



I.O.U. News

Iowa Ornithologists' Union Newsletter

Fall 1997 • Volume 13 Number 3

Bringing Ospreys To Area: Four young birds from Wisconsin are part of MacBride Raptor Project By Sam Chege Mwangi

Reprinted with the permission of the Iowa City Press-Citizen

Four ospreys Friday joined the MacBride Raptor project at the Coralville reservoir as part of an initiative to facilitate their nesting in Iowa.

Acquired from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the birds, which are between four and five weeks old, were placed on a platform called a hack tower where they will stay for another four or five weeks before they can be released into the wilderness.

Raptor Project coordinator Jodeane Cancilla said this was the first in a three year pilot plan to bring more ospreys into the area. "We hope to bring in four birds a year for three years and increase their nesting in the Iowa area."

Cancilla said that during the first year they will supplement the birds with extra fish to make sure they are feeding well. She explained that it will take about three years for the birds to start nesting.

"Normally they will migrate to North and South America during winter and then stay in Florida region for another year or so. But they will finally return here to nest." She said the initial stage when they are young is crucial because it's the time they bond with the region that will help them return eventually.

Jaime Edwards of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources said the department has

received sightings of other ospreys in the area but for unknown reasons they have not been nesting and that had caused the department to help bring in more ospreys.

The osprey project is a coordination between the Department of Natural Resources, the MacBride Raptor Project, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Each osprey costs between \$400-500 to bring in. They eventually hope to bring in 100 ospreys over a 10-year period.

The osprey feeds on fish and has the capacity to spot fish from 90 feet in the air and zoom into the water at the speed of 60 miles an hour. They are capable of diving three feet deep into the water and have buffers around their nose that protect them when they dive.



**Christmas Count Dates due
by NOVEMBER 20!!!**



Fall 1997 Meeting by Mary Kuhlman, Ft. Dodge

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca near Shueyville served as the headquarters for the 1997 Fall Meeting. The Iowa City Bird Club hosted the event. Special thanks go to Rick Hollis, Bernie Knight, Carol Thompson, Bud Gode, Karen Disbrow, Nancy Carl, Sally Moore and Jim Scheib for their work in organizing the meeting. Quiz prizes were donated by Shala Street of Backyard Habitat of Coralville.

The Friday evening social took place at the McBride Museum at the University of Iowa with tours of Bird Hall. Special thanks to Carl Bendorf, George Schrimper, and David Brenzel.

Saturday afternoon programs began with Rick Hollis introducing Nathan Kiese as the student guest for the meeting. Nathan is a local high school student. Three interesting programs followed. Kelly McKay spoke on the *Assessment of Human Impacts on Bald Eagle Reproductive Success Along the Upper Mississippi River*. Nests were monitored along 100 miles of the river during February through June of 1994 and 1995. All human activities in the river corridor such as ice fishing, barge traffic, snowmobiling, and jet skiing within one mile radius of 28-33 active nests were monitored. He concluded that while high rates of human activity seen to negatively impact bald eagle reproductive success, different eagles exhibit different tolerance levels to human activities. He also found that activities greater than .25 mile away from the nest seem to have little or no effect on eagle behavior.

Lisa Hemesath updated the group on Partners in Flight. Negotiations are currently taking place for purchase of land for the Kellerton Bird Conservation Area Project. This project seeks to protect grassland birds. She encouraged members to become involved in planning events for International Migratory Bird Day which is the second Saturday in May. She also gave an update on the wildlife diversity Teaming with

Wildlife program. This proposal for an excise tax on outdoor equipment has the support of the Iowa DNR. She encouraged members to contact congressmen and businesses for their support.

What are odonates? Dragonflies! In his very informative program, Bud Gode explained that there "truly amazing" creatures have been around since dinosaur times. He showed us that there are 100 colorful species of dragonflies and damselflies in Iowa.

The business meeting followed. The membership voted to have the board of directors establish a policy for granting IOU money for projects outside of the organization.

The banquet speaker, Jeff Hoover from the University of Illinois, used heroes, villains, and rock and roll to describe a project along the Cache River in southern Illinois. This project is using avian ecology to direct the restoration of the river corridor. "We've been the villains; we can be the heroes," he explained, as he told of efforts to increase the width of the forest to make it better habitat for neotropical migratory birds.

Field trips were held both Saturday and Sunday mornings. Destinations included Hickory Hill Park, Hawkeye Wildlife Area, Lake MacBride, Coralville Reservoir, Squaw Creek, the Cedar Greenbelt, and Cedar Lake. Thanks to Tom Kent, Carl Bendorf, Lanny Haldy, Chris Edwards, Pete Wickham, Jim Durbin, James Huntington, Chris Caster for being field trip leaders.

The weekend concluded with the Sunday lunch and compilation. Please make plans to attend the spring meeting in Ames on May 15-17 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of IOU.



Iowa Birdline
319/338-9881



Attendance:

Ames: Barb Bettis, Ed & Elizabeth Carbrey, Jim Dinsmore, Lisa Hemesath, Dixie & Michael Overton.

Ankeny: Maridel Jackson.

Bettendorf: Cathy & Jim Konrad.

Burlington: Chuck Fuller, John Rutenbeck.

Coralville: Chris Caster, Julie Englander.

Cedar Rapids: Pete Wickham.

Clear Lake: Joan & Vergil Eness, Barbara Larson.

Davenport: Mary Lou Petersen.

Des Moines: Bob & John Cecil, John & Mary Mitchell, Phil Walsh.

Dubuque: Glenn Winterwood.

Estherville: Harold White.

Fairfield: Diane & Michael Porter.

Ft. Dodge: Mary Kuhlman.

Indianola: Leonard Miller, Doyle Woods, Jim Sinclair.

Iowa City: Ed & Jean Allgood, Theresa Carbrey, Nancy Carl, Karen Disbrow, Jim & Karole Fuller, Bud Gode, Theresa Guedon, Rick Hollis, Jim Huntington, Tom Kent, Nathan Kieso, Cal & Bernie Knight, Ramona McGurk, Sally Moore, Jim Scheib, Carol Thompson.

Lake Mills: Sibyl Sand.

Liscomb: Beth & Mark Proescholdt.

Indianola: Leonard Miller, Jim Sinclair, Doyle Woods.

Marion: Jim & Joyce Durbin.

Marshalltown: Johanna Buwalda, Judy Garton, Edna Kirse, Joan Roborsky, Linda Tasler, Ethel Tietze

Nevada: Hank Zaletel.

Nora Springs: Reva Pedelty.

North Liberty: Chris Edwards.

Norwalk: Ann Johnson, Sue Spieker.

Mason City: Carolyn Fischer, Barbara Larson, Curt Nelson, Jan Walter.

Perry: Bob Myers.

Oskaloosa: Ron Muilenburg.

Princeton: Ann Barker.

Tabor: Ross Silcock.

Tiffin: Jean Sanders.

Van Meter: Eloise & Eugene Armstrong.

Washington: Edwin Lins.

Waterloo: Francis Moore.

West Des Moines: Richard & Sharon Stillwell.

A Teacher's Activity Booklet About...Iowa Birds Done!

The second edition of *A Teacher's Activity Booklet About...Iowa Birds*, sponsored by the IOU and the Iowa Conservation Education Council, is now available for purchase. New sections on extinct birds of Iowa, the Goldfinch, the state bird, birding pioneers and Althea Sherman are just a few of the additions to the new volume. Copies are available for \$7.00 plus \$2.50 for postage and handling. Make checks payable to the IOU and remit to Linda Zaletel, 1928 6th St., Nevada, IA 50201-1126.

Rare Bird Hosts

The following people will receive a one year membership in the IOU as a thank you for allowing people into their homes and on to their property to view rare birds. They are:

1. Lucy Rimler of Ames for the Western Tanager that was present in May of 1997. She was nominated by Hank Zaletel.

2. Ruth Winebrinner of Spirit Lake for the Rufous Hummingbird at her house in August of 1996. She was nominated by Ed Thelen.

3. Annie Leich of Glenwood for the Lazuli Bunting that appeared in May of 1997. She was nominated by Tom Kent.

Thank You!



SPECIES SEEN

Fall IOU Meeting ~ Sept. 20-21, 1997
~ Iowa Checklist ~ 132 seen

GREBES

Pied-billed Grebe

CORMORANTS

Double-crested Cormorant

PELICANS

American White Pelican

DUCKS, SWANS, GEESE

Ruddy Duck

Canada Goose

Wood Duck

Green-winged Teal

Mallard

Blue-winged Teal

Northern Shoveler

HERONS, EGRETS AND BITTERNS

Great Blue Heron

Great Egret

Green Heron

American Bittern

NEW WORLD VULTURES

Turkey Vulture

OSPREY

Osprey

HAWKS, EAGLES AND KITES

Bald Eagle

Northern Harrier

Sharp-shinned Hawk

Cooper's Hawk

Broad-winged Hawk

Red-tailed Hawk

FALCONS AND CARACARAS

American Kestrel

PHEASANTS, GROUSE, QUAIL AND

TURKEYS

Ring-necked Pheasant

Wild Turkey

WOOD-PARTRIDGES

Northern Bobwhite

RAILS AND COOTS

American Coot

SANDPIPERS

Common Snipe

Greater Yellowlegs

Lesser Yellowlegs

Solitary Sandpiper

Spotted Sandpiper

Dowitcher sp.

Semipalmated Sandpiper

Least Sandpiper

Baird's Sandpiper

Pectoral Sandpiper

Stilt Sandpiper

PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS

Killdeer

GULLS AND TERNS

Ring-billed Gull

Herring Gull

Caspian Tern

PIGEONS AND DOVES

Rock Dove

Mourning Dove

NEW WORLD CUCKOOS

Yellow-billed Cuckoo

OWLS

Great Horned Owl

Barred Owl

NIGHTJARS

Common Nighthawk

SWIFTS

Chimney Swift

HUMMINGBIRDS

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

KINGFISHERS

Belted Kingfisher

WOODPECKERS

Red-headed Woodpecker

Red-bellied Woodpecker

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Downy Woodpecker

Hairy Woodpecker

Northern Flicker

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

Olive-sided Flycatcher

Eastern Wood-Pewee

Least Flycatcher

Eastern Phoebe

Eastern Kingbird

CROWS AND JAYS

Blue Jay

American Crow

VIREOS AND ALLIES

Blue-headed (Solitary) Vireo

Philadelphia Vireo

Red-eyed Vireo

WAXWINGS AND SILKY-FLYCATCHERS

Cedar Waxwing



THRUSHES

- Eastern Bluebird
- Gray-cheeked Thrush
- Swainson's Thrush
- Hermit Thrush
- American Robin

MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS

- Gray Catbird
- Brown Thrasher

STARLINGS

- European Starling

NUTHATCHES

- Red-breasted Nuthatch
- White-breasted Nuthatch

CREEPERS

- Brown Creeper

WRENS

- Sedge Wren
- Winter Wren
- House Wren

GNATCATCHERS

- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

SWALLOWS

- Tree Swallow
- Northern Rough-winged Swallow
- Bank Swallow
- Barn Swallow
- Cliff Swallow

KINGLETS

- Ruby-crowned Kinglet

CHICKADEES, TITS

- Black-capped Chickadee
- Tufted Titmouse

OLD WORLD SPARROWS

- House Sparrow

WAGTAILS AND PIPITS

- American Pipit

SISKINS, CROSSBILLS AND ALLIES

- American Goldfinch
- Purple Finch

- House Finch

NEW WORLD WARBLERS

- Tennessee Warbler
- Orange-crowned Warbler
- Nashville Warbler
- Chestnut-sided Warbler
- Magnolia Warbler
- Yellow-rumped Warbler
- Blackburnian Warbler
- Palm Warbler

- Bay-breasted Warbler
- Blackpoll Warbler
- Black-and-white Warbler
- American Redstart
- Ovenbird
- Common Yellowthroat
- Wilson's Warbler

BUNTINGS, SPARROWS, TANAGERS, ALLIES

- Song Sparrow
- Lincoln's Sparrow
- Swamp Sparrow
- White-crowned Sparrow
- White-throated Sparrow
- Dark-eyed Junco
- Savannah Sparrow
- Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow
- Chipping Sparrow
- Field Sparrow
- Vesper Sparrow
- Eastern Towhee
- Scarlet Tanager
- Dickcissel

- Rose-breasted Grosbeak
- Northern Cardinal

- Indigo Bunting

BLACKBIRDS, GRACKLES, ORIOLES

- Baltimore Oriole
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Eastern Meadowlark
- Common Grackle



• STATISTICS •

Species in checklist - 397

Species seen - 132

Percent seen - 33.25%



HEARD ON THE BIRDLINE

Summer 1997

June 15-September 15

by Jim Fuller, Iowa City

All sightings reported to the Iowa Birdline will be considered hypothetical until submitted and approved by the Records Committee of the Iowa Ornithologist's Union.

Iowa's first **EURASIAN COLLARED DOVES** were discovered on August 30 by Fritz Brock, a Pennsylvania birder who was visiting family at Grinnell. Up to five birds were seen at the north edge of the Grinnell Country Club golf course, and have been easy to locate since. Interestingly, a **WHITE-WINGED DOVE** was spotted on the same date at the Riverton Area in Fremont County. The other outstanding bird was the state's second **ROSEATE SPOONBILL** found by Steve Dinsmore on August 4 at a large heron roost at the Waubonsie Wildlife Area east of Nebraska City. It delighted birders by remaining for another ten days. In late June and July, this area also produced reports of a cooperative **KINGRAIL**, numerous **SNOWY EGRETS**, and **LITTLE BLUE HERONS**, as well as both **BLACK** and **YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS**.

Rare gulls are not normally summer denizens in the state, but this year was the exception with reports of **LAUGHING GULL** at Blackhawk Lake June 16-19, two **COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULLS** which roamed Dickinson County from mid-June to mid-July, and **SABINE'S GULLS** in Dickinson County on July 8, and at the Saylorville Reservoir on August 11.

During the traditionally quiet latter part of June, a **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** was sighted north of Perry on the 28th, three juvenile **BLACK-BILLED MAGPIES** were found at the earlier detected nest site in Plymouth County, a **WESTERN GREBE** was at Little Spirit Lake on the 30th, and **BARN OWLS** were once again nesting in

Zelbert Freemyer's barn near Bedford. June reports of warblers of note included **WORM-EATING WARBLER** in Lee County at the Croton unit of Shimek State Forest, **PRAIRIE WARBLER** at Lake MacBride State Park, and **HOODED WARBLER** at Lake Ahquabi State Park.

The highlight of July was a **SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** observed by Sharon Laub along a fenceline on her farm near Rippey on the 12th. **SNOWY EGRETS** appeared at four other locations in Carroll, Des Moines, Dickinson, and Lee Counties. Likewise, **LITTLE BLUE HERONS** showed up at two locations along the Mississippi River in Lee County. July reports of unusual birds that were probable nesters were **SWAINSON'S HAWKS** near Mason City and Waterloo, and **LEAST TERNS** and **PIPING PLOVERS** along the western border at power plant settling ponds in Woodbury and Pottawattamie Counties. **MISSISSIPPI KITE** sightings came from four central Iowa locations, Greenwood Park in Des Moines, the Voas Wildlife Area in Dallas County, Lake Ahquabi State Park, and the Ledges State Park, where a known nest was lost in a windstorm.

To usher in August, a **PACIFIC LOON** frequented Big Spirit Lake from August 2-11, while a **BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK** appeared briefly at the Riverton Area in Fremont County on the 9th. Other August events saw a **WHITE-FACED IBIS** sit down at Harrier Marsh in Boone County, but only briefly, on the 15th, and three **SANDHILL CRANES** were present at Walnut Creek NWR on the 19th.

The only unusual early September reports both came from Johnson County, where two **MARBLED GODWITS** were at the Hawkeye Wildlife Area on the 4th, and a male **BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER** showed up at the MacBride Raptor Center on the 7th.



Mexico Trip??

I am planning to go birding in NE Mexico next February 14-22, and invite IOU members to go along. Most of the birding will be between Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas, and Tamazanchale, San Luis Potosi. This is an excellent area to see rare U.S. strays, as well as Mexican endemics.

Costs for food and lodging in Mexico should not exceed \$250.00 per person. Transportation costs will be extra. We will need one vehicle for every three or four persons. I will suggest that those who provide vehicles not pay for gas or mandatory Mexican auto insurance (up to \$20 per day depending upon the value of the vehicle). This is not a commercial venture, and I will share in all costs.

Health is always a concern in Mexico, and I will provide information on avoiding the dreaded *tourista*. You may also want to check with your physician.

Please keep in mind that this is not a professional tour, and that the quality of lodging, food, and travel conditions may vary. However, I have traveled a number of times into Mexico, and will have taken two previous trips to this specific area. Without exception, I have found interior Mexico to be safe and its people delightful.

If interested, please contact me as soon as possible for tentative itinerary, bird list, past trip accounts, and other information.

Bob Cecil
1315 41st St.
Des Moines, IA 50311
515/277-5709



Myrle Burk Awards

by Jim Dinsmore, Ames

Each year, the Iowa Academy of Science awards four Myrle Burk Scholarships to Iowa college students with a demonstrated interest in ornithology. The awards, currently worth \$750 each, are funded from an endowment set up by Dr. Myrle Burk, a long-time member and former officer of the IOU. As part of this award, the IOU has provided each of the awardees a free year's membership in our organization. The awardees for 1997 are:

Steve Fairbairn - a native of Jefferson, Iowa, Steve attended Simpson College and now is a graduate student at Iowa State University. There he is studying marsh bird communities on restored and natural wetland complexes in northern Iowa. Steve is also involved with analysis of data collected by the IOU/DNR winter bird feeder study.

Erika Hasler-Saveraid, a native of Missouri, Erika attended Cornell University and now is a graduate student at Iowa State University. She is studying birds and butterflies found in mountain meadows in the Yellowstone Park ecosystem. Erika previously has worked on forest bird communities in Missouri, New Hampshire and Maine.

Jennifer Hurley - a native of Cedar Falls, Jennifer attended St. Marys College of Minnesota and now is a graduate student at the University of Northern Iowa. There she is studying bird use of rotated pastures and prairies. She previously worked on Black Terns on the Mississippi River.

Jennifer Hultquist - a native of Nebraska, Jennifer attended the University of Nebraska and now is a graduate student at Iowa State University. She is studying bird use of terraces in agricultural fields in southwestern Iowa. Jennifer previously has done projects studying both game and non-game birds in Nebraska.



Birding Trail

by Mark Proescholdt, Liscomb

Fred Leshar is working with a group to establish a "birding trail" from the Quad Cities to the Twin Cities modeled on the Texas birding trail on the Texas Gulf Coast. The ultimate goal is to preserve habitat and to protect birds.

The Upper Mississippi River Birding Trail has eight possible loops:

1. Twin Cities — Red Wing Pools 1,2,3
2. Red Wing — Wabasha Pools 4, Lake Pepin
3. Wabasha — Trempealeau Pools 5,6
4. Trempealeau — Harper's Ferry Pools 7,8,9
5. Harper's Ferry — Guttenburg Pool 10
6. Guttenburg — Bellevue Pools 11,12
7. Bellevue — Clinton Pool 13
8. Clinton — Quad Cities Pools 14,15

Each possible loop has a number of possible birding locations. For more information about this project and to provide comments and information on birding areas, contact Fred Leshar at 509 Winona St., LaCrosse, Wisconsin 54603, 608/783-1149.

Iowa Ornithologists' Union
4024 Arkansas Drive
Ames, IA 50014



Adopt-A-Book

Please help the I.O.U. purchase 781 copies of the Breeding Bird Atlas. They will be distributed to Iowa middle/high schools and county conservation boards. To make your donation, send your check for \$12.50 per book (payable to IOU) to Jim Scheib, 10 Longview Knoll, Iowa City, IA 52240.

Hank & Linda Zaletel, Editors
1928 6th St.
Nevada, IA 50201-1126
515/382-5427
madowl@nevia.net



THOMAS H KENT
211 RICHARDS ST
IOWA CITY IA 52246-3519

