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# Eastern Iowa Birdwatch



The Iowa City Bird Club Newsletter

Volume 34 Number 2

September 2014

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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 17, Wednesday, 7:15 a.m.- Noon. Bird Banding** at Kent Park Youth Group Camp with new Johnson County Naturalist Sydney Algreen and Rick Hollis. Come anytime during the morning.

**September 18, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting.** Rick Hollis will speak about birding apps, and Mark Bowman will discuss an upcoming MAPS bird banding study at Kent Park.

**September 20, Saturday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Hawk Watch at NEW LOCATION:** Because of the construction at Mehaffey Bridge, this year's event will be at Scales Pointe next to Bobbers Grill, at the end of Scales Bend Road NE north of North Liberty. There is construction on Hwy. 965 near Scales Bend, so follow the detour signs. Bring a lawn chair and join us to watch for migrating raptors. Chris Edwards, 430-4732.

**September 27, Saturday. Cy-Hawk Big Day Challenge.** Join the Iowa City Bird Club in competition with Big Bluestem Audubon of Ames to see which group can find the most bird species in a 24-hour period. To participate please contact Karen Disbrow at 430-0315. See page 3 for more information.

**October 1, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk.** Meet at the Conservation Education Center.

**October 5, Sunday, 1 p.m. Dedication of the Kent Park Bird Blind** near the CEC. Bring a lawn chair.

**October 12, Sunday, 7:30 a.m. Hawkeye Wildlife Area** for sparrows and other fall migrants. In addition, David Shealer will set up mist nets for bird banding. Meet Karen at the N. Dodge Hy-Vee at 7:30 or Brandon Caswell at 8:00 at Casey's near the North Liberty exit of I-380.

**October 15, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk.** Meet at the Conservation Education Center.

**October 16, Thursday, 7:00 p.m. Meeting.** Birding South Africa by Stuart Sparkman and Karen Vista-Sparkman.

**October 25, Saturday. 7:30 a.m. Lake Macbride** for water birds on the lake and land birds along the trails. A leader is still need for this outing – contact Karen at 430-0315 to volunteer.

**November 5, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk.** Meet at the Conservation Education Center.

Continued on next page →

## Schedule (continued)

**November 9, 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 19, Wednesday, 8 a.m. Kent Park Bird Walk.** Meet at the Conservation Education Center.

**November 20, Thursday, 7 p.m. Meeting.** Birding Guyana by Nancy Lynch and Marcia Shaffer.

**December 14, Sunday. Iowa City Christmas Bird Count.** Watch for details in the next issue.

## Other Dates of Note

**October 18, Saturday, Noon – 4 p.m. Iowa Audubon’s “Fall Into Birds” Family Birding Event** at the Crown Point Community Center, 6300 Pioneer Parkway, Johnston. Presentations on hummingbirds by Doug Harr and bird feeding by Karen Disbrow; “Bird in Art” silent auction; beginning birder hike; refreshments. For more information contact Karen Disbrow at 430-0315.

**October 18, Saturday. Iowa Young Birders** field trip to Saylorville Reservoir near Des Moines. For more information plus a calendar of other fall events, visit [www.iowayoungbirders.org](http://www.iowayoungbirders.org).

### From the President’s Desk Karen Disbrow

I cannot believe September is here already – where did the summer go? This has been one of the coolest summers I can remember, with fewer than five 90° days. Even so, the recent cooler nights have brought great warbler fallouts already. As always, I have tried to set up trips to take advantage of the season. We have an abundance of birding talent in the club so for the novice and the more experienced birder there should be something for everyone. Some people think of sparrows during fall migration. Sparrows can be a challenge to identify, so the October field trip to Hawkeye Wildlife Area should be a great time to learn about this group of birds, and thanks to Brandon we will also have a bird banding event to observe there. We are continuing our Kent Park Wednesday Bird Walks on the first and third Wednesday of each month through November.

Two big events will be our annual hawk watch, which due to the construction on Mehaffey Bridge has been moved to the end of Scales Bend Road near Bobbers restaurant, north of

North Liberty, and the dedication of the new bird blind in Kent Park. In addition, a Hawkeye vs. Cyclones Big Day event is scheduled for Sept. 27. I know as a club we can come up with more species than the Big Bluestem Audubon group. Go Hawks!

I would like to thank a number of people. Jim Scheib, Jim Fuller, Ken Lowder, Rick Hollis, Dave Kyllingstad, and Bruce Gardner participated in the UI Alumni Association Senior College birding program this past spring, and gave their honorarium to the ICBC. Thanks, guys! Ramona McGurk again helped me do a birding session for the Johnson County Historical Society Nature Camp week in July. Jim Scheib has made our website the envy of the birding community, with maps, photographs, and links to wildlife cams and other pages of interest. Rick Hollis manages our Facebook page, answering questions, identifying photographs, and posting our events for the group. And a special thanks to our newsletter editor, Chris Edwards, who does an awesome job of putting out a great newsletter.

Also a big thank you to the Grant Wood AEA for the use of their facilities for our meetings,

Johnson County Conservation Board for the use of the CEC for our Wednesday Walks, and Leno & Cilek North Dodge Ace Hardware and Forever Green Garden Center in Coralville for the 10% discount on regularly priced seed and suet for our members.

Good Birding!

## Kent Park Bird Banding Volunteer Opportunity

Mark Bowman, former Iowa City Bird Club member, and Rob Bradley, a federally-licensed bird bander from Cedar Rapids, are working with Johnson County Conservation to establish a MAPS bird banding site at Kent Park beginning in summer 2015. They are seeking committed volunteers to assist with the project.

The MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship) Program uses a standardized protocol to generate data complementary to that of the breeding bird atlas. MAPS banding is promoted and supported by the Institute for Bird Populations (IBP) and endorsed by such agencies as Partners in Flight, the USDA Forest Service, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The MAPS protocol will require Mark and Rob to set up 10 to 15 mist nets on seven different mornings between May 31 and August 7, and to band birds for six hours each of those mornings beginning at dawn. They will band on most Friday mornings and default to the very next Saturday or Sunday if rained out. The official start date is scheduled for June 5, 2015. They now have two skilled helpers, but their jobs prevent them from coming on all Fridays, and they hope to enlist additional assistants from the local area.

If you have any questions or would like more information about the project, please contact Mark Bowman at prairiehiker1@hotmail.com or (515) 360-2190.

## Cy-Hawk Big Day Challenge September 27

Members of Big Bluestem Audubon Society, our Cyclone rivals from Ames, have challenged us to a Big Day competition. Whichever group identifies the most species of birds during this first Cy-Hawk Big Day Challenge will win the currently fictitious (but still legendary) Cardinalis-Buteo Trophy, along with intrastate bragging rights for the next 365 days! The competition will take place from midnight to midnight on Saturday, September 27.

To participate, form a team of two or more birders (teams that can fit into one vehicle usually work the best), devise your birding strategy and logistical plan, and email your team's name, your captain's name, email address, and phone number, and your team members' names to Karen Disbrow by 5 p.m. on Friday, September 26. All Iowa City Bird Club members will be birding to compile a single bird list to compete against the compiled bird list of Big Bluestem Audubon. We may also have some internal competitions as well (most species, most warblers, most sparrows, or something to that effect – let Karen know your suggestions for this).

Most importantly, for a species to count, at least two members of the team must positively identify each bird (seen or heard), and all birds must be found within the state of Iowa within the 24-hour window of Saturday, September 27. Your team can bird for as much or as little during the day as you like.

This is the first time we've tried this, so we'll be playing it a little by ear, making improvements and corrections as we go. For at least this first time, this will be solely about fun, friendly competition, enjoying fall migration, and enjoying the company of your fellow birders.

*– Eric Ollie and Karen Disbrow*

## **2014 Hickory Hill Park Warbler Walks**

### **Mark Madsen**

Every year the Iowa City Bird Club organizes bird walks in Hickory Hill Park during the month of May in order to document the spring migration of warblers and other woodland birds. For the last two years the Bur Oak Land Trust (formerly the Johnson County Heritage Trust) has co-sponsored these walks which are open to the general public. This year the walks were led by Jason Paulios, Chris Edwards and Mark Madsen on weekday mornings beginning at 6:30 a.m. and typically finished between 8:00 and 8:30. The results of each day's activity were compiled and posted by Jim Scheib on the Iowa City Bird Club website ([www.icbirds.org](http://www.icbirds.org)). This year the walks began on Monday, April 28 and continued through Friday, May 23.

Although there are general similarities from year to year, every spring migration is different since it depends strongly on the specific weather patterns. This year was cooler than it had been in the recent past. Most of the days we started with temperatures in the 40s (or lower). Although the cool temperatures were a reason to stay in a warm bed, it had two nice consequences: gnats and mosquitoes were not much of a problem until the last few days of the walks; and the leaves were slow to develop giving us much better views of the birds.

The walks were very well-attended this year with an average of more than eight participants per day, and on several days there were more than double that number. Overall more than 25 individuals participated over the four-week duration. The youngest participant was in elementary school, while the oldest was well past retirement. There was a good range of birding experience that included both experts and beginners.

Altogether this year there were more than 60 species of woodland birds along with a few ducks (Mallard and Wood Duck) and other water birds (Great Blue Heron, Great Egret and Double-crested Cormorant) that flew over the park.

Because of its large size (250 acres), Hickory Hill Park is an attractive spot for migrating warblers. This year there were uniformly good viewing conditions because of the weather, which was generally clear, and because of the late appearance of most of the leaves. A total of 28 warbler species were seen this year. One sighting of note was a Louisiana Waterthrush. Although this is not an uncommon warbler, there have not been previous reports in the recent past on the Warbler Walks. All the warblers that generally make an appearance were seen this year. One exception was the Hooded Warbler which was not seen during the Warbler Walks, but was seen at the park by others. No Cerulean or Worm-eating Warblers were seen this year. Connecticut Warblers were heard several times, but no direct sightings occurred on the Warbler Walks.

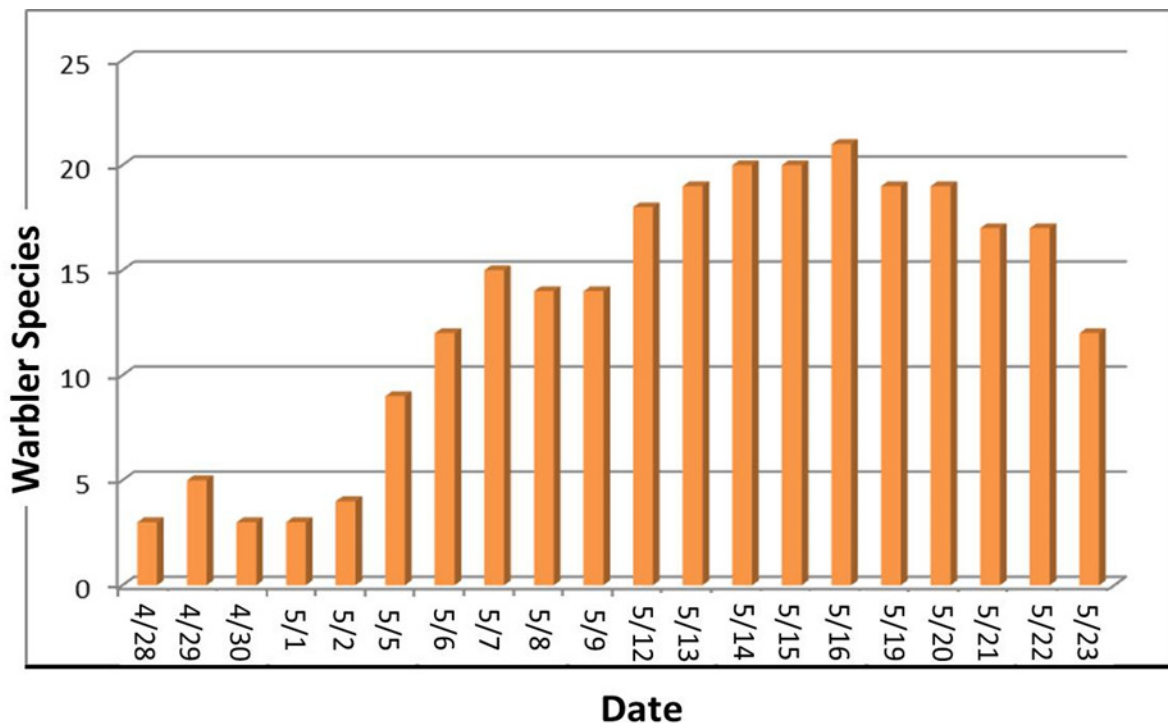
In addition to warblers, many other interesting birds were found. All the regular migrant thrushes (Hermit Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, Gray-cheeked Thrush, and Veery) were seen along with the typical resident thrushes of the park (Wood Thrush and American Robin). We also got great views of both Scarlet and Summer Tanagers. Scarlet Tanagers nest in the park, and while Summer Tanagers are seen most years, this year an adult male hung around for a much longer time than usual and was seen on multiple days.

With all its mature trees, Hickory Hill Park is an excellent place to see woodpeckers. Downy, Hairy and Red-bellied Woodpeckers were seen every day. Northern Flickers also showed up and the group was treated to nice views of a Pileated Woodpecker next to the Conklin Lane entrance shelter.

Flycatchers were well-represented with eight species found. Eastern Phoebes, Eastern Wood-Pewees, and Great-crested Flycatchers nest in the park and were encountered frequently. Migrant Least Flycatchers were seen daily starting May 7. Among the less common migrant flycatchers, Alder Flycatchers were seen on three days between May 19-23, Yellow-bellied Flycatchers on three days between May 14-19, and Olive-sided Flycatchers twice between May 15-20. Five vireo species were seen, including Blue-headed, Yellow-throated, Warbling, Philadelphia, and Red-eyed. A sixth species, White-eyed Vireo, is sometimes found in the park, but was not found this spring.

Many birds nest in the park, and this year there were two nests in particular that caught our attention. One was a Cooper's Hawk nest located in the woods to the southwest of the dam. This nest was easily seen at the beginning of May, but by the last week it was hidden amongst the leaves unless you knew exactly where to look. The other nest belonged to a pair of Blue Jays. It was located at eye level 8' off the trail in the thorns of a Honey Locust tree.

The graph below shows how the warbler migration progressed through the month of May. Initially, just a handful of warbler species were seen per day, but that rapidly increased through mid-May to more than 20 species per day, with a drop off to about 10 species per day by the end of the last week.



In closing, I want to again thank all the folks that contribute their time and energy to make these Warbler Walks happen each year. They include Karen Disbrow, Jim Scheib, Chris Edwards, Jason Paulios, Mark Madsen, and Bruce Gardner.

## Warbler Walks Results – April 28-May 23, 2014

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	28	29	30	1	2	5	6	7	8	9	12	13	14	15	16	19	20	21	22	23	Days
Blue-winged Warbler			X			X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				12
Golden-winged Warbler							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	14
Tennessee Warbler								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	13
Orange-crowned Warbler			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				15
Nashville Warbler		X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	16
Northern Parula						X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	13
Yellow Warbler								X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		11
Chestnut-sided Warbler							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	14
Magnolia Warbler							X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	12
Cape May Warbler															X						1
Yellow-rumped Warbler	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X				16
Black-throated Green Warbler		X					X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		12
Yellow-throated Warbler																					-
Palm Warbler					X	X					X										3
Blackburnian Warbler										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			9
Bay-breasted Warbler												X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	8
Blackpoll Warbler											X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		8
Cerulean Warbler																					-
Black-and-white Warbler	A			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		16
American Redstart						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	15
Ovenbird	X	X				X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		14
Northern Waterthrush	X	X								X			X								4
Louisiana Waterthrush					X																1
Hooded Warbler																					-
Mourning Warbler									X				X				X	X	X	X	6
Common Yellowthroat					A		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	15
Wilson's Warbler													X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	8
Canada Warbler												X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	8
Kentucky Warbler															X						1
Connecticut Warbler											X										1
Worm-eating Warbler																					-

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

Others: Olive-sided Flycatcher 5/15, 5/20; Yellow-bellied Flycatcher 5/14, 5/16, 5/19; Alder Flycatcher 5/19, 5/22, 5/23; Philadelphia Vireo 5/13, 5/15, 5/19-5/23; Veery 4/30, 5/21; Summer Tanager 5/9-5/23; Bobolink 5/7; Orchard Oriole 5/7, 5/16.

## 2014 Johnson County Spring Bird Count

### Chris Caster

The Johnson County Spring Bird Count was held on May 10. The early morning temperature was 44° and the afternoon high was 79°. It was about as nice a day to bird as you could imagine. Light winds were from the south and there were only the briefest sprinkles in the late afternoon. We had one of our largest crews ever and this resulted in our second highest species total since we began keeping records in 1997. We found 174 species – only the third time we’ve surpassed the 170 mark. Our record of 175 species was set in 2003. Ten species of waterfowl was decent. Twenty-one shorebirds and 28 warblers were outstanding. Equally amazing were the numbers we found. Twenty-seven Blue-winged and 41 Golden-winged Warblers were reported along with 8 Cape May Warblers, to mention a few.

The most interesting bird goes to the Brewster’s Warbler found by Mark Madsen and Drew Dillman—this is Blue-winged x Golden-winged Warbler hybrid. Other interesting birds were Black Terns and Clay-colored Sparrows at Terry Trueblood. Cattle Egret and Virginia Rail were at Waterworks Park. All the vireos were found including 8 Bell’s. Two Prothonotary Warblers were found in the west of HWA. Mute Swans were at the Brown Deer Country Club. Two Avocets and a Willet were among the hundreds of peeps at HWA. A Kentucky Warbler was at Ryerson’s Woods. Louisiana Waterthrushes were along the Clear Creek Trail and at Sugar Bottom. A Loggerhead Shrike was at 500th St. and Johnson-Muscatine Rd. With the lofty totals there weren’t too many misses, though Hooded Merganser, Dunlin, Common Nighthawk, Northern Mockingbird, and Cerulean Warbler could not be found.

Participants: Kyle and Dena Belcher, Mark Brown, Chris Caster, Adam Ciha, Drew Dillman, Bob and Dara Dick, Chris Edwards, Julie Englander, Linda Fisher, Jim Fuller, James Huntington, Katie Long, Ken Lowder, Mark Madsen, Jason McCurdy, Mary Noble, Jason Paulios, Diana Pesek, Daryl Ropp, Jim and Sharon Scheib, Bill Scheible, David Weiss.

#### SPECIES LIST

Canada Goose	149	Virginia Rail	1	Herring Gull	3
Mute Swan	2	Sora	15	Caspian Tern	9
Wood Duck	35	American Coot	149	Forster’s Tern	12
Gadwall	12	Black-bellied Plover	1	Black Tern	7
American Wigeon	2	American Golden Plover	1	Rock Pigeon	41
Mallard	60	Semipalmated Plover	170	Eurasian Collared-Dove	1
Blue-winged Teal	75	Killdeer	59	Mourning Dove	102
Northern Shoveler	42	American Avocet	2	Eastern Screech-Owl	1
Ring-necked Duck	1	Greater Yellowlegs	12	Great Horned Owl	4
Lesser Scaup	2	Lesser Yellowlegs	51	Barred Owl	3
Ring-necked Pheasant	29	Solitary Sandpiper	10	Chimney Swift	19
Wild Turkey	8	Willet	1	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2
Pied-billed Grebe	1	Spotted Sandpiper	22	Belted Kingfisher	4
American White Pelican	312	Hudsonian Godwit	1	Red-headed Woodpecker	32
Double-crested Cormorant	15	Semipalmated Sandpiper	659	Red-bellied Woodpecker	44
Great Blue Heron	14	Least Sandpiper	979	Downy Woodpecker	34
Great Egret	1	White-rumped Sandpiper	14	Hairy Woodpecker	8
Cattle Egret	1	Baird’s Sandpiper	27	Northern Flicker	5
Green Heron	3	Pectoral Sandpiper	322	Pileated Woodpecker	4
Turkey Vulture	37	Stilt Sandpiper	15	Eastern Wood-Pewee	8
Osprey	3	Short-billed Dowitcher	32	Acadian Flycatcher	1
Bald Eagle	23	Wilson’s Snipe	2	Willow Flycatcher	2
Cooper’s Hawk	4	American Woodcock	1	Least Flycatcher	17
Broad-winged Hawk	1	Wilson’s Phalarope	10	Eastern Phoebe	9
Red-tailed Hawk	7	Franklin’s Gull	30	Great Crested Flycatcher	40
American Kestrel	2	Ring-billed Gull	34	Eastern Kingbird	36

Loggerhead Shrike	1	Brown Thrasher	19	Scarlet Tanager	25
White-eyed Vireo	3	European Starling	139	Eastern Towhee	22
Bell's Vireo	8	Cedar Waxwing	9	Chipping Sparrow	65
Yellow-throated Vireo	42	Blue-winged Warbler	27	Clay-colored Sparrow	3
Blue-headed Vireo	5	Golden-winged Warbler	41	Field Sparrow	20
Warbling Vireo	47	Brewster's Warbler (hybrid)	1	Vesper Sparrow	3
Philadelphia Vireo	2	Tennessee Warbler	141	Lark Sparrow	11
Red-eyed Vireo	56	Orange-crowned Warbler	21	Savannah Sparrow	8
Blue Jay	104	Nashville Warbler	280	Grasshopper Sparrow	9
American Crow	34	Northern Parula	30	Henslow's Sparrow	2
Horned Lark	4	Yellow Warbler	102	Song Sparrow	68
Purple Martin	77	Chestnut-sided Warbler	82	Lincoln's Sparrow	8
Tree Swallow	141	Magnolia Warbler	16	Swamp Sparrow	6
N. Rough-winged Swallow	16	Cape May Warbler	8	White-throated Sparrow	18
Bank Swallow	98	Yellow-rumped Warbler	58	White-crowned Sparrow	13
Cliff Swallow	205	Black-throated Green Warbler	20	Northern Cardinal	182
Barn Swallow	96	Blackburnian Warbler	31	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	62
Black-capped Chickadee	105	Yellow-throated Warbler	1	Indigo Bunting	82
Tufted Titmouse	27	Palm Warbler	16	Dickcissel	11
White-breasted Nuthatch	45	Bay-breasted Warbler	1	Bobolink	11
Carolina Wren	2	Blackpoll Warbler	11	Red-winged Blackbird	534
House Wren	160	Black-and-white Warbler	34	Eastern Meadowlark	53
Sedge Wren	1	American Redstart	155	Western Meadowlark	8
Marsh Wren	4	Prothonotary Warbler	2	Common Grackle	100
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2	Ovenbird	21	Brown-headed Cowbird	85
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	36	Northern Waterthrush	18	Orchard Oriole	16
Eastern Bluebird	22	Louisiana Waterthrush	3	Baltimore Oriole	102
Veery	1	Kentucky Warbler	1	House Finch	11
Gray-cheeked Thrush	2	Mourning Warbler	3	American Goldfinch	140
Swainson's Thrush	5	Common Yellowthroat	102	House Sparrow	160
Wood Thrush	9	Wilson's Warbler	11	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	33
American Robin	243	Canada Warbler	1	TOTAL SPECIES	174
Gray Catbird	219	Summer Tanager	1		

## Iowa Audubon Corner

### Karen Disbrow

In May the Audubon Minnesota office approved a \$5,000 grant to Iowa Audubon, for the funds the Aveda Corp. raised in Iowa. We will use this money to help complete restoration of a 220-acre wetland at the Union Hills IBA, located about 12 miles south of Clear Lake.

The dedication of the Effigy Mounds-Yellow River State Forest Bird Conservation Area as a Globally Important Bird Area, held May 31 at the Paint Creek Unit of Yellow River State Forest, was an awesome event, and over 50 people attended. Cerulean Warblers were numerous, and you could hear them singing as you approached the parking lot. The hikes and boat trip were well attended. So if you are looking for Cerulean Warblers this is the place to visit.

Iowa Audubon collected funds for the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation project to assist DNR with the Nelson Tract addition to Yellow River State Forest. Doug Harr used the honorarium that ICBC paid him for his talk last spring and donated it in the Iowa City Bird Club's name to the project. At the time of this writing a total of \$4,700 has been donated by the bird clubs and Iowa Audubon to this worthy project.

Plans for the "Fall into Birding" event on October 18 are ongoing. This should be a great family event. We have over 60 items for the "Birds in Art" silent auction. There will be no raffle this year as we did not locate an appropriate item to be raffled.



## **A Warbler Big Day**

### **Chris Edwards**

I've long had a goal of seeing 30 warbler species in Iowa in one day. I've come close on several occasions, with 29 species on May 16, 2005 in Johnson and Lee counties; 28 species on May 6, 2007 in Johnson, Lee and Muscatine counties; and 27 species three times including this year's Johnson County Spring Count. Whenever I grab my binoculars and head outdoors on a May morning, I'm hopeful for a great warbler day, and May 12, 2014 was no different. Ten minutes in my wooded backyard produced Kentucky Warbler, Mourning Warbler, and Acadian Flycatcher, and I knew then it could be a good morning. But I expected to have only a few hours of birding before mid-morning storms rolled through.

I decided to head to Weise Slough in Muscatine County to try to add a few species to my county list there. When I arrived, the bottomland woods were full of warblers. Tennessee Warblers, Nashville Warblers, and American Redstarts were everywhere, and within a few minutes I saw my first Canada Warblers of the year. Golden-winged Warblers, Chestnut-sided Warblers, and Magnolia Warblers were also numerous. By mid-morning, the sound of approaching thunder got louder and louder, but then the storm passed by with just a light sprinkle of rain. I considered that a good omen and continued to bird. A short while later, after seeing a male Cape May Warbler and then a male Bay-breasted Warbler, two of my favorites, I tallied up my warbler list and had 23 species.

That's when, as James Huntington would say, the "dark side" took over, and I made the decision to drive to Shimek State Forest in Lee and Van Buren counties. Any serious attempt at a 30-warbler day needs to include a visit to Shimek because of the area's breeding specialties. On this day it would take a clean sweep of all those specialties to reach 30, which would be challenging on a hot, windy afternoon.

After the 90-minute drive I arrived at the Donnellson Unit of Shimek State Forest. It only took a few minutes to hear and then see a male Hooded Warbler along the entrance road (#24). I continued on to the Farmington Unit, where a Yellow-throated Warbler was singing near the entrance of Coal Mine Hollow Drive (#25). Farther along that road I found two male Pine Warblers singing slightly different songs (#26). I headed south to the Croton Unit and parked along 150th Avenue. Within minutes I heard a Cerulean Warbler, and since most of the trees weren't leafed out yet I was able to get a good look (#27). I then walked one of the many stream beds, and turned up a Louisiana Waterthrush (#28).

That's when things got tough. My two remaining targets were Yellow-breasted Chat and Worm-eating Warbler, and although I knew of reliable locations for both species, neither seemed inclined to sing on this hot afternoon. I spent a couple hours hiking around without finding either one. Finally, back along 150th Avenue I found a singing Yellow-breasted Chat (#29). (And please, don't anyone tell me Yellow-breasted Chats are no longer considered part of the warbler family!) I then went back to the wooded ravine near the parking lot where Worm-eating Warblers are sometimes found and hiked around again. I told myself I would stay no later than 5:30 p.m., and for the last 15 minutes I sat on a log and just listened. At 5:30 I got up and started to leave, when a Worm-eating Warbler began singing about 30 yards up the ravine! It sang half a dozen times and then flew off. By that time a storm was moving in, and I had to sprint the last 50 yards back to the truck to keep from getting drenched. But I had found #30 at last!

I'll need a new goal now. Since I missed Orange-crowned Warbler and Black-throated Green Warbler on that day, 32 warblers doesn't seem out of the question. In May 2015, the new quest begins!

## Field Trip and Meeting Reports

**April 17, Meeting.** Photographers Robert and Linda Scarth presented a fabulous program, “Inside Passage: Bears, Whales, Totems & More in the Tongass and Great Bear Rain Forests”.

Attendees: Ed and Jean Allgood, Jennifer Johnson, Lauren and Doina Johnson, Vic and Nola Edwards, Bruce Gardner, Peter Hansen, Khristen Lawton, Ching-Long Lin, Nancy Lynch, Susan Manwarren, Mark Oxley, Tom and Carol Rosenberger, Marcia Shaffer, Steve and Ann Valenta, Donna Warner, Kai Weatherman, Xiaodong Zhu.

**April 19, Hawkeye Wildlife Area.** We had some new birders, and some new-to-Iowa birders, on this beginning birder trip. Our first stop was Swan Lake, and we spent quite awhile there scoping through the hundreds of waterfowl on the lake. We had a number of spotting scopes setup, providing everyone a good opportunity to study the ducks – learning to identify them by color pattern and shape, comparing similar species such as Canvasbacks and Redheads, watching diving and feeding behavior, etc. There were many other birds present as well, including a Wilson’s Snipe hiding in the vegetation.

When we exhausted all the possibilities at Swan Lake, we took a short walk to the pond east of the Sand Point parking lot. Not finding much there, we moved on to the small ponds along James Avenue and then birded along Greencastle Avenue.

At the end of the morning, several of us continued to Terry Trueblood Recreation Area (formerly called Sand Lake) south of Iowa City, where a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher had been seen earlier in the week. After a search along the south shore of the lake, we were lucky to spot it on the peninsula, and we enjoyed great views of this spectacular and rare (in Iowa) bird.

Participants: Shruti and Aniruddha Deshpande, Drew Dillman, Chris Edwards (leader), Bruce Gardner, Rick Hollis, Jennifer Johnson, Sue Manwarren, Linda Quinn, Tom and Carol Rosenberger, Marcia Shaffer, Gerry Teig.

Birds (54 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Ring-necked Pheasant, Pied-billed Grebe, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Egret, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, American Coot, Killdeer, Lesser Yellowlegs, Wilson’s Snipe, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Brown-headed Cowbird, House Sparrow, Eurasian Tree Sparrow.

*– Chris Edwards*

**April 26, Waterworks Prairie Park.** Eleven birders visited this park off north Dubuque Street in Iowa City. The weather was clear with temperatures reaching the 60s, but it felt cooler in the strong wind. We walked a 1.5-mile loop around the ponds. Horned Grebe and Caspian Tern were the best birds, but Tree Swallows were the real stars, constantly flying near us and tussling over housing. We saw a number of raptors as well, including 40 migrating Broad-winged Hawks, Sharp-shinned Hawk, and Osprey. The trip was also scheduled to visit Terry Trueblood Recreation Area, but we decided to forego that portion due to a mental health walk being held there.

Participants: Drew and Judy Dillman, Chris Edwards (co-leader), Michelle Friessen, Rick Hollis (co-leader), Linda Quinn, Tom and Carol Rosenberger, Marcia Shaffer, Donna Warner, Jack Widness.

Birds (52 species): Canada Goose, Gadwall, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Pheasant, Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, American White Pelican, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Osprey, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Bald Eagle, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Coot, Killdeer, Solitary Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Wilson's Snipe, Caspian Tern, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, American Kestrel, Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Brown-headed Cowbird, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– *Rick Hollis*

**May 4, Hickory Hill Park.** Seventeen hardy birders braved the 40° temperature and light rain sprinkles to enjoy a walk through Hickory Hill Park. We were treated to a very quick fly-over by a Northern Harrier while we were gathering at the shelter before the walk had started. We were there to see warblers and were able to observe only eight different warblers. Last year this trip took place on May 12 and we observed eleven different warblers. We saw five different species of thrushes last year but only a robin this year.

A big thank you to Mark Madsen for his excellent skills in locating and identifying the birds we saw and heard. Thanks also to Jason McCurdy for helping the folks at the back of the walk with bird identification.

Participants: Susan Baker, David Brown, Chad and Colleen Davis, Bruce Gardner (leader), Joni Jones, Pat Kieffer, Andy and Katie Long, Mark Madsen, Jason McCurdy, Jan Myatt, Linda Quinn, Marcia Shaffer, Donna Warner, Kathy Wegman.

Birds (39 species): Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Golden-winged Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Palm Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– *Bruce Gardner*

**May 15, Meeting.** Rick Hollis gave a very informative presentation, "eBird: What It Is and What It Can Do For You". eBird is an online database of bird observations which provides birders, scientists, researchers, and amateur naturalists with real-time data about bird distribution and abundance. Rick's talk also covered other useful web sites and mobile apps. If you have any eBird questions, feel free to contact Rick at [xiboia@earthlink.net](mailto:xiboia@earthlink.net).

Attendees: Barry Buschelman, Karen Disbrow, Chris Edwards, Therese Guedon, Peter Hansen, Rick Hollis, Lois Hughes, Merle Ihne, Joni Jones, Jane Knoedel, Dave Kyllingstad, Nancy Lynch, Gail McLure, Jan Myatt, Linda Quinn, Marcia Shaffer, Forrest Strum, Richard and Gerry Tetrault, Donna Warner, Diane Zumbach.

**May 17, Rowold Family Farm.** The Harry Rowold farm consists of about 300 acres of

restored prairie and timber along the Wapsipinicon River in Clinton County. The river was almost out of its banks and had backed up into the “old bed” that cuts through the farm. It was a gorgeous day and the birds would not stop coming.

Participants: Linda Fisher, Merle Ihne, Lois Hughes, Ben Rowold (leader).

Birds (50 species): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Ring-necked Pheasant, Wild Turkey, Green Heron, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, European Starling, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Palm Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, waterthrush sp., Common Yellowthroat, Wilson’s Warbler, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, meadowlark sp., Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– Ben Rowold

**May 25, Shimek State Forest.** Four of us left Iowa City at 6:30 a.m. on a pleasant, partly cloudy morning and headed south 70 miles to Donnellson, where we met five more birders to complete our party. At the Casey’s in Donnellson, our youngest member spotted and identified the first bird for our group, a Eurasian Collared-Dove. On the way to the nearby Croton Unit of Shimek State Forest, a Blue Grosbeak was spotted singing on a wire west of Argyle, but when our caravan stopped it quickly fled. We continued on to the parking lot at the Croton Unit and the real birding began there. Next to the parking lot, a Yellow-breasted Chat

was singing, and the first of several Summer Tanagers was briefly sighted. We followed the trail into the woods, and along the stream we heard and saw a Northern Parula and a Louisiana Waterthrush. A Worm-eating Warbler sang several times, but then quickly departed into the woods. Shortly after crossing the stream, we tracked down a singing Kentucky Warbler, and eventually everyone had great views of this bird. At the same spot we saw the first of many Yellow-billed Cuckoos. Continuing on, we spotted a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher on a nest, got good views of two more Yellow-breasted Chats, and heard a Mourning Warbler. On our way back to the parking lot we heard and briefly saw a White-eyed Vireo in the thick shrubbery.

After returning to the parking lot, we walked along Belfast Road to 150th Avenue, where large sycamores line the stream. There we heard, but did not see, a Cerulean Warbler and a Yellow-throated Warbler. On the walk back we saw a pair of Black-billed Cuckoos, several more Yellow-billed Cuckoos, a female Summer Tanager, and a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak among other birds. It was nearing mid-day when we left the Croton Unit and drove towards Farmington. Along the way we saw several Bobolinks and heard numerous Dickcissels and Warbling Vireos.

After a pit stop in Farmington, we headed to the Donnellson Unit of Shimek State Forest, where our primary target was Hooded Warbler. It would prove to be the most elusive bird of the day. We walked along the forest road and located a Hooded Warbler singing in the woods, but a chase through the underbrush resulted in only a quick glimpse before it flew to the other side of the road. We relocated the singer and repeated the process, but again only one or two members of our party got a quick glimpse before the bird flew off. We did spot a Yellow-throated Warbler singing high in the pines along the road nearby. We decided it was a good time to sit down at the picnic area and enjoy our lunch.

After lunch we continued on to Coal Mine Hollow Drive in the Farmington Unit of Shimek State Forest, where our target bird was Pine Warbler. We parked and walked along the road, and after a 10-minute walk we heard one singing in the pines. We then spotted both a male and a female Pine Warbler, and enjoyed decent views of the birds up high in the pines. We also watched an Eastern Wood-Pewee building a nest on a pine branch.

By now it was 3 p.m., and we decided to try one more time for Hooded Warbler at a second spot in the Donnellson Unit near Martin Pond. A short walk led us to another male Hooded Warbler back in the woods, singing an atypical song. We waded through the underbrush, all of which seemed to have thorns, and got tantalizingly close to the singer before it flew. We repeated this process several times and only got a brief glimpse. We finally decided it wasn't meant to be, and gave up the chase. Before departing we all agreed it had been a spectacular day of birding. Everyone except the leader had seen at least one life bird, and some had seen more than ten life birds!

Birds (80 species): Canada Goose, Wild Turkey, Northern Bobwhite, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Killdeer, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Black-billed Cuckoo, Barred Owl, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Swainson's Thrush, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European

Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Blue-winged Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow-throated Warbler, Pine Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Hooded Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Summer Tanager, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

Participants: Kyle and Dena Belcher, Chad, Colleen & Sophia Davis, Chris Edwards (leader), Gail Krupa, Ben Rowold, David Weiss.  
– *Chris Edwards*

**June 7, Bickett-Rate Preserve.** This property near 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. It is also the location of Althea Sherman's original chimney swift tower, which has recently been erected and renovated at the site by the Songbird Project.

As a follow-up to last year's breeding bird survey at the preserve, we made a follow-up visit during this year's breeding season. We spent a pleasant morning hiking some of the trails through the woods and fields. We observed two new species for the preserve, Bald Eagle and Louisiana Waterthrush. The eagle was a fly-over that probably nested elsewhere along the Cedar River, but the waterthrush was singing along a stream in potential nesting habitat. We raised the breeding status of two other species, Eastern Kingbird and Red-headed Woodpecker, to "confirmed". The kingbird was seen carrying nesting material, and the woodpecker was observed entering a nest cavity in a dead tree.

Other notable discoveries including an Acadian Flycatcher, which was a life bird for several participants; fledgling Eastern Phoebes; a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher visiting a nest; and male Bobolinks displaying for females over a pasture.

Participants: Jerry Denning, Chris Edwards (leader), Barb Fisher-Krueger, Gerry and Ruth Peterson, Linda Quinn, Linda Rudolph.

Birds (49 species): Canada Goose, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Yellow-throated Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Cedar Waxwing, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– *Chris Edwards*

**June 14, Indiangrass Hills.** Eight birders turned out for the annual outing to Indiangrass Hills in Iowa County. The weather was very pleasant, although the wind was forecast to pick up mid-morning so we made it a point to tick off the grassland species right away. Our walk started in the traditional area that starts just east of the I Ave. parking area. Grasshopper Sparrows, Henslow's Sparrows, and Bobolinks were heard and seen well in this area. Down near the stream crossing, we missed Sedge Wren which we saw in this location last year, but we

all enjoyed a pair of Eastern Towhees. Also notable in the area were at least two pairs of Red-headed Woodpeckers and a first-year male Orchard Oriole.

After returning to the parking area for a short break, we all explored the west side of I Ave. The wind had picked up by this time, but just down the hill along the trail we were still able to detect a pair of Sedge Wrens that were evidently nesting, as one of them was seen carrying food.

Butterflies were so scarce last year that I didn't mention them in the write-up, but numbers seem to have rebounded this year so I've included my sightings below. For birds, we ended the outing with 44 species, which includes a Eurasian Collared-Dove that was seen for second consecutive year just outside the property along 240th St. This total is four less than last year, but that was due to missing some common species that are normally seen, such as Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Common Grackle, Black-capped Chickadee, Downy Woodpecker, and White-breasted Nuthatch.

Participants: Mark Brown (leader), Chad, Colleen & Sophia Davis, Gerald Denning, Linda Quinn, Earl and Susan Rogers.

Birds (44 species): Canada Goose, Ring-necked Pheasant, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Killdeer, Mourning Dove, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, 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, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

Butterflies (10 species): Monarch, Cabbage White, Red Admiral, Question Mark, Painted Lady, Pearl Crescent, Meadow Fritillary, Summer Azure, Least Skipper, European Skipper.

– *Mark Brown*

**June 22, Turkey Vulture Festival at Coralville Dam.** About 75 people, including many kids, attended this year's event. Iowa Young Birders, The Songbird Project, Eastern Iowa Bee Keepers, Johnson County Conservation, Iowa Ornithologists' Union, Iowa City Bird Club, and the Corps of Engineers had displays and activities available for everyone to enjoy.

This year only four Turkey Vultures were seen. Earlier in the spring up to 140 vultures had been using their traditional roost in the trees east of the dam, and perching on the rock face of the dam each morning to dry their wings before flying off for the day. Over Memorial Day Weekend the Army Corp of Engineers placed flags along the top of the dam, and this may have had a scarecrow affect and caused the birds to abandon this roost. Later in the summer a group of Turkey Vultures was found roosting on a communications tower along I-80.

Turkey Vultures do not reach sexual maturity until they are seven years old. Mated pairs start nesting in early April, so most of the birds we see at roosts in June are teenagers. There is no color differentiation in the young birds except at the fledgling stage – the young leaving the nest have a black head for a few months. Next March when they return they will have a red head like the adult birds.

Thanks to the groups that participated in this event, to Terry Escher of the Corps and her volunteers, and to Bruce Gardner and Mary Noble of the Iowa City Bird Club for making this such a successful event. Next year on June 23 we will meet again to observe and learn about nature's garbage collectors.

– *Karen Disbrow*

**July 19, Iowa City Butterfly Count.** Our sixteenth annual count, conducted as part of the North American Butterfly Association's Fourth of July Butterfly Count program, was held on Saturday, July 19, with four participants. Areas visited included Kent Park, Hawkeye Wildlife Area, Macbride Nature-Recreation Area, Lake Macbride State Park, and Turkey Creek Preserve. The weather was partly cloudy with temperatures ranging from 66-82F and light S winds.

Butterfly numbers seem to have rebounded following two subpar years, and this year's results were fairly typical – in 9.25 hours in the field we found 32 species and 767 individuals. The count's average is 33 species and 980 individuals, but that number is skewed upwards by occasional very high counts of Clouded and Orange Sulphurs.

A few species were seen in numbers significantly above average: Great Spangled Fritillary (record high count), Red Admiral, Silver-spotted Skipper, and Black Dash (record high count). Some species were seen in numbers significantly below average: Common Buckeye and Least Skipper. Prominent misses included Red-spotted Purple and Common Sootywing.

For more information about the NABA butterfly count program, visit [www.naba.org](http://www.naba.org).

Participants: Mark Brown, Chris Edwards (leader), Rick Hollis, Tom Jantscher.

Butterflies (32 species, 767 individuals): Black Swallowtail 2, Eastern Tiger Swallowtail 11, Cabbage White 112, Clouded Sulphur 184, Orange Sulphur 51, Little Yellow 24, Gray Copper 2, Bronze Copper 1, Coral Hairstreak 1, Eastern Tailed-Blue 30, Summer Azure 88, American Snout 1, Great Spangled Fritillary 96 (record high count), Meadow Fritillary 4, Pearl Crescent 13, Question Mark 2, Eastern Comma 3, American Lady 4, Painted Lady 4, Red

Admiral 31, Common Buckeye 3, Viceroy 9, Common Wood-Nymph 24, Monarch 28, Silver-spotted Skipper 23, Horace's Duskywing 1, Least Skipper 1, Peck's Skipper 4, Little Glassywing 2 (record high count), Dion Skipper 2, Black Dash 4 (record high count), Dun Skipper 2.

– *Chris Edwards*

**August 17, Hawkeye Wildlife Area.** This was our annual late summer shorebird outing. This time of year most of our neotropical breeders have finished their business and have quietly disappeared. Fall migration begins now with the return of shorebirds from the tundra. The majority of these birds are juveniles in fresh plumage accompanied by a smattering of adult birds in worn breeding plumage.

Fortunately the high waters that had closed roads at Hawkeye Wildlife Area earlier this summer had receded to expose ample mudflats. One of the better places in recent years to find shorebirds is from Sand Point. Jim Forde had posted seeing Red-necked Phalaropes the day before, so that is where we headed.

We stopped briefly at Swan Lake. A Yellow Warbler showed itself as it chipped incessantly from the bushes on the north side of the road. Many Wood Ducks and a few Mallards, the males in their subdued eclipse plumage, were present, but nothing more. A pewee was singing from the Sand Point parking lot.

The long walk out to the point was filled with Killdeer, which demanded looks from birders hopeful for shorebirds of the Buff-breasted variety. American White Pelicans soared overhead. Upon reaching the water we were greeted by a couple dozen Great Egrets standing nearly motionless in the shallows. It was truly picturesque. Our first shorebird was a Spotted Sandpiper fleeing north along the water's edge. Soon we located a mixed flock of shorebirds, but they were still well to our north and most not readily identifiable. We trekked behind the cover of willows and emerged about

100 feet west of the flock. Initially we identified Semipalmated Sandpipers and a couple of juvenile Stilt Sandpipers, but after getting comfortable Least and Pectoral Sandpipers were soon apparent.

Most exciting was a Western Sandpiper. These birds are regular during migration, but rare, and always a great find. This bird's bill was a full third longer than the Semipalmated Sandpipers' and definitely drooped at the tip. It was early enough in the day that all the birds were still fairly backlit though. Our patience was rewarded as the light changed, revealing that this bird did indeed have a couple of rows of rufous-colored scapulars, a key fieldmark. James took the opportunity to conduct something of a peep ID workshop and grilled poor Jerry. Yes, poor Jerry. But James was extremely patient.

After everyone had studied the peeps sufficiently, we continued to the point. There were more shorebirds on mudflats well to our north. Soon we located the Red-necked Phalaropes we had been hoping to see. There were six juveniles and one bird we thought to be an adult. However it was not a good look for any of us, and most of the other birds were not identifiable to species at that distance. Linda did spot a Black-bellied Plover though.

James added a Baird's Sandpiper and Short-billed Dowitcher to the trip list during the walk back. After our birding on Sand Point, just three of us headed to Round Pond, but there weren't many birds there and we didn't add anything new to the list.

Participants: Chris Caster (leader), Jerry Denning, James Huntington, Merle Inhe, Jamie McCoy, Gerald Peterson, Linda Rudolph, Bill Scheible, Donna Warner.

Species (50): Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Red-



tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Greater Yellowlegs, Baird’s Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Red-necked Phalarope, Ring-billed Gull, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, American Crow, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Gray Catbird, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow Warbler, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

– *Chris Caster*

**Laysan Island Exhibit at  
Old Capitol Museum**

This year the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History is celebrating the 100th anniversary of its Laysan Island Cyclorama. This unique exhibit, housed in the Hageboeck Hall of Birds, has fascinated generations of Iowa children and adults. To mark the centennial, a special exhibit is now on display on the second floor rotunda of the Old Capitol Museum through December 31, 2014. The exhibit, “Wonderful Paradise: A Century of Recovery on Laysan Island,” explores the changes innovative science, new technology, and continued renewal have brought the island—and what the next hundred years may hold. Hours are 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat.; 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. Thur.; 1 p.m. – 5 p.m. Sun.; closed Monday.

**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 Ace Hardware at 600 N. Dodge Street, Iowa City, and Forever Green Garden Center at 125 Forevergreen Rd., Coralville.

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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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