



# I O U News

Iowa Ornithologists' Union Newsletter

Spring 2001



Volume 17 – Number 1

## Hank and Linda Zaletel and the I.O.U. Newsletter

Jim Dinsmore

This, the first issue of volume 17 of the I.O.U. Newsletter, is also the first issue that was not produced by Hank and Linda Zaletel. Hank and Linda have edited the newsletter since its inception 16 years and about 60 issues ago. This is a remarkable record of service and dedication and it deserves some comment.

In the early 1980s, a number of members of the I.O.U. expressed a desire for having a newsletter that would be less technical in nature than Iowa Bird Life and that would publish announcements, news of members, and other such items on a regular basis. Bird groups in other states had such a newsletter, and it seemed that it was time for the I.O.U. to do so as well.

To get the ball rolling, I.O.U. President Carl Bendorf appointed an ad hoc Publications Committee which met in April 1985. That committee, which consisted of Jim Dinsmore, Tom Kent, Pete Petersen, Nancy Slife, and Linda Zaletel, discussed content, format, method and frequency of publication, and several other topics at our meeting. One concern was to make sure the publication did not overlap with Iowa Bird Life. We drafted a call for proposals from individuals who might be interested in serving as editor of the newsletter. That call for proposals was inserted in the next issue of Iowa Bird Life.

The response, as expected, was not overwhelming but we did get one proposal, from Hank and Linda. Their proposal was reviewed by the Publications Committee and accepted by the I.O.U. Board of Directors. Within just a few months, a newsletter had become a reality!

The first issue was published late in 1985 and was the sole issue for volume 1. In the years that followed, four quarterly issues per year were the norm. That first 8-page issue, published on the same goldenrod-colored paper that was used in all successive issues, included information on the upcoming Christmas Bird Counts, information and forms for the 1986 Winter Bird Feeder Survey, and articles on Bald Eagle Days and several other topics. Hank and Linda at first wanted to name the newsletter The Goldfinch News but soon found that the Iowa Historical Society had a publication with a similar name so they settled



Señor Zaletel in Mexico, Feb 2001.  
Photo by Kay Niyo.

on I.O.U. News, the name that they retained throughout the sixteen volumes.

Over the years, the masthead, logo, and layout have changed (and improved) as Hank and Linda have made use of new computer software to produce the newsletter. Hidden from the membership is the fact that Hank and Linda have gone through several computers and a succession of software (at their own expense) as they continually upgraded the newsletter. Although the content of the issues has varied greatly depending upon what was happening and what was being submitted to them (often not much), there was also a level of predictability to the content of some issues.

The winter issue each year contained information on the upcoming Christmas Bird Counts and, for many years, the Winter Bird Feeder Survey. The spring issue usually contained information on the upcoming spring meeting and a report on who had been nominated for officer positions for the elections to be held at that meeting. The summer issue typically contained information on the upcoming fall meeting as well as a report on the previous spring meeting. Other regular news included reports on members, birding activities around Iowa, lists of publications on Iowa birds, and a wide variety of other items. One novel way to get articles was to reprint interesting newspaper articles from around Iowa. Hank was good at finding such articles, and these often provided interesting biographies of Iowa birders or stories about birding activi-

*(continued on page 3)*



**IOU News is a quarterly publication of  
The Iowa Ornithologists' Union**

**Iowa Ornithologists' Union**

Founded 1923

**Officers:**

President- Mark Proescholdt; Box 65, Liscomb, IA50148  
VicePresident- Tom Johnson  
Secretary- Jane Clark  
Treasurer- Rita Goranson  
Board- Dan Dorrance, Maridel Jackson, Curt Nelson,  
James Scheib, Phil Walsh  
Registrar-David Edwards

Journal: **Iowa Bird Life**, quarterly;  
Editor- Kayleen Niyo, [kniyo@aol.com](mailto:kniyo@aol.com)

**Documenting / Reporting Birds:**

**Records Committee-**

Ann Johnson; 432 120th Avenue, Norwalk IA 50211  
[hologrambirds@worldnet.att.net](mailto:hologrambirds@worldnet.att.net)

**Winter Field Reports-**

Robert Cecil; 1315 41<sup>st</sup> Street, Des Moines, IA 50311  
[wewarb@aol.com](mailto:wewarb@aol.com)

**Spring Field Reports-**

Matthew Kenne; 709 N. Phillips, Algona, IA 50511  
[meekeck@rconnect.com](mailto:meekeck@rconnect.com)

**Summer Field Reports-**

James Dinsmore; 4024 Arkansas Drive, Ames IA 50014  
[oldcoot@iastate.edu](mailto:oldcoot@iastate.edu)

**Fall Field Reports-**

James Fuller; 6 Longview Knoll N.E., Iowa City, IA 52240  
[james-fuller@uiowa.edu](mailto:james-fuller@uiowa.edu)

Iowa Birdline: (319) 338-9881

**Bird Censuses:**

Spring Bird Count- Ann Barker  
Christmas Bird Count- Stephen Dinsmore

**Resources:**

Field Checklist of Iowa Birds:

Maridel Jackson  
410 S.W. Westview Drive, Ankeny, IA 50021

Website: <http://www.iowabirds.org/>

Listserv: IA-BIRD <[hologrambirds@worldnet.att.net](mailto:hologrambirds@worldnet.att.net)>

**Membership / Subscriptions:**

David Edwards  
2308 State Avenue, Ames, IA 50014  
[dcejcd@uswest.net](mailto:dcejcd@uswest.net)

**IOU News:**

**Send materials to:**

Paul Hertzell  
240 12th St SE, Mason City, IA 50401  
[phertzell@rconnect.com](mailto:phertzell@rconnect.com)

**Send thanks to:**

Linda Zaletel, Hank Zaletel,  
Ann Barker, Al Batt, Bob Cecil, Jane Clark, Jim Dinsmore,  
Stephen Dinsmore, Dave Edwards, Rita Goranson,  
Karl Jungbluth, Matt Kenne, Mary Lou Petersen,  
Mark Proescholdt, Gerald White

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## Slate of Candidates for 2001

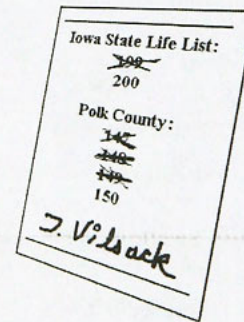
From the Nominations Committee — The slate of candidates for 2001, to be voted upon during the IOU spring meeting in Keosauqua:

President -	Phil Walsh
Vice-President -	Tom Johnson
Board of Directors-	Sharon Stilwell
	Linda Zalatel
	Dick Tetrault

The Nominations Committee consists of Ann Johnson (Chair), Ann Barker, and Jim Fuller.

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## State and County Bird Lists

Mary Lou Petersen

Members are encouraged to submit their state and county bird lists for the 2000 calendar year. The threshold for the state list is 200 species, and the threshold for each county list is 150. All that is needed is the number of species for each list. These are lifelong totals, and cover all species of wild birds positively identified and recorded within the political boundaries of the state and/or individual counties. One does not need to be a resident of Iowa in order to report totals, just an I.O.U. member.

Records through 2000 are due by 31 May, 2001, and should be sent to:

Mary Lou Petersen  
3448 Maple Glen Drive  
Bettendorf, IA 52722-2899



## Zalatel

(continued from page 1)

ties around the state. Hank also regularly took photographs at the spring and fall meetings, many of which appeared in the newsletter.

The division of labor quickly evolved into Hank being in charge of finding the material and Linda being the creative person who did the layout and actual production of the newsletter. It certainly was a partnership that worked well for the organization. Hank and Linda have done a great job over the years, making sure that the newsletter came out on a regular basis and that it always contained information that would be of interest to the membership. After 16 years of dedicated work for the organization, we all owe them a hearty "Thank you" for a job well done. They leave big footprints to fill.



### Swallow Nest Alert

Many Iowa Cliff Swallow nests have been destroyed while the Iowa DOT performed maintenance on highway bridges with high-pressure water used to remove salt residue from the structures. Last year the washing was taking place well into the birds' breeding season on the Highway 92 bridge at Muscatine, an action in violation of migratory bird laws. So the state has adopted a new procedure for the washing. Still, it is a concern that the contractors who do the work may need a period of adjustment to comply. To meet that challenge, please report any future nest destruction or removal from the bridges to Gerald White. He will forward the information until the situation is resolved. Please provide as much documentation as possible if any acts of nest removal are observed.

Gerald White  
1505 East 5th. St  
Muscatine, IA 52761  
(319) 263-3464  
[dwhite@machlink.com](mailto:dwhite@machlink.com)

## SEASONAL FIELD REPORTING

Matthew Kenne

Soon, the stream of spring migrants will trickle off and the laziness of summer nesting will begin. How will history record the passage of this season to the next? With the Spring Field Report in Iowa Bird Life! I know many of you see an installment of Field Reports and feel the need to stifle a yawn, but I believe they really do serve a vital function for this organization. You regularly hear that we need to record our observations for use by future generations of researchers and conservationists. That's a fine and noble idea, though I'm not convinced the observations of amateurs, no matter how scientifically structured, carry much weight with many professional biologists.

Mine is a much more personal reason for submitting field reports at the end of every season, a reason that I think all birders who spend time in the field in Iowa should emulate: helping other birders learn, as I learn, from field reports. Because I had no club, partner, or mentor in the field as I began birding, Field Reports helped to fill gaps in my knowledge and gave me the benefit of the vast experience of others. The information on range and migration I pulled from the reports changed my plans and expectations when I went birding by preparing me for the unexpected. I've looked for, and sometimes found, new birds because of what I've learned from reading Field Reports.

In the last five years of Field Reports, the following are some examples of information that aren't to be seen in books or heard on the Birdline: new early and late migration dates of many species; new public areas to explore; expanded colonization areas of such species as Eurasian Tree Sparrow, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Sandhill Crane, Mississippi Kite, and Great-tailed Grackle; nesting success of Piping Plovers, Least Terns, and Barn Owls; the continued

presence of Black-billed Magpies along the Missouri; the widespread-but-rare nesting of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Brown Creeper through the northern counties, and Henslow's Sparrow around the state; coverage of events such as the July 1996 Red Crossbill invasion, the November 10, 1998 windstorm and its birds, and rarities brought into the state by mid-April snow or thunderstorms. Using Iowa Field Report dates never worked for finding spring Smith's Longspurs in my area, but Minnesota Field Reports pointed us in the right direction and opened up the fall.

If you want to (in the words inside the front cover of every issue of Iowa Bird Life) encourage interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and unite those who have these interests in common, send your important observations to each season's Field Reports Editor. Deadlines and information are found inside the cover of IBL. I found out last year that receiving submissions by e-mail hastened things nicely as far as my deadlines were concerned, but please include your full name and regular address with your report. If you haven't seen a sample field reports form, something like what appears below is fine.

Yes, your contribution will be put into the permanent IOU database for future researchers and conservationists! And, yes, your observations may need to pass through the workings of the Records Committee to ensure as much accuracy as possible for those future researchers. Contrary to popular belief, dealing with the Records Committee is nothing to be leery of; I've always considered submitting documentations a reminder that I've seen some really good birds! If you have any questions concerning the process, please contact myself, or one of the other Field Report Editors.

Species	Number	Date	Location	Comments
Common Loon	2	May 30	Smith Lake, Kossuth Co.	alternate plumage
Least Flycatcher	1	May 30	Smith Lake	singing "chebek"



## Things To Do

### April 21

Sandhill Crane Count. Experience the marsh habitat at daybreak while helping the Cedar Rapids Audubon Society count cranes at Otter Creek Marsh in Tama County. Contact Roger Heidt (319) 393-5712.

### April 22

Quad City Audubon Society field trip. Visit Sherman Park to watch the spectacular courtship display of the American Woodcock. Contact Carol Rogers (319) 324-8897.

### May 4-6

IOU Spring meeting at Hotel Manning, Keosauqua, Iowa. See complete information on pages 4, 5.

### May 12

Wilder than a walkathon, Audubon Birdathon is a national fundraising event (and the world's biggest birdwatching competition) where volunteers team up to spend a single day counting birds. Big Bluestem Audubon invites you to join the fun in central Iowa, or you can stay close to home and raise much-needed funds for the Audubon Iowa State Office. For more information, contact Karl Jungbluth at (515) 432-5057 or [weatherbird@opencominc.com](mailto:weatherbird@opencominc.com)

### May 16

Invasive Species. Pauline Drobney will speak on "Invasive Species" at the Wednesday meeting of Central Iowa Sierra Club at 7:30pm in Des Moines. Pauline is a restoration ecologist at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge. For information contact Jane Clark at (515) 223-5047 or [jrclark@radiks.net](mailto:jrclark@radiks.net)

### May 19

Audubon Iowa Wetland Workshop. Join Audubon Iowa and the National Audubon Society Wetlands Campaign on Saturday for a "Wetland Workshop" at Harrier Marsh, near Ogden

in central Iowa. Experience a wetland firsthand with a discovery tour at Harrier Marsh. Learn to recognize a wetland, understand the importance of wetlands for water quality and take a grassroots approach to saving wetlands. Lunch will be provided for a nominal fee. Speakers will include Dr. Jim Dinsmore, Beth Lapin, Rod Hanson, plus other wetland experts. For more information, contact Karl Jungbluth at (515) 432-5057 or [weatherbird@opencominc.com](mailto:weatherbird@opencominc.com)

### Bird courses at Lakeside Laboratory

This year, two bird courses will be taught at Lakeside Laboratory on West Okoboji.

#### May 20-25

Birds and Birding. 1 credit. This is one of several natural history workshops the lab is offering. It can also be taken as a non-credit course. The course will be field oriented with emphasis on the common birds of wetlands, grasslands, and woodlands in the Great Lakes region. Instructor: Jim Dinsmore, Iowa State University.

#### May 20 - June 15

Ornithology. 3 credits. The biology, ecology, and behavior of birds with emphasis on field studies of local avifauna. Group projects stress techniques for population analysis and methodology for population studies. This is a more traditional course with much of the work involving fieldwork, data collection, and analysis. Instructor: Neil Bernstein, Mount Mercy College.

For more information, visit the lakeside web site ([www.lakeside.iastate.edu](http://www.lakeside.iastate.edu)), or contact: Iowa Lakeside Laboratory  
131 Bessey Hall  
Iowa State University  
Ames, IA 50011  
[lakeside@iastate.edu](mailto:lakeside@iastate.edu)  
(515) 294-2488

### May 26

Shorebird and Waterfowl field trip to Colo Ponds and Hendrickson Marsh. People will be meeting at the Nevada Courthouse by the cannon at 8:00 AM. All are welcome on this half-day trip. Wear boots, as there is a chance of getting wet. Contact Hank Zaletel [madowl@midiowa.net](mailto:madowl@midiowa.net).

### June 2

Annual Birders' Brunch at the Ledges State Park with the Big Bluestem Audubon Society. Meet in the upper Ledges at 8 AM., and bring a food item to share. Contact Carol Berrier (515) 965-8242.

## In the Region

### April 28 Minnesota

MOU Salt Lake trip. The MOU takes a field trip to Salt Lake the fourth weekend in April. Typically, birdwatchers see more than 130 species on these outings. Reservations are \$10 per person and include a dinner at 7:30 that night. Call Lillian Pederson at (320) 598-7438. Lodging is available in private homes for \$10 per person per night. Call Scotty Kuehl at (320) 598-3664 for more information.

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Lodging:

-  The historic Hotel Manning offers antique adorned rooms ranging from \$30 to \$60.
- Two Superior rooms with sitting areas and alcoves overlooking the Des Moines River - \$60
  - Eight deluxe rooms - \$50
  - Eight economy rooms with shared bath and one double bed- \$30 single, \$35 double.
  - The adjacent motel has an additional 19 rooms, ranging from \$38 to \$44 (double occupancy).

Additional information on the Hotel Manning and photos of the rooms are available on the hotel's web site at [www.netins.net/showcase/manning](http://www.netins.net/showcase/manning). Phone: (319) 293-3232.

 Super 8 Motel in Farifield (20 miles). (641) 469-2000.

 The Villages of Van Buren have several Bed & Breakfasts. For more information, call 1-800-868-7822, or check the web site at [www.800-tourvbc.com](http://www.800-tourvbc.com).

 Camping is available at Lacey-Keosauqua State Park

**Registration and Meals**

Registration

Number of persons \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$6.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Meals, Sat. May 5

Breakfast\* \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$5.25 = \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$5.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Banquet \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$8.50 = \_\_\_\_\_

Meals, Sun. May 6

Breakfast\* \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$5.25 = \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$5.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Total = \_\_\_\_\_

\* Breakfast is included for Hotel Manning guests, and guests of the adjacent motel

Make checks payable to: Robert Cecil, 1315 41st Street, Des Moines, IA 50311

Registration by April 25 will be appreciated.



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## Excerpts

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The Croton Unit is one of the largest contiguous segments of the Shimek State Forest, comprising some 1,000 acres. Located along the Des Moines River in Southern Lee County, it has become well known as a reliable location for a number of species typically associated with the southeastern United States. In recent years, 12 warbler species have nested or been suspected of nesting in the area, and at least 10 nest annually. In addition, the area is noted for vireos, both tanagers, and other woodland species.

-Bob Cecil, 1993,  
Birding the Croton Unit of Shimek State Forest, *Iowa Bird Life* 63:10-13

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Travel south along Iowa Hwy. 1 through central Van Buren County and you'll sense a real difference in the landscape as you gradually descend a series of broad terraces into Iowa's "Big Bend" country. Level lowlands spread out ahead, ending against a forested bluff in the far distance. The sweeping bluff outlines a great bend in the Des Moines River and the beginning of Lacey-Keosauqua State Park. The park itself overlooks nearly 2 miles of the unusually large, 13-mile long loop in the Des Moines River, a major diversion from its dominantly southeastern course to the Mississippi River. This "Big Bend" segment of the river is steeped in both geologic and human history, for its past reaches back to the sandy floors of ancient seas and to the splash of pioneer wagons fording the river.

-Robert M. McKay,  
Lacey-Keosauqua State Park: Iowa's "Big Bend" Country; from *Iowa Geology 1997*, Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

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On March 1, 1846, the large (Mormon) camp of Israel company began its three-and-a-half-month trek to the Missouri River, about 300 miles away. . . Captain William Pitt's Navoo Band presented concerts for pay at Farmington's Galt House and schoolhouse on March 4, and in Keosauqua's Van Buren County Courthouse on March 10, 11, and 17, followed by a private concert in Keosauqua's Hotel, also on March 17.

-W.G. Hartley, 2001,  
Mormons and Early Iowa History (1838 to 1858): Eight Distinct Counties; in *The Annals of Iowa* 59:217-260

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On 15 May, 1993, my wife Patricia and I discovered a Northern Parula nest at Lacey-Keosauqua State Park, Van Buren County, along the first stream crossing at the east entrance road. A male's characteristic song was heard near where a female was foraging. Soon the female disappeared into or onto the nest which was placed approximately 40 feet high in the outermost branches of a hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) tree.

-D. Randall Pinkston, 1994,  
Northern Parula nest in Van Buren County, *Iowa Bird Life* 64:19-20.

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The Northern Parula nests throughout most of the eastern United States and bordering areas of Canada, with the exception of southern Florida, and in an area of the upper Midwest that is centered in Indiana but includes Iowa.

-Laura Jackson, et. al., 1996,  
*The Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas*, p.312, University of Iowa Press, Iowa City

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## Iowa Spring Bird Count - Is Your County Counted?

Ann Barker

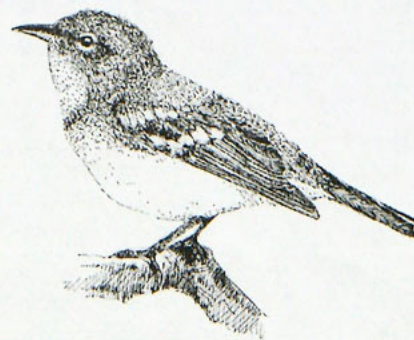
The 9th annual Iowa Spring Bird Count will be held on Saturday May 12, 2001. It is held on the same day, and according to the same rules, as the North American Migration Count, so that totals may be submitted to both counts.

Each county is a count territory, and in the interest of expanding our knowledge of spring migration in the state, we would like to have participation from as many of Iowa's 99 counties as possible. A county compiler organizes the count within the county, assigns territories to be covered, and compiles the results, which are then submitted to the state compiler, and published in *Iowa Bird Life*.

Can you help? Compilers may do the count themselves, without any help, or may organize parties to cover assigned territories. One person can act as a compiler for more than one county. Even if only one individual counts birds for part of a day, results can be submitted and will contribute to the database. A count may be done as a county Big Day, or as a competition for a fundraiser for your local birding club. Use your imagination!

There can be only one compiler for each county. If you can act as the compiler for a county or counties of your choice, please contact me at the address below and the official forms will be sent to you.

Ann Barker  
3204 Crestline Drive  
Davenport, Iowa 52803  
(563) 355-6271  
[Annbarker4@aol.com](mailto:Annbarker4@aol.com)





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Iowa Ornithologists' Union  
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Ames, IA 50014

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