

Eastern Iowa Birdwatch

The Iowa City Bird Club Newsletter

Volume 16 Number 2

Summer/Fall 1996

Calendar

Field trips, unless otherwise noted, leave from Terrill Mill Park, located across N. Dubuque Street from the Mayflower. **Meetings** are generally held at 7:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month at Lucas Elementary School, 830 Southlawn Drive, near Towncrest in eastern Iowa City.

September 15, Sunday, 7:00 a.m. Hickory Hill Park or Coralville Reservoir for migrants. James Huntington, 338-1837.

September 28, Saturday, 9:00 a.m. – Noon. Annual Hawk Watch at Stainbrook Preserve. Call Rick Hollis (338-4834) or Dave Conrads (335-9293) for more information. Stainbrook Preserve is located north of North Liberty along Mehaffey Bridge Road, near the entrance to Sugar Bottom Recreation Area.

October 12, Saturday, 9:00 a.m. Canoe the Maquoketa River from Monticello to Eby's Mill. To reserve a canoe call Barbara Beaumont at 626-6227.

October 17, Thursday, 7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting. Carol Thompson will talk about Iowa's Wetlands (and Birds).

October 19, Saturday, 7:00 a.m. Cone Marsh or Coralville Reservoir for waterfowl and other migrants. Bud Gode, 351-5245.

November 10, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. Pleasant Creek State Recreation Area. Chris Caster, 339-8343. Scoters, grebes, loons, and a variety of waterfowl are possible at this Linn County location.

November 21, Thursday, 7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting. Bud Gode will speak on dragonflies and their relatives.

Other Dates of Note

September 6 - 8. IOU Fall Meeting in Mason City. Call Carol Thompson at 338-5361 for details on this and other IOU events.

Calendar (continued)

September 14, Saturday, 7:00 a.m. Cedar Rapids Audubon, Snake Creek Marsh in Greene County. Bring lunch. Meet at the Coe College parking lot on the west side of 13th Street between C & D Avenue for this and other CRA trips (unless otherwise noted). Leader: Pete Wickham.

September 21, Saturday. IOU, Snake Creek Marsh in Greene County for Yellow Rail, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, LeConte's Sparrow.

September 21, Saturday, 7:30 a.m. Cedar Rapids Audubon, local trip. Leader: Dale Fye.

October 5, Saturday, 7:30 a.m. Cedar Rapids Audubon, Bill Brown's Acreage on the Maquoketa River. Meet at the Fleetway parking lot on the east side of Marion. Co-leaders: Jim Durbin and Bill Brown.

October 12, Saturday, 7:30 a.m. Cedar Rapids Audubon, Cedar Valley Nature Trail. Meet at the trailhead at Boyson Pond. Leader: Dale Fye.

November 2, Saturday, 7:30 a.m. Cedar Rapids Audubon, Saylorville or Red Rock. Leader: Roger Heidt.

November 16, Saturday. IOU, Northeast

Iowa with Mark Proescholdt for migrating Tundra Swans on the Mississippi River and Golden Eagles arriving at their winter roost along the Upper Iowa River.

News

A new local Hiking Club has been formed. For information and a current schedule, call Ed or Jean Allgood at 338-8090.

Field Trip and Meeting Reports

28 March, Regular Meeting. Rick Hollis gave an entertaining presentation on Birding in Brazil.

People (13): Ed Allgood, Nancy Carl, Jim Corrigan, Chris Edwards, Jim Fuller, Bud Gode, Virginia Hirst, Rick Hollis, Bernie Knight, Cal Knight, Sally Moore, Jean Sanders, Carol Thompson.

March 31, Cone Marsh. The weather was not the best, especially at Cone Marsh. The temperature started at about 28 and reached only 38 as we returned to Iowa City. The wind-chill was brutal – wind out of the North and Northwest at about 20-25 mph. The sun did manage a few brief outings. In spite of the rough weather I believe the group had a good time and some saw several new birds.

People (14): Pete Brokaw, Nancy Carl, Jim

Corrigan, Bud Gode (leader), Therese Guedon, Christopher and Li Hsien Liu, Lynne and David Mason, Sally Moore, Larry and Marcy Olson, Rex Pleuss, Jean Sanders.

Birds (36 species): American White Pelican, Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose, Green-winged Teal, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, American Coot, Killdeer, Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper, Common Snipe, Ring-billed Gull, Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Bluebird, Northern Cardinal, American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Meadowlark sp., Common Grackle.

18 April, Regular Meeting. Karole Fuller presented a delightful show on (mostly) Springtime Woodland Wildflowers.

People (15): Ed Allgood, Jean Allgood, Bob Berry, Glorine Berry, Nancy Carl, Margrieta Delle, Karen Disbrow, Jim Fuller, Karole Fuller, Bud Gode, Virginia Hirst, Rick Hollis, Ramona McGurk, Sally Moore, Mary Noble.

April 20, Sutliff Area and Lake Macbride. Ten hardy birders braved the elements on a cold, windy, rainy morning. We birded a private area along the Cedar River near Sutliff, with stops at Lake Macbride on the way there and back. We saw quite a few birds considering the weather. Highlights included an Osprey patrolling the Cedar River and three late White-fronted Geese near Lake Macbride.

People (10): Chris Edwards, Julie Englander,

Bud Gode, Hilary Hay, Jim Hay, Ramona McGurk, Gail McLure, John McLure (leader), Mary Noble, Vickie Wyant.

Birds (49 species): Pied-billed Grebe, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Greater White-fronted Goose, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, Red-breasted Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, American Coot, Killdeer, Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Forster's Tern, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, European Starling, Northern Cardinal, Chipping Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

June 2, Frytown Conservation Area. We had a beautiful sunny day. The Frytown Area has been recently cleared in the eastern section. The western part is heavily wooded and contains two small ponds. There are rough trails throughout the area.

People (4): Barbara Beaumont (leader), Rick Hollis, Kay Ramani, Jean Sanders.

Birds (42 species): Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, Northern Bobwhite, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Wood-pewee, Least Flycatcher, Great Crested Flycatcher, Cliff Swallow (seen in Iowa City), Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee,

House Wren, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Bell's Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow Warbler, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Rufous-sided Towhee, Field Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch.

June 16, Beams' Woods. We arrived at this private woodland north of Stone City just as a thunderstorm let loose. Eventually the rain let up and we hiked the bluffs and ravines in search of birds. The highlights were numerous Acadian Flycatchers and Veerys as well as two evasive Kentucky Warblers. Wildflowers in bloom included Columbine, Spiderwort, and Wild Geranium.

People (3): Chris Edwards (leader), Julie Englander, James Huntington.

Birds (30 species): Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Barred Owl, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Great Crested Flycatcher, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Veery, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Kentucky Warbler, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Rufous-sided Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, House Sparrow.

Book Reviews

Stokes Field Guide to Birds, Eastern Region.

Donald and Lillian Stokes. 1996. Little, Brown and Company. 472 pp. \$16.95. Available at the Iowa City Public Library. This new photographic field guide covers the eastern half of North America, including southern Texas. A companion volume covers Western North America. One or more color photographs, text, and a small range map for a single species are presented on each page. In some instances two closely related species, such as Western and Clark's Grebes, are presented on one page. The text includes sections on identification, feeding, nesting, other behavior, habitat, voice, and conservation for each species. An introductory "Quick Guide to the Most Common Birds" and "Learning Pages" for each major bird group are designed to show beginners the most common birds. Two excellent features are a quick alphabetical index on the inside of the front and back covers, and a color tab index to bird groups on the outside edge of the pages. Birds are presented in taxonomic order according to the 1995 supplement of the AOU checklist.

The photographs vary widely in quality but are generally very good. They are one of the most attractive features of the guide, but for identification purposes are much less useful than the painted plates in other field guides. The one-species-per-page format is convenient, but makes it more difficult to compare the relative size and plumage differences of similar species.

There are several significant species omissions, including Thayer's Gull, which is now considered "regular" in Iowa. There are no North American vagrants and very few exotic species, and several rare but regular Texas species, such as Brown Jay and Red-billed Pigeon, are missing. I noted several inaccuracies in the range maps for our area, such as the summer ranges of White Ibis and Pine Warbler encompassing part of Iowa. The text information on behavior and conservation,

although brief, is a welcome addition that most guides lack. The quick index and color tab index are excellent features that allow for quick lookups.

In summary, this is a useful supplemental field guide that includes nice photographs and several other attractive features. However, for identification purposes the Peterson and National Geographic field guides are still recommended.

–Chris Edwards

The Wind Masters. Pete Dunne. 1995. Houghton Mifflin Co. 257 pp. plus brief bibliography. 66 pen and ink drawings by David Sibley. Available at the Iowa City Public Library. I do not normally like fictionalized looks at nature. I feel pretty much about them as did T.R. when he referred to one book entitled *Wild Animals I Have Known* as "*Wild Animals I Never Knew*". The present book is something altogether different. It does not pull any punches about the sometimes brutality of nature. There are brief chapters, mostly told through the bird, about every raptor breeding in the U.S. (Vultures are included, and their inclusion is justified.) I enjoyed reading it and learned some things. Sibley's illustrations capture the mood of the species. What more could a reader ask?

–Rick Hollis

Spring Migration Count – May 11, 1996

Rick Hollis

While the 5" of rain received two days prior to the count conclusively broke this spring's drought, it limited our access to birding areas and birds. For that matter, it almost certainly limited nesting success for ground- (and low-) nesting species in some areas. The prolonged cool wet weather of which this was the beginning may have also limited nesting success for insectivorous birds in our area.

People (3 parties of 1, 1, and 2+): Margrieta Delle, Chris Edwards, Rick Hollis, and Rick and Margrieta's birdwatching class from the museum.

Birds: American White Pelican (60), Double-crested Cormorant (65), Great Blue Heron (2), Green Heron (2), Black-crowned Night-Heron (1), Canada Goose (25), Wood Duck (3), Mallard (10), Northern Shoveler (1), Lesser Scaup (9), Ruddy Duck (4), Turkey Vulture (8), Osprey (2), Sharp-shinned Hawk (3), Broad-winged Hawk (5), Red-tailed Hawk (1), *Buteo* sp. (1), Ring-necked Pheasant (2), American Coot (20), Killdeer (4), Greater Yellowlegs (2), Lesser Yellowlegs (2), Spotted Sandpiper (1), Bonaparte's Gull (2), Caspian Tern (3), *Sterna* sp. (1), Mourning Dove (16), Yellow-billed Cuckoo (2), Barred Owl (1), Chimney Swift (15), Ruby-throated Hummingbird (1), Belted Kingfisher (2), Red-headed Woodpecker (3), Red-bellied Woodpecker (11), Downy Woodpecker (9), Hairy Woodpecker (4), Northern Flicker (1), Least Flycatcher (5), *Empidonax* sp. (2), Eastern Phoebe (15), Great Crested Flycatcher (5), Eastern Kingbird (4), Tree Swallow (15), Bank Swallow (2), Cliff Swallow (32), Barn Swallow (16), Blue Jay (34), American Crow (35), Black-capped Chickadee (36), Tufted Titmouse (10),

White-breasted Nuthatch (12), House Wren (35), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (11), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (3), Eastern Bluebird (4), Veery (4), Gray-cheeked Thrush (2), Swainson's Thrush (28), Wood Thrush (1), American Robin (27), Gray Catbird (54), Brown Thrasher (14), European Starling (39), Solitary Vireo (18), Yellow-throated Vireo (3), Warbling Vireo (2), Red-eyed Vireo (2), Golden-winged Warbler (3), Tennessee Warbler (3), Orange-crowned Warbler (2), Nashville Warbler (18), Northern Parula (3), Yellow Warbler (16), Chestnut-sided Warbler (4), Magnolia Warbler (7), Cape May Warbler (1), Yellow-rumped Warbler (100), Black-throated Green Warbler (14), Blackburnian Warbler (4), Yellow-throated Warbler (1), Prairie Warbler (2), Palm Warbler (27), Bay-breasted Warbler (3), Blackpoll Warbler (3), Cerulean Warbler (1), Black-and-white Warbler (27), American Redstart (8), Ovenbird (40), Northern Waterthrush (10), Common Yellowthroat (15), Wilson's Warbler (5), Scarlet Tanager (1), Northern Cardinal (48), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (4), Indigo Bunting (2), Rufous-sided Towhee (3), Chipping Sparrow (5), Field Sparrow (16), Song Sparrow (10), Swamp Sparrow (17), White-throated Sparrow (47), White-crowned Sparrow (3), Red-winged Blackbird (53), Eastern Meadowlark (1), Common Grackle (16), Brown-headed Cowbird (9), Baltimore Oriole (21), American Goldfinch (19), House Sparrow (45).

With our poor counter turnout, I am not sure of what benefit our numbers are, but we had 1,411 individuals, of 109 species. The most numerous 15 species, in order of abundance:

100 Yellow-rumped Warbler
65 Double-crested Cormorant
60 American White Pelican

54 Gray Catbird
 53 Red-winged Blackbird
 48 Northern Cardinal
 47 White-throated Sparrow
 45 House Sparrow
 40 Ovenbird
 39 European Starling

36 Black-capped Chickadee
 35 House Wren
 35 American Crow
 34 Blue Jay
 32 Cliff Swallow

Grumblings from Rick's Desk

Meetings: It seems that fewer and fewer people are coming to our meetings. It almost makes one wonder if we should continue to hold meetings. We will have a lineup for the fall, but before the spring schedule is arranged, we should make a decision whether to continue to hold meetings. Our speakers put time and effort into their talks, and when so few people show up it is disappointing for them.

Field Trip Starting Point: Since we had the unfortunate case of two cars receiving parking tickets on a field trip, we cannot continue to carpool from and leave the cars at Terrill Mill Park. Rather than change our rendezvous point of long standing (at least several years), I've decided that perhaps the best bet is to continue to meet at Terrill Mill, then drive independently to an appropriate point to start car pooling. (City Park, for trips W and N, and SE Jr High for Cone Marsh trips.) This way, we do not have to remember, "This is the trip to _____, so we meet at _____."

Beginner's Birdwatching Class: I have taught some form of a birdwatching class, off and on over the past 15 years. It has probably been presented more years than not, sometimes through Kirkwood, sometimes through a now defunct program at the University and most recently through the Museum of Natural History. The past two years I have had a wonderful co-instructor, Margrieta Delle, whose ear and tape and slide collections made up for my inadequacies in those regards. She has been a joy to work with. After this amount of time, I am a little burnt out and probably will be taking

several years off. It is a good idea that such a course/workshop be offered. It helps newcomers to the area find places quicker than they might stumbling around on their own, it helps true birding neophytes to get more fun out of the avocation we all share, and it does bring people into the bird club. On our most recent field trip to Frytown, there were three club regulars and one person who had been in the course this spring. The reason I am talking about this is in hopes that someone will think "Hey that sounds like fun! I could do that." Yes it is fun and many of us could do it. I invite you to consider it. I am sure that David Brenzel at the museum would like to do it again – it has been very popular. I would offer as much or as little advice or help as asked for. My handouts could be used, and I might even consider helping on a field trip or two.

Spring Count: This a personal addendum to the formal report that is presented elsewhere in this issue. Very notable in this year's Spring Count are our misses, birds you know were in Johnson County this 11 May, that our inadequate coverage missed. Our number of watchers and number of parties is down. I cannot understand why we can't get more people involved with this. We get a bunch of people to go out at Christmas, at times in some truly miserable weather, yet we can't seem to get more than a few parties in the field in what is prime birding season. I understand that many have other commitments, but you do not have to do this all day. You do not even have to give up going down to Cone or wherever you want to chase. Simply report on what you saw, how long you birded, etc., for the time you were in Johnson Co. I realize with a one-day shot, it

precludes participating in multiple counts, and that we do lose some people to Cedar Co., and that sometimes special things pop up (graduations, etc.) – these are unavoidable and similar things happen around Christmas Count time. Let's try to treat next year's Spring Count like we do a Christmas Count. Put it on your mental calendar now – it is the same time as always. Make it a Big Deal! Gather a party together. Plan on helping us do it right next year! If we cannot do it right, perhaps those of us who believe it is a useful idea should pack it up and head to one of the counties where it is done better and help them do it right.

That is more than enough grumbling for one issue.

Good birding,
Rick

Computer Corner

Chris Edwards

Peterson Multimedia Guides: North American Birds. 1995. Houghton Mifflin Interactive. A relatively new resource for birders, multimedia CD-ROM guides combine text, graphics, audio, and video in a single product. This Windows CD-ROM covers 949 North American species, and includes the illustrations and text from the Peterson Eastern and Western Field Guides. Bird songs and calls, photographs, range maps, and additional text are included for almost all of the 672 nesting species.

At the heart of the program are the species screens, which are reached by first selecting one of Peterson's eight visual categories (Passerines, Birds of Prey, Long-legged Waders, etc.), then the bird family, and finally the individual species. Each species screen displays Peterson's field guide illustrations and text for that species. An audio clip of the bird's songs and calls, a full-screen photograph, a range map, illustrations of similar species, and text on

habitat, feeding, nesting, and status are available in pop-up windows.

A bird finder tool allows the user to search for species based on specific criteria, including visual category or family; region or state; season (summer or winter); habitat; size; and color. The results of the search are displayed as a list, which is linked to the species screens. For example, a search for shorebirds found in Texas during the winter produces a list of 36 species; selecting any species from this list takes the user to the species screen for that bird. The bird list for Iowa, containing 301 species, is fairly accurate but includes several casual and accidental species and omits Black Scoter, Eurasian Tree Sparrow and several gulls.

One of the most useful features of the program is the Skill Builder, which allows the user to test their bird identification skills. The objective is to identify a series of birds based on the limited information presented. The user controls what information is available during the quiz: artwork, songs and calls, field marks, range maps, etc. A filter can be set so that only certain birds are included. For example, the program can be set to randomly play the songs and calls of all warblers found in Iowa for the user to identify.

There are several other features included. A lifelist feature allows the user to enter the name, location and date of personal sightings. The list cannot be sorted or printed but can be exported to a word processing program. Sixteen multimedia essays on different birding topics, as well as a video tutorial on watching birds with Roger Tory Peterson, are also included.

The program has two relatively minor shortcomings. Many of the bird songs, although useful, are of lesser quality than the bird song recordings available on cassette and compact disc. The program's performance is also somewhat slow. On my Pentium computer there is typically a five- to ten-second delay between screens. Perhaps these problems will

be remedied in a future version.

North American Birds is an exciting program and an excellent learning tool. The list price is \$69.95, but it is available from local retailers for as low as \$42.99. The Iowa City Public Library has a new collection of CD-ROMs, but does not have this title yet.

There are several other similar guides available on the market. In the next issue I'll take a look at the new Audubon North American Birds CD-ROM and see how it compares to the Peterson guide.

Bird Notes

RED CROSSBILLS INVADE IOWA. An incredible Red Crossbill irruption has occurred in Iowa this summer. In July and early August there were more than twenty-five reports of crossbills from all areas of the state. Most reports were of small flocks of birds visiting feeders for several days. Red Crossbills are nomadic and have previously been observed in Iowa during the summer, but an invasion of this magnitude is unprecedented. There have also been reports from Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, and Wisconsin. A pine cone crop failure in the western United States, caused by drought conditions, is thought to be responsible for the movement.

– *Iowa Birdline, Birdchat*

PEREGRINE FALCON KILLED AFTER IOWA CITY RELEASE. Three juvenile Peregrine Falcons were released in July at the University of Iowa Power Plant as part of the Iowa City Peregrine Falcon Reintroduction Project. The project is a joint effort of the Macbride Raptor Project, the University of Iowa, and Kirkwood Community College. Unfortunately, several hours after the release

one of the three birds was killed by an adult Peregrine Falcon, which appeared suddenly and has apparently decided to take up residence at the power plant. The two surviving juveniles were moved to a DNR release site in Mason City. The goal of the project is to establish a pair of breeding adult falcons in the Iowa City area. It is hoped that the adult will remain at the site and lure a mate. – *Iowa City Press-Citizen*

IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS. Under new leadership, the National Audubon Society is placing a renewed emphasis on bird conservation. The Important Bird Areas (IBA) project is a new joint program with the American Bird Conservancy. Pennsylvania is the first state to participate in the program. Birdwatchers, wildlife biologists, land managers, and conservationists in Pennsylvania have identified and nominated more than 150 sites for consideration. Sites are evaluated based on specific criteria, such as whether birds concentrate there in significant numbers during breeding or migration, or whether endangered or vulnerable species are present. Nominated sites will be reviewed by ornithologists in the state. Audubon plans to introduce the IBA program to each state. – *Inside Audubon*

PRAIRIE-CHICKEN REINTRODUCTION. The DNR's efforts to reintroduce the Greater Prairie-chicken in Iowa appear to be paying off. 560 prairie-chickens were released in Ringgold and Adair counties from 1987 to 1994. Reproduction has been documented in Ringgold County in most years since 1988, and a number of the released birds have turned up at a historical lek in northern Missouri, where the number of booming males reached 35 in 1995. Overall, the number of booming grounds in Iowa increased from three in 1994 to seven in 1995 with 40 booming males in Ringgold, Adair, Adams, and Decatur counties. Once a common bird in Iowa, prairie-chickens were extirpated by

habitat loss and overharvesting, with the last Iowa nests reported in 1952. All bordering states have maintained at least small remnant populations. – *Wildlife Diversity News*

RECORD HAWK MIGRATION. Sightings of Merlins, Bald Eagles, and Golden Eagles broke all-time season records at Pennsylvania's Hawk Mountain last fall. A total of 24,50 migrating birds of prey were sighted, and twelve of the sixteen species counted exceeded their ten-year averages. Flights of Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks were the best since 1983, and Northern Goshawk numbers were also higher than usual. "It indicates that some populations are definitely recovering from past lows," noted Laurie Goodrich, senior naturalist at the sanctuary. – *Birder's World*

NEW BIRD SPECIES DISCOVERED. A new species of hummingbird, the Chiribiquette Emerald (*Chlorostilbon olivaresi*), was discovered in a small isolated mountain range in southeastern Columbia. The location of the bird's discovery, consisting of flat-top buttes with low-growing, scrubby vegetation and areas of barren rock, has only recently been explored by biologists. The hummingbird is actually quite common in the open scrub areas.

– *The Wilson Bulletin*

KIRTLAND'S WARBLER EXPANDING RANGE. The endangered Kirtland's Warbler may be expanding its nesting range into Michigan's Upper Peninsula, according to Michigan DNR biologists. Five singing males and six females were found there during surveys in June. The main population of Kirtland's Warblers nests in jack pine forests in the Lower Peninsula, where 678 singing males were found this year. Jack pines planted in the Upper Peninsula during the last ten years are now providing suitable habitat for the warblers, which nest only in stands of jack pines between

five and sixteen feet tall with live branches that reach the ground. – *Associated Press*

SNOW GEESE OVERPOPULATION. Snow geese populations are so high that market hunting or other extreme measures may be needed to avoid a catastrophic die-off, according to biologists on a task force studying the problem. In the past thirty years, snow goose numbers have tripled to nearly three million. The geese are destroying habitat on their Arctic nesting grounds, which could affect shorebirds and other species. The task force is expected to make recommendations later this year for controlling the population. – *Des Moines Register*

BALD EAGLE SURVEY. This winter 1,338 bald eagles were tallied in 46 counties on the Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey. The number is down slightly from the 1995 count of 1,416 birds, but the high percentage of juveniles birds (33%) still indicates a healthy eagle population. Eagle nesting numbers continue to rise, both nationwide and in Iowa. There are now at least 4,500 pairs of nesting Bald Eagles in the lower 48 states. Iowa had at least 38 active nests in 1995, and at least 49 eaglets fledged from 27 of those nests. On August 11, 1995 the Bald Eagle was officially upgraded from endangered to threatened status throughout the contiguous states. – *Wildlife Diversity Program*

BALD EAGLE KILLED. A Texas state corrections officer and his friend received a total of four months of home confinement, 400 hours of community service and \$24,240 in fines for shooting and killing a Bald Eagle. The men were caught when a quick-thinking film processor contacted authorities after developing 10 color photographs that the men had taken of the eagle. – *Cedar Rapids Gazette*

MISSISSIPPI KITES DEFEND NEST. A

pair of Mississippi Kites that attacked some Hutchinson, Kansas, residents while protecting their nest lost a custody battle with state wildlife officials. The Department of Wildlife and Parks removed the nest containing one young kite to stop the adult birds from dive-bombing passers-by. The chick was taken to Tennessee, where it will live with other young kites and be released.

– *University of Iowa Noon News*

Thanks to Rick Hollis and Bud Gode for contributions to this issue's *Bird Notes*.

Iowa City Bird Club

Eastern Iowa Birdwatch is published quarterly. Members are encouraged to send articles, reviews, notes, and comments to Chris Edwards, 85 Whitman Ave., North Liberty, IA 52317, or e-mail to CREdwards@aol.com.

Annual membership dues are \$5.00, payable by January 1st for the coming year to Bernie Knight, Eastern Iowa Birdwatch, 425 Lee St., Iowa City, IA 52246. Check your mailing label for the year you have paid through.

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