erected and renovated at the site by the Songbird Project.

To survey the property's breeding birds, I made five morning visits between June 2 and July 27, 2013, putting in 22.0 hours of effort on foot and visiting all areas of the property at least once. I recorded all birds seen or heard, and looked for evidence of breeding utilizing the same protocols that were used in the recent Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas II. Four levels of breeding status – Observed, Possible, Probable, and Confirmed – were assigned depending on the level of breeding evidence found.

Other than a gravel lane to the farmstead, and two farm lanes through the pasture and woods, there are currently no maintained trails on the property, which made it necessary to carry an aerial photo/boundary map and a compass with me at all times, both to prevent getting lost as well as to make sure I visited all sections of the property. Flooding on the Cedar River limited my access to the bottomland forest bordering the river early in the season. Insect repellent and a head net were also necessary as gnats and mosquitoes were abundant this year – good for birds, but not so much for birders.

Overall I found 67 bird species, with the following breeding status: 21 confirmed, 30 probable, 13 possible, and 3 observed. Of these, five are considered to be of high conservation priority by Iowa Audubon: Black-billed Cuckoo, Pileated Woodpecker, Veery, Wood Thrush, and Bobolink. Other notable species included Acadian Flycatcher, Carolina Wren, Scarlet Tanager, Lark Sparrow, Orchard Oriole, and Eurasian Tree Sparrow. A male Blue Grosbeak singing on an adjacent property was also noteworthy. In addition to birds, on my walks I observed 14 butterfly species, 5 amphibian species, and 6 mammal species.

One aspect of breeding bird surveys I especially enjoy is that they force me to slow down and spend more time observing birds, rather than quickly moving through an area and checking off everything I see or hear. Some of my most exciting observations during this survey were of active bird nests or recent fledglings. In early June I was standing motionless in bottomland woods for an extended period, with the mosquitoes buzzing all around me, watching a female American Redstart fuss around and eventually approach her nest. Suddenly a female Ruby-throated Hummingbird darted past and settled on a tiny nest not far from where I stood! Other than Barn Swallows and Eastern Phoebes, those were the only two nests I found. Later in the breeding season, I observed many recently fledged young being attended by their parents. These included Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, Red-eyed Vireos, Black-capped Chickadees, House Wrens, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Eastern Bluebirds, Song Sparrows, and Indigo Buntings. It is always interesting to watch these family interactions.

It is likely that additional visits during the breeding season would result in several additional species being added to the list of breeding birds, and many species being upgraded from "possible" and "probable" to "confirmed" status. Significantly, I did not survey nocturnal birds, so owls and nightjars

are absent from the list. It is my hope that the Iowa City Bird Club will be allowed to schedule field trips to the property during future breeding seasons. There are plans to eventually open Bickett-Rate Preserve to the public, and until then, occasional open house events may allow the public to view the Althea Sherman chimney swift tower and other parts of the property. If you have the opportunity, I encourage you to visit this unique and interesting place. You can read more about the property at <http://cedarcounthistoricalociety.webs.com/bickettratefarm.htm>.

### SPECIES LIST

CO=Confirmed Breeding		Acadian Flycatcher	PR	American Redstart	CO
PR=Probable Breeding		Eastern Phoebe	CO	Ovenbird	PR
PO=Possible Breeding		Great Crested Flycatcher	PR	Common Yellowthroat	PR
OB=Observed		Eastern Kingbird	PR	Scarlet Tanager	PR
		Yellow-throated Vireo	PR	Eastern Towhee	CO
Canada Goose	OB	Warbling Vireo	PR	Chipping Sparrow	PR
Wood Duck	PR	Red-eyed Vireo	CO	Field Sparrow	PR
Wild Turkey	PO	Blue Jay	PR	Vesper Sparrow	PR
Great Blue Heron	PO	American Crow	PO	Lark Sparrow	PR
Turkey Vulture	PO	Cliff Swallow	OB	Song Sparrow	CO
Red-tailed Hawk	PR	Barn Swallow	CO	Northern Cardinal	CO
Mourning Dove	PR	Black-capped Chickadee	CO	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	PR
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	PO	Tufted Titmouse	PR	Indigo Bunting	CO
Black-billed Cuckoo	PO	White-breasted Nuthatch	PO	Dickcissel	PR
Chimney Swift	OB	Carolina Wren	PR	Bobolink	PR
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	CO	House Wren	CO	Red-winged Blackbird	CO
Belted Kingfisher	PR	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	CO	Eastern Meadowlark	PR
Red-headed Woodpecker	PO	Eastern Bluebird	CO	Common Grackle	PR
Red-bellied Woodpecker	PR	Veery	PO	Brown-headed Cowbird	PR
Downy Woodpecker	CO	Wood Thrush	PO	Orchard Oriole	PR
Hairy Woodpecker	CO	American Robin	CO	Baltimore Oriole	PR
Northern Flicker	PO	Gray Catbird	CO	American Goldfinch	CO
Pileated Woodpecker	PO	European Starling	CO	House Sparrow	PR
Eastern Wood-Pewee	CO	Cedar Waxwing	PR	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	PO

## Iowa Audubon Corner

### Karen Disbrow

Iowa Audubon will have an informational display, staffed by yours truly, at the Midwest Environmental Education Conference, September 25–27, 2013, at the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in Coralville.

The Effigy Mounds-Yellow River State Forest Important Bird Area has been designated a Globally Important Bird Area. There were be a dedication ceremony October 5 at noon during the annual Effigy Mounds hawk watch.

A new family birding event will be held October 26 near Des Moines. Iowa Audubon

and the Des Moines Audubon Society will jointly host the event, titled “Fall Into Birds”, on Saturday, October 26 from Noon – 4 p.m. at Crown Point Community Center, 6300 Pioneer Parkway, Johnston. The event will focus on the birds of Iowa’s fall and winter seasons, including identification, bird feeding and more. Speakers will present short programs on birds, bird feeding, and other related topics, and exhibitors will have displays focusing on birds and wildlife. Snacks and refreshments will be available for sale. There is no admission fee for this family event, but a silent auction and bird art print raffle will be held, with proceeds to help Iowa Audubon with its bird conservation mission. Please contact me if you would like to purchase raffle tickets, which are \$5.00 each or three for \$10.00.

## Books for Birders

### Jason Paulios

**The Warbler Guide.** Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle, with drawings by Catherine Hamilton. Princeton University Press, 2013. 560 pages. Flexibound, \$29.95.

It's hard to believe that some 70-plus years after the first Peterson *Field Guide to the Birds* publishers are still finding new ways to produce field guides to identifying birds. National Geographic, Sibley, Kaufman, Peterson, Stokes, Audubon, the list goes on and on. Each has a particular style that attempts to convince the birder that "this one will solve the ID conundrum." Most birders are happy to get one or two options, maybe one home reference and one for the field. As the hobby has grown, Order and Family-specific accounts have started to find their way into home reference shelves (though often only pulled out and dusted off during migration season). These guides to shorebirds, sparrows, and warblers are often consulted when your trusty pocket guide fails to convince you of a particular species "tick." *The Warbler Guide* by Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle is, for many Iowa birders, possibly the most useful of these new reference books. If you were to ask the average Iowa birder for a favorite bird species, chances are good that it'd be one of the colorful little sprites found in this advanced guide.

These kinds of species guides can either be packaged as all-in-one reference guides or as in-depth field ID guides. The earlier Peterson *Field Guide to Warblers of North America* (Dunn, Garrett) was more of the former, combining detailed write-ups about distribution, breeding, subspecies, habitat, and conservation with photos and copious illustrations. *The Warbler Guide* chooses to limit the detailed text in favor of a system of symbols and crisp photographs of each warbler species from all angles clearly arranged on large, Sibley-sized glossy pages. They've chosen to arrange species alphabetically which is helpful when you need to quickly look something up; all the changes in taxonomy make traditional organization a nightmare anyway. In each species account the authors very cleverly kept the focus on photos taken from underneath the bird since that is traditionally the only view we get. Did I mention there are a lot of these photos? *Crossley ID Guide* lovers will be right at home. Other useful innovations in each species account include: specimen photos to show variation, a similar species photo section, and "distinctive views" which clearly show helpful field marks.

The most innovative idea to come from this new book is the attention to warbler calls and songs. Warblers are often hidden up high behind leaves or skulking around in dense shrubbery; you will never be able to see all the warblers that pass through the canopy during a spring migration. We've often seen field guides attempt to describe these sounds (tseet, seet, tzee) with no context or comparison. Stephenson and Whittle have created a method for keying out the sounds you hear in the woods and laid them out in a useful comparison table. *The Warbler Guide* has the listener break down a song into elements, phrases, and sections. Then qualities (clear, trills, buzzes, pitch rise/fall) are appended and applied using the song finder charts. I anticipate many purchasers of this guide will overlook this section due to the complexity of the sonograms, but my advice is that warbler watching is much less frustrating after studying the songs.

Overall, this is a thorough and innovative ID guide to the 56 species of New World warblers seen in the U.S.

Additional content is available online, including downloadable Quick Finders in PDF or JPG format (<http://blog.press.princeton.edu/2013/07/25/downloadable-warbler-guide-quick-finders/>); an audio Song and Call Companion (<http://macaulaylibrary.org/guide/the-warbler-guide>); and bonus articles (<http://www.thewarblerguide.com/bonus-content/>).

## Hickory Hill Park Warbler Walks

### April 29-May 24, 2013

Day of week	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F		
Species / Date	29	30	1	2	3	6	7	8	9	10	13	14	15	16	17	20	21	22	23	24	Days	
Blue-winged Warbler			X					A			X										3	
Golden-winged Warbler								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			A			9	
Tennessee Warbler		A				X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	13	
Orange-crowned Warbler		X	X				X														3	
Nashville Warbler		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					14	
Northern Parula	X	A	X	X		A	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				16	
Yellow Warbler			X											X						X	3	
Chestnut-sided Warbler						X	X		X		X	X			X	X				X	X	9
Magnolia Warbler										X	X	X	X							X		5
Cape May Warbler								X	X												2	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X						14	
Black-throated Green Warbler	X			X					X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X	11	
Blackburnian Warbler								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				10	
Yellow-throated Warbler																					0	
Palm Warbler		X					X	X			X										4	
Bay-breasted Warbler			X									X		X	X						4	
Blackpoll Warbler												X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9	
Cerulean Warbler																					0	
Black-and-white Warbler		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						X	12	
American Redstart					X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	14	
Ovenbird			X	X						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				10	
Northern Waterthrush						X		X													2	
Kentucky Warbler																					0	
Connecticut Warbler													X		A				X		3	
Mourning Warbler														X			X	A	X		4	
Common Yellowthroat			X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	16	
Hooded Warbler																					0	
Wilson's Warbler													X	X	X				X	X	6	
Canada Warbler														X					X	X	4	

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

Other highlights: Alder Flycatcher 5/20-5/24; Yellow-bellied Flycatcher 5/24; Philadelphia Vireo 5/14, 5/15, 5/20; Hermit Thrush 5/9; Gray-cheeked Thrush 5/8, 5/14; Summer Tanager 5/14; Orchard Oriole 5/9, 5/17.



## iPhone Camera App Comparison

### Rick Hollis

At various times I have played with a number of iPhone camera apps, and have tried to find the perfect one for my needs. The “perfect” camera app would work for casual bird pictures as well as with a phone-telescope gadget. Wherever possible I went with the free version. One snowy day I put them all on my iPhone and compared them. It should be noted that although the zoom feature is generally pretty worthless – you can do a better job with Photoshop, iPhoto, or whatever other software program you have – it is useful when your phone is behind a scope or binoculars, as it will eliminate vignettes.

**Camera** comes with the iPhone and is pretty basic. The only option is an HDR (High Dynamic Range) mode, which sounds like it takes a single picture and saves it. It does not give you the option of looking at the separate images prior to merging. It will also take movies.

**Camera+** has a number of nice features. Unfortunately when using the stabilizer, timer, or burst features, you must choose one and only one to work with at a time.

**Auto Camera** lets you set a timer for 2 up to 60 seconds and a burst of multiple photos, 1, 2, 5, or 10.

**Timer cam** has a timer but no other features.

**HDR** has a number of settings to take HDR images. It will allow you to take HDR images by pointing and repeatedly shooting. It takes the pictures and merges them. It will allow you to specify where the bright and dark spots are before taking the picture. It has settings to save pictures before merging, but the images are still small (110 KB).

**Fast Camera** is the one I was most curious about for use with phonoscoping. It comes on almost immediately and starts taking pictures. It can be set to a manual mode or a burst mode (which takes pictures as long as you hold the button down). Or it can be set to start taking pictures for as long as you let it, until you push stop. It would take a maximum of 1000 pictures if you did not stop it. It also has a timer. Changing the rear camera image from VGA to MAX gives you decent-sized mages. On Max it does not take pictures as fast as on VGA. Fast Camera has an annoying tendency to go into “never-never land”.

At present my favorite is **Camera+**. It stays on my iPhone, along with **Camera** (which I cannot remove) and **HDR**.

**Chart of Features**

	Image Size	Alternate Size	Zoom	HDR	Stabilizer	Burst	Timer	Movies	GeoTagging
<b>Camera</b>	1.6 MB	HDR 1.9 MB	Y	Y	-	-	-	Y	-
<b>Camera +</b>	1.5 MB		Y	-	Y	Y	Y	-	Y
<b>Auto Camera</b>	1.8 MB		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Timer cam</b>	2 MB		-	-	-	-	Y	-	-
<b>HDR</b>	176 KB		-	Y	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Fast Camera</b>	98 KB VGA	MAX 1.6 MB	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-

## Kent Park Wednesday Walks

### Rick Hollis

Wow! We have been doing these trips for almost a year now. I should start with a great big “thank you” to Nancy Lynch, who covered these trips this summer when my illness interfered with my plans. Any missing information from the trips (including the trips Nancy led) is due to my own poor record keeping.

From December 5, 2012 to August 7, 2013, we were scheduled to hold fourteen trips. Two were canceled (due to weather and illness), and there are two trips for which I cannot find records. We skipped the third Wednesday in December and all of January.

These walks last an hour or two, and if the weather is lousy we will go into the Conservation Education Center and watch the feeders. Attendance on the trips ranged from one to twelve participants. The average trip was probably four or five people. Looking over the names, some people also attend our weekend trips, while others have never attended our weekend trips.

If you look at the bird summary, you will see that these trips are a bit more relaxed than most trips. We do not try to identify every bird, but the ones we do, we work through the ID and the songs together. It is obvious that some very common species were missed on many trips. This is partly due to failure on my part to pay attention to or identify everything we heard, or lax record keeping. I am anxious to see how this goes for a whole new year. I therefore resolve to pay more attention to sound and to keep better records.

The species we saw, with the number of times we recorded them in parenthesis: Canada Goose (6), Wood Duck (2), American Wigeon (1), Northern Shoveler (1), Ring-necked Duck (1), Lesser Scaup (1), Great Blue Heron (1), Green

Heron (1), Turkey Vulture (2), Bald Eagle (1), American Coot (1), Killdeer (1), Mourning Dove (5), Yellow-billed Cuckoo (2), Great Horned Owl (2+), Red-headed Woodpecker (4), Red-bellied Woodpecker (4), Downy Woodpecker (2), Hairy Woodpecker (2), Northern Flicker (2), Eastern Wood-Pewee (2), Eastern Phoebe (4), Great Crested Flycatcher (1), Eastern Kingbird (1), Loggerhead Shrike (1), Blue Jay (6), American Crow (3), Black-capped Chickadee (6), Tufted Titmouse (6), Red-breasted Nuthatch (1), White-breasted Nuthatch (6), House Wren (3), Winter Wren (1), Golden-crowned Kinglet (1), Eastern Bluebird (4), American Robin (5), Gray Catbird (5), Brown Thrasher (1), Cedar Waxwing (2), Tennessee Warbler (1), Common Yellowthroat (3), American Redstart (4), Bay-breasted Warbler (1), Yellow Warbler (1), Yellow-rumped Warbler (2), Black-throated Green Warbler (1), Wilson's Warbler (1), Eastern Towhee (2), Field Sparrow (3), Lark Sparrow (4), White-throated Sparrow (1), Harris's Sparrow (1), White-crowned Sparrow (1), Dark-eyed Junco (3), Northern Cardinal (9), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (5), Indigo Bunting (4), Red-winged Blackbird (6), Common Grackle (1), Brown-headed Cowbird (5), Baltimore Oriole (3), House Finch (3), Purple Finch (2), Pine Siskin (1), American Goldfinch (8), and House Sparrow (2).



## Field Trip and Meeting Reports

**April 13, Hawkeye Wildlife Area.** This beginning birder trip started out cloudy and cold at 38° F with wind gusts of 15 mph and periods of falling snowflakes. Before the morning ended the skies were clearing but it was still cold.

Participants: Jerry Denning, Karen Disbrow (leader), Deb Holtzinger, Katie Pletcher, Lisa Quinn, Steve Schomberg, Donna Warner.

Birds (41 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, American White Pelican, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, American Coot, Killdeer, Mourning Dove, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, American Crow, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Song Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, House Sparrow.

– *Karen Disbrow*

**April 18, Meeting.** Have you ever wanted to go on safari with just yourself and your guides? The Iowa City Bird Club made a vicarious journey with Linda and Robert Scarth, photographers from Cedar Rapids, who made such a trip to three remote, fly-in camps in northern Botswana in December 2012. Two camps were in the Okavango Delta and the other was along the Kwando River east of the Okavango River. Their presentation, “Safari for Two: A Journey to Northern Botswana,” was an

account of the animals, birds, plants and landscapes they visited.

After describing a bit about the country and its geography, history and symbols, they showed and discussed a variety of birds, animals and plants they saw and learned about. Among the birds were kingfishers, eagles, hornbills and storks. One of the highlights of the trip was to follow a pack of endangered African Wild Dogs as they hunted, played and lived their strong family values. They included a video clip of the dogs trying to scare a warthog out of a termite mound. The Scarths also showed some images of the camps where they stayed and how they transported and used their photo equipment in the safari vehicles and boats.

Attendees: Ed and Jean Allgood, Karen Disbrow, Chris Edwards, Vic and Nola Edwards, Bruce Gardner, Peter Hansen, Barb Haring, Rick Hollis, Lauren and Doina Johnson, Pat Kieffer, Kristen Lawton, Mike and Ruth Lindeen, Gail McLure, Mark Oxley, Viana Rockel, Linda Rudolph, Gerry and Diane Teig.

– *Linda Scarth*

**April 26, Night Sounds Field Trip.** This field trip was postponed due to bad weather the week before. We were invited to a farm in Washington County. Since we arrived early we went to the nearby tri-county marsh area. The evening was perfect – 66° with clear skies. After sighting numerous woodland and wetland birds, including a leucistic coot, we proceeded to the farm. We gathered in vehicles to go to the pasture area where we heard American Woodcocks displaying; some were spotted by those with sharp eyes. We heard Chorus Frogs and a Great Horned Owl, but then clouds started to gather and the wind picked up, which made hearing difficult

Participants: Karen Disbrow (leader), Lynn Doxie, Kathy Gassman, Therese Guedon, Peter Hansen, Katie Pletcher, Sharon Somers, Forrest Strom, Jr., Harriet Woodford.

Birds: (20 species): Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Blue-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Ring-necked Pheasant, Pied-billed Grebe, Great Egret, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, American Coot, Killdeer, American Woodcock, Mourning Dove, Great Horned Owl, Tree Swallow, American Robin, European Starling, Field Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird.

– *Karen Disbrow*

**April 27, Waterworks Prairie Park and Hickory Hill Park.** The morning was clear and cool with no wind for this beginning birder trip. We started at the Waterworks Prairie Park along Dubuque Street. There were numerous birds in the air and on the water. We walked to the far south end and checked the Iowa River, where we heard an Orange-crowned Warbler in the brush and saw a Savannah Sparrow flitting around the pump house. They were the best birds of the morning. Late in the morning a few of us continued to Hickory Hill Park, but by then the day was warming up considerably and the birds were not singing as much.

Participants: Karen Disbrow (co-leader), Kathy Gassman, Therese Guedon, Kathy Hall, Dwight Jensen, Ruth Pierce, Barb Plotz, Tom and Carol Rosenberger, Jim Scheib (co-leader), Sharon Somers, Donna Warner.

Birds (32 species): Canada Goose, Northern Shoveler, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, American Kestrel, Sora, American Coot, Killdeer, Wilson's Snipe, Franklin's Gull, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, American Robin, Orange-crowned Warbler, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Brown-headed Cowbird, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– *Karen Disbrow*

**April 28, Otter Creek Marsh.** Special thanks to James Huntington and Jason McCurdy for filling in as co-leaders. The morning was clear with a temperature of 55° and no wind. James arrived at the Hy-Vee parking lot with word of an Upland Sandpiper near the Eastern Iowa Airport, so we headed there first on our way to Otter Creek Marsh.

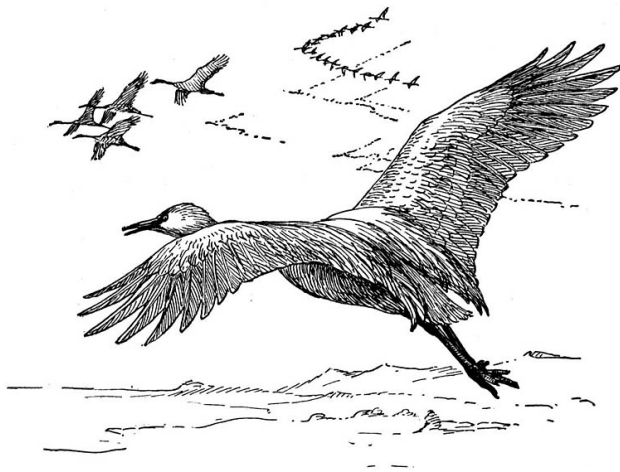
We drove two cars and parked along the road northwest of the airport. We got out of our cars, set up our spotting scopes, and looked southeast to the field where the sandpiper had been seen. Within the first ten minutes we heard and had several quick looks at a sandpiper. Then the Cedar Rapids Police pulled up with their lights flashing. Being the president of the club, I spoke to them and identified our group, while James and everyone else pretended to be busy with their scopes. The policeman said the road was too busy for us to be stopped there. We were parked three feet off the pavement and there had been little traffic on this early Sunday morning, so I said incredulously, "Really?" The policeman saw I was not buying that, so he said, "Listen, you are making Homeland Security nervous looking towards the airport tower with your binoculars and scopes." My eyes got big as I realized the tower was in direct line with where we were looking. OMG! I told James we had to pack up and leave immediately. The police left and we went on our way. This trip was a week after the Boston Marathon bombing, so security concerns were especially heightened. We could have easily been surrounded with guns drawn if we had been near the East Coast rather than in Iowa. The lesson here is to remember to be aware of your surroundings when birding near airports or other areas with security concerns.

After that experience the rest of the trip was less eventful. We spent an enjoyable morning at Otter Creek Marsh, and made stops at Amana Lily Lake, Hawkeye Wildlife Area, and Swan Lake on the return trip.

Participants: Karen Disbrow, Therese Guedon, James Huntington (co-leader), Andy and Katie Long, Jason McCurdy (co-leader), Sharon Somers.

Birds (60 species): Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Wood Duck, Gadwall, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck, Ring-necked Pheasant, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Horned Grebe, American White Pelican, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, American Coot, Sandhill Crane, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Dunlin, Wilson's Snipe, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Brown Thrasher, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird.

– Karen Disbrow



**May 12, Hickory Hill Park** Our annual Mother's Day field trip to Hickory Hill Park was attended by ten birders. This walk is an added feature of our spring weekday warbler walks. The weather was cool but without any rain. Mark Madsen did an excellent job of leading us to the eleven warbler species that we heard and then saw. Without Mark's ability to hear, identify and locate warblers, our total would have been much lower. Thanks Mark!

Participants: Kathleen Gassman, Bruce Gardner (co-leader), Katherine Hall, Pat Kieffer, Andy and Katie Long, Mark Madsen (co-leader), Tom and Carol Rosenberger, Sharon Somers.

Birds (48 species): Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Killdeer, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Veery, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, European Starling, Golden-winged Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, Scarlet Tanager, Chipping Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– Bruce Gardner

**May 16, Meeting.** Jim and Sharon Scheib presented "Birding in Iceland". Their trip to Iceland encompassed three days of a two-week Holland-America voyage in the North Atlantic in July of 2005.

On the first day they drove along the coast of Iceland's longest fjord and stopped at Godafoss, the waterfall of heathen gods and one of the most spectacular waterfalls in Iceland. They then visited the Dimmuborgir lava labyrinth, a paradise of towering lava castles, natural arches and countless unexplored grottos. The last stop of the day was at the gurgling purple and yellow sulfur cauldrons at the high-temperature thermal field of Namaskard.

The next day they left Ísafjörður harbor by boat to sail the large Djupfjord to the island of Vigur. This island features magnificent bird life including puffins, eider ducks and arctic terns. The local farmers live off the land and by harvesting the down of the eider ducks. A leisurely walk around the island offered an opportunity to see an abundance of birds in their natural habitat.

On the last day they drove from Reykjavík over the Mosfellsheidi heath to beautiful Thingvellir National Park, a place of tremendous interest as a primary site of both Iceland's geological and historical heritage. They then drove through the Lyngdalsheidi heath into the farmlands of the south, to visit the most beautiful waterfall of the country, Gullfoss. Nearby they stopped at the Geysir geothermal area with its multitude of hot springs.

Among the interesting birds they saw in Iceland were Whooper Swan, Greylag Goose, Meadow Pipit, Redwing, Eurasian Oystercatcher, Redshank, Black Guillemot, and Great Skua.

Attendees: Norlin Boyd, Barry Buschelman, Karen Disbrow, Bruce Gardner, Peter Hansen, Paul and Margaret Heidger, Kristen Lawton, Mark Oxley.

– *Jim Scheib*

**May 18, Draco Hill in Cedar County.** Betty Kirchner invited us to visit this lovely property owned by her friends Paul Durrenberger and Suzan Erem. They purchased the land in 1997 and moved there in 2012 after Paul's retirement.

They are in the process of restoring the farmland to prairie and forest, controlling invasive species, managing the woodlands, and opening up opportunities for a prairie remnant to reassert itself. The property is directly across the Cedar River from the Bickett-Rate Preserve. The mature woods and river corridor make it a great place for birds.

We arrived at 9 a.m. on a clear, sunny day with the temperature at a wonderful 68 degrees. After a walk through the property, we sat on a screened-in patio and watched the feeders while drinking tea and coffee and eating delicious banana and zucchini breads. Thanks to Suzan and Paul for hosting us. For more information about Draco Hill, visit their web site at [www.dracohill.org](http://www.dracohill.org).

Participants: Betty Kirchner, Karen Disbrow (leader), Jerry Denning, Bruce Gardner, Peter Hanson, Suzan Erem and Paul Durrenberger (hosts).

Birds (25 species): Canada Goose, Wild Turkey, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Mourning Dove, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Kingbird, Tufted Titmouse, House Wren, American Robin, Gray Catbird, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow, Eurasian Tree Sparrow.

– *Karen Disbrow*

**June 1, Brinton Timber.** With all the recent rains we were ready for mud and plenty of bugs. The Skunk River was well out of its banks, but we found the trails at Brinton fairly dry and the gnats were only an occasional bother. The morning remained cool and somewhat overcast, but it never rained.

We arrived at Brinton around 8 a.m., after stops in Kalona to pick up Daryl and a bathroom

break in Brighton. This was the first time I had been to Brinton Timber that there weren't a number of horse people using the park, so it was just us and the birds. A Scarlet Tanager was the first to greet us followed by an Acadian Flycatcher. These proved to be the most numerous bird species on the morning. In fact Acadians seemed to be present at nearly every turn.

We kept to the southern trail on our way into the timber. Our first bird along the trail was a Louisiana Waterthrush which sang and called at the first creek crossing. Only Kyle got a good look at it. We heard these at two other locations, but they eluded any visual confirmations. Wood Thrush were also numerous along the southern trail and we were able to get some looks at those. Ovenbirds were nearly as elusive as the waterthrush. Before long we had decent looks at a Scarlet Tanager pair, and most exciting, a Kentucky Warbler. There were two of those as well and the male sang for us. Also singing was a Rose-breasted Grosbeak that responded to a tape by moving in right overhead. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo called repeatedly nearby, but remained concealed in the treetops. Soon after we got a visual on a Red-eyed Vireo and then heard our first Cerulean Warbler. The Cerulean was located after a short walk off the trail in the top of a red oak. We were patient to find it and most everyone got a look.

At the next creek we heard another waterthrush and took the south loop trail until it veered away. Since we didn't think we had the time to walk that loop we doubled back. The waterthrush eluded us despite playing a recording multiple times. On the return hike to the cars, we took the ridge top trail. From what we could tell the loop trail on the low north side had been flooded. By this time the birds had quieted significantly, but another waterthrush, two other Ceruleans, and a Northern Parula were heard. Most exciting on the return was a Pileated Woodpecker. We all got lengthy looks as it sat atop a bare snag at the edge of a pond.

After a rest stop in Washington, we made a brief stop near the Clemmons Creek Wildlife Area. The dead-end stretch of 240th St. west of Kiwi Ave. is usually interesting and we heard Willow Flycatcher and Orchard Oriole and got nice looks at Yellow Warbler and Henslow's Sparrow.

The participants parted ways back to Iowa City at this point. My car headed back to the Kalona area to take Daryl home. After dropping him off, we headed north on Sharon Center Rd. SW and spotted a roadside Northern Mockingbird at the St. John's Cemetery at the intersection with 520th St. Nice way to end it. Thanks to everyone for turning out.

Participants: Jess Alexander, Kyle and Dena Belcher, Chris Caster (leader), Judy Ellyson, Linda Quinn, Daryl Ropp, Sharon Somers, Don Swartzendruber.

Birds (69 species): Canada Goose, Ring-necked Pheasant, Great Blue Heron, Red-tailed Hawk, Turkey Vulture, Killdeer, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Great-crested Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Yellow-throated Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Purple Martin, Cliff Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush, Northern Mockingbird, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, European Starling, Northern Parula, Yellow Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Song Sparrow,

Indigo Bunting, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Cardinal, Dickcissel, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– *Chris Caster*

**June 9, Ciha Fen.** The day before the trip I pre-walked Ciha Fen to familiarize myself with the area. It's beautiful but... the gnats were HORRENDOUS! I could not stop walking; if I did 20 gnats would land on my face and start biting. I walked it fast then went and bought gnat spray. After that I hoped for the best.

On Sunday morning we had a nice group of nine birders, two of whom came all the way from Dubuque. Luck was with us and it was 65°, overcast, and drizzling! No gnats. Ciha Fen is a lovely site of sand prairie, oak savanna and a small wooded fen consisting of two small ponds with floating plant mats. It's very unusual. We had a lovely walk through the wet grass and saw or heard a nice group of birds. The Winterwoods from Dubuque were especially helpful identifying bird song and the numerous unusual plants at this site. They knew the names of many of the flowers, grasses and sedges we saw and kindly shared their knowledge. The red ripe wild strawberries were delicious!

Participants: Luis Abreu, Kathy Gassman, Therese Guedon, Eric Lynch, Nancy Lynch, Sharon Somers (leader), Harriet Woodford, Charlie and Gretel Winterwood.

Birds (30 species): Great Blue Heron, Mourning Dove, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pee-wee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, American Crow, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Cedar Waxwing, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow,

Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow,

– *Sharon Somers*

**June 15, Indiangrass Hills.** Some early morning showers and the persistent threat of more rain probably impacted the turnout of the annual club outing to Indiangrass Hills in Iowa County. The seven of us who did participate were rewarded with dry weather and some decent sightings. All four of our target grassland species were seen within the first couple hours of the walk. They were in the traditional area that starts just east of the I Ave. parking area and following the trail east toward the stream crossing. A couple of Bobolinks were seen right away. There seemed to be fewer than in recent years, but one male was quite territorial right along the trail and he flew into an area that we suspect had a nest. Both Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows were heard shortly after. There were good numbers of both, at least a half dozen of each and both eventually gave the group good looks. Down near the stream crossing, a Sedge Wren was singing and it also gave decent looks. This was actually the second individual of the day, since we heard and briefly saw one wren along I Ave. before we parked.

Some of the target birds that were missed were Orchard Oriole, Northern Mockingbird, and Loggerhead Shrike. These three have been unpredictable at Indiangrass Hills over the years and hopefully all are still around.

After a brief visit to the west side of I Ave, the group decided to head back at around 11:30. A couple of notable sightings just outside of the property along 247th St. were a single Western Meadowlark and a couple of Eurasian Collared-Doves. We ended the outing with 48 species, which is a slight improvement over last year.



Participants: Mark Brown (leader), Brandon Caswell, Gerald Denning, Jason McCurdy, Linda Quinn, Sharon Somers, David Weiss.

Birds (48 species): Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Killdeer, Mourning Dove, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Sedge Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Towhee, Field Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Cardinal, Dickcissel, Indigo Bunting, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Western Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

- Mark Brown

**June 22, Turkey Vulture Festival.** This was our third annual festival held in collaboration with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the Coralville Dam. It was an overcast day that started with very few Turkey Vultures in the sky, and none on the rock face of the dam since the birds had abandoned that roosting spot during the June flooding. Things did pick up and we ended the day with 22 Turkey Vultures. The Songbird Project, Johnson County Conservation Board, Iowa Ornithologists' Union, and Iowa Audubon had informational booths. Thanks to Ramona McGurk, Barry Buschelman, Ben Rowold, Sharon Somers, Mary Noble, and Carol and Tom Rosenberg.

Birds (20 species): Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Chimney Swift, Eastern Kingbird, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Gray Catbird, Northern Parula, American Redstart, Chipping Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

- Karen Disbrow

**IOWA CITY BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM**

Please send this form with your annual membership dues to Bruce Gardner, 3055 Wapsi Ave. NE, Iowa City, IA, 52240. Annual dues are \$15 per household or \$10 for students. Make checks payable to "Eastern Iowa Birdwatch". Members receive a 10% discount on birdseed and suet at the Ace Hardware store at 600 N. Dodge Street in Iowa City.

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## Iowa City Bird Club

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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](mailto:k_disbrow@yahoo.com).

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

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### ***Eastern Iowa Birdwatch***

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