

IOU News

Fall 2003  Volume 19 – Number 3

Whooping Cranes Return to Iowa

James J. Dinsmore

Most Iowa birders know that Whooping Cranes once were found in Iowa and nested in northern Iowa until about 1894. After that there were only a few scattered sightings of whoopers in Iowa as the species suffered a long population plunge and then a painstakingly slow recovery in numbers from about 1960 to its current population of about 400 captive and wild birds. A few years Iowa had a brief bout of Whooping Crane sightings with two reports in fall 1998 and two more in spring 1999. The latter two involved birds that stayed a few days so a number of birders got to see real wild Whooping Cranes in Iowa. These were cranes that were moved east by high winds as they migrated through their normal Great Plains pathway. Another chapter in the story of Whooping Cranes in Iowa developed this spring with the “stealth” visit by four Whooping Cranes in northeastern Iowa on 22 May. This story requires a bit of background.

For many years, crane experts have worried about the risks that the one wild population of Whooping Cranes faced. The birds nested in remote wilderness areas of northwestern Canada

where they apparently were doing okay but conditions made it virtually impossible to monitor them during the nesting season. Those cranes then migrated south to the Gulf Coast near Corpus Christi, Texas, where they wintered and then migrated north the following spring. During migration, these cranes faced tremendous risks including shooting, collisions with wires and towers, and disease. Although the core of their winter range is a national wildlife refuge, water quality and food supplies are pressing issues as well as continuing human development on adjacent areas. Added to that is the risk that a single winter storm could raise havoc to most of the world's population of Whooping Cranes. For years crane experts have sought some relief to this risk by trying to establish additional populations of Whooping Cranes. By doing so, they hoped to spread out the risks to the species and increase its chances for long-term survival. Also, if a new population was either nonmigratory or had a shorter migration route than the existing one, presumably the risks encountered during migration could also be eliminated or reduced.

The first attempts to do so went poorly. An attempt to establish a Whooping Crane breeding population in Idaho failed after years of effort. The main problem was that the newly wild Whooping Cranes often attempted to pair with Sandhill Cranes that were found in the same area rather than sticking with their own species. Fortunately, much that was learned from those efforts has been useful in more recent attempts. A second attempt centered on establishing a nonmigratory flock of Whooping Cranes in central Florida. This attempt had much failure at first, in large part because of heavy predation on the birds, but it is gradually having some success and several pairs successfully hatched young this spring.

The third attempt was a bit more imaginative in its design. The basic idea was to try to establish a breeding flock at Necedah National Wildlife Refuge in west-central Wisconsin. From there the birds would migrate about 1200 miles southeast to Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge north of Tampa, Florida, where they would spend the winter. The trick was trying to establish a new migration pathway for cranes that were hatched in captivity and came from a population that migrated between northern Canada and Texas. The solution was to “train” the birds to fly this new pathway. After experimenting for several years with Sandhill Cranes, crane experts decided it was possible to do this but with an interesting twist. They decided that they could condition young cranes

continued on page 9





IOU News

is a quarterly publication of the Publications Committee of the **Iowa Ornithologists' Union**

Editor: Paul Hertzel
240 12th Street SE
Mason City, IA 50401
phertzel@rconnect.com

IOU Publications Committee:
James J. Dinsmore
Paul Hertzel
Ann Johnson
Thomas H. Kent, Chair
Kayleen A. Niyo

IOU News deadlines for submission of materials:

Issue	Coverage	Deadline
Spring	March 1 - May 31	February 15
Summer	June 1 - July 31	May 15
Fall	August 1 - Nov 30	July 31
Winter	Dec 1 - Feb 28	November 15

IOU News Advertising Coordinator:
Linda Zaletel
1928 6th Street
Nevada, IA 50201
madowl@midiowa.net

IOU Membership / Subscriptions:
David Edwards
2308 State Avenue
Ames, IA 50014
dcejce@qwest.net

IOU Journal: **Iowa Bird Life**
Kayleen Niyo, Editor

Documenting / Reporting Birds:
Records Committee-
Ann Johnson
532 120th Avenue
Norwalk IA 50211
aj@hologrambirds.com
Website: <http://www.iowabirds.org/>

Winter Field Reports-
Robert Cecil
wewarb@aol.com
Spring Field Reports-
Matthew Kenne
meekeckk@rconnect.com
Summer Field Reports-
James J. Dinsmore
oldcoot@iastate.edu
Fall Field Reports-
Paul Hertzel
phertzel@rconnect.com

From the President

The board is exploring how to deal with bequests. This is something new for us as we received bequests of \$5,000 and \$10,000 within the past year. We would like the IOU members to have input as to how to handle and honor these funds. Please share your thoughts with us.

Also, we are looking at ways the IOU can offer birding tours to its members. It is proving to be very difficult with liability being the major problem. Does anyone have any ideas or suggestions for solutions to this liability problem without taking out an insurance policy?

The Board will be addressing both of these issues in their October meeting. Your ideas, thoughts and comments would be most appreciated.

—Richard Tetrault, President, IOU

Red Rock Land Protection Project Will Honor Gladys Black

Anita O'Gara

The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation has secured the opportunity to purchase 38 acres of woodland on the Des Moines River just below the tailrace of the Red Rock Reservoir. The tract, now owned by Eleanor Coster, includes approximately 1/8 mile of river access. Directly across the river is a prominent Bald Eagle viewing site—where people watch eagles that are roosting on the Coster property.

Gladys Black used this area for 25 years to introduce kids and adults to “jungle birds,” eagles, and other wildlife and their habitat needs. Mrs. Coster wanted to see the land protected as a memorial to Gladys.

Details of the project are still being worked out, but it's anticipated that the land will be owned and managed by a public agency as a wildlife refuge with little or no public use.

The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation will be raising funds to purchase and protect this site. INHF also hopes to use publicity from this project to raise awareness of critical habitat needs in Iowa and to recapture attention for Gladys Black's long-term work of promoting birds, habitat, and environmental education in this region.

Contributions for the Gladys Black project may be sent to INHF, 505 Fifth Avenue, Suite 444, Des Moines, IA 50309. To volunteer on project promotion, contact Anita O'Gara at 515-288-1846 or aogara@inhf.org.

Thank You for 2002 Donations

IOU Publications Committee

*(Jim Dinsmore, Paul Hertz, Ann Johnson,
Tom Kent, and Kay Niyo)*

Over the past few years it became apparent that the cost of publishing *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News* was exceeding income from memberships and subscriptions by a considerable amount and would lead to a depletion of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union reserve funds in the near future. The Publications Committee, which was reorganized in January 2003, has been working with the Board of Directors to address the financial problems and at the same time preserving the quality of our publications.

Last summer, the IOU board of directors and President Tom Johnson sent a letter to members asking for donations to alleviate the deficit created by our expanded publications. Forty-eight contributions totaling \$4,200 were received, and we have learned from Treasurer Rita Goranson that all of these funds were used to support publications in 2002. The current Publications Committee thanks these contributors on behalf of the Union as follows:

\$10 to \$50: Marilyn Lekwa, Wolfgang Oesterreich, Marjorie Olson, Gerald Von Ehwegen, Natalie A. White, Margaret Augustine, Barbara Beaumont, Dick Bierman, Fred Brink, James Hampson, Polly Haskins, Tim Humpal, Kathryn Malmberg, Alexandra Ozolins, Reva Pedelty, Beth Proescholdt, Ty Smedes, Eva Wiedemeyer, Zora Zimmerman, Walter Zuurdeeg, William Clark, Jack Jones, Eldon Bryant, Steve Dinsmore, Bruce Ehresman, Cynthia & Tom Ervin, Jay Gilliam, Fred Leshner, Stacie & Bob Norris, Mark Proescholdt, and Deanne Summerfelt.

\$100 to \$500: Darleen Ayres, Harry Barrows, J. C. Brenton, Central Iowa Ornithology, Pamela Daws, James L. Fuller, Dennis Henrickson, Richard Hollis, Ross Silcock, Gerry & Richard Tetrault, Russell Widner, Becky, Tiffany, Brian & Thomas Johnson, Rita & Al Goranson, Kent Nickell, Kevin Healy, Barb & David Hurd, and Thomas H. Kent.

We deeply appreciate the generosity shown by the people listed above.

Also in 2002, the dues structure was changed to allow members to contribute, on a graded scale, more than the baseline membership fee. So far in 2003, \$2,600 has been raised from contributions in excess of the baseline \$20. This level of support from the IOU membership is very encouraging.

Opportunities for Support in 2003

After six months of almost constant meeting by e-mail, the Publications Committee has recommended a decreased budget for managing the publications. To maintain the quality of the current publications, we recommend a minimum of 160 pages for *Iowa Bird Life* and 48 pages for *IOU News*. The

costs of this minimum baseline would come from membership and subscriber fees of \$20, donations based on higher membership categories, and a limited amount of income from advertising and Internet commissions.

The recommended minimum pages are less than what we have grown used to in the last three years. A few of these pages have been gained back by space saving in *Iowa Bird Life*. (Have you noticed more use of inside and back cover space, narrower margins, and proportional spacing?) A new printer allows the editor to add four-page supplements at the same cost per page as the rest of the journal. (Previous printers required 16 or 32 pages to get this saving.)

The committee proposes to pay for extra pages, which will bring the amount of content up toward that of the last three years, by "page-cost" donations. The cost per page in *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News* can be rounded off to \$50. Donations in this "Publications Enhancement Fund" would be available in advance so that the editors could include extra pages without requesting a budget increase and without sending letters to authors indicating "acceptable but space not available."

Here's how you can participate. Send a check for \$25 (one-half page), \$50 (one page), \$100 (two pages), or more to the IOU Publications Enhancement Fund, c/o Rita Goranson, Treasurer, 115 Lakeview Drive, Mason City, IA 50401-1617. Donations may also be made on-line by credit card through PayPal at <http://www.iowabirds.org/iou/pubs.asp>, by clicking on the link at the top of the page. All donations are tax deductible. We will keep you posted on what is accomplished with these donations.

The Publications Enhancement Fund is not meant to be in competition with the tax-deductible donations made through the higher membership classes. Please give your support in one or both ways as you see fit. The Publications Committee is dedicated to maintaining the quality of *Iowa Bird Life*, *IOU News*, and *Iowa Birds & Birding*. Since the major source of funding for our publications is membership fees, the most valuable contribution that current members can make is to recruit new members.

Membership application to the IOU can be made on the web site at <http://www.iowabirds.org> or by writing to the Registrar at

David C. Edwards
2308 State Street
Ames IA 50014-8344



Or contact any member for help.

IOU Fall Meeting 2003

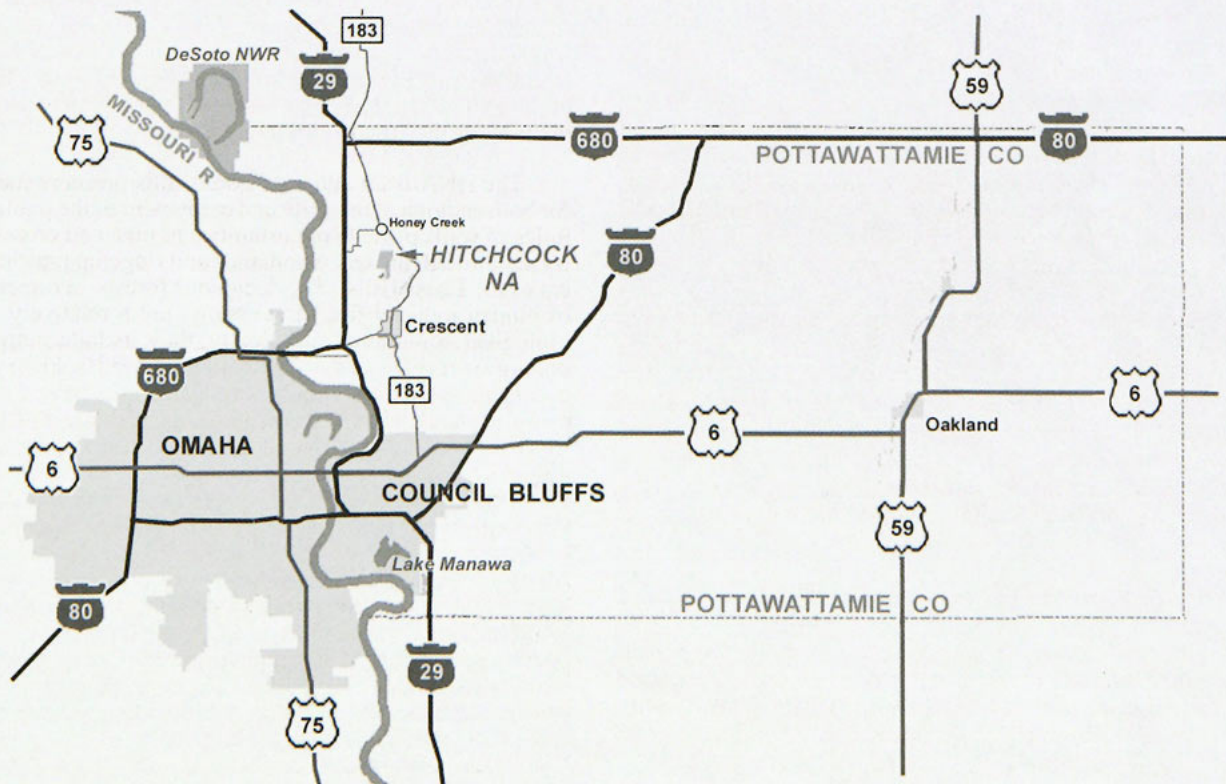
Friday, October 10 – Sunday, October 12
Hitchcock Nature Area, Loess Hills



The 2003 IOU Fall Meeting will be held October 10-12 at the Hitchcock Nature Area located in western Pottawattamie County, Iowa. The Hitchcock Nature Area, which sits in the heart of the geologically unique Loess Hills, was rescued from developers planning a land fill and now sits as a crown jewel of the Iowa park system.

The HNA is one of the best wildlife viewing areas in the state. Of particular interest to birders are the annual hawkwatches conducted at the HNA. Every September through December, bird of prey enthusiasts gather at Hitchcock Nature Area to observe and count thousands of hawks, eagles,

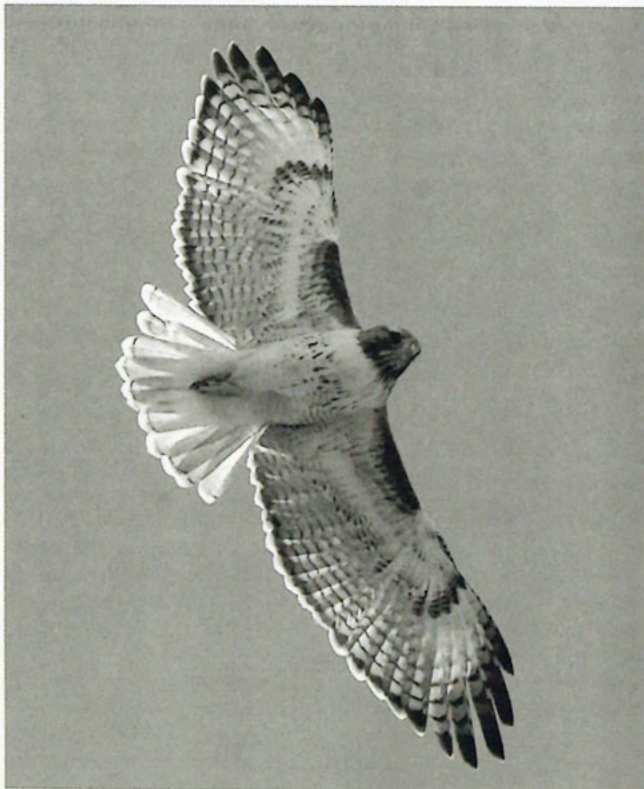
and vultures that migrate south past the lodge area. Begun in 1992 by Babs and Loren Padelford, the Hitchcock Nature Area Hawkwatch has been held every fall except for a hiatus in 1996-1997. The broad expanse of the adjacent Missouri River Valley and the updrafts created by the prevailing westerly winds that strike the Loess Hills create a "hawk highway" that attracts the migrating raptors to Hitchcock. In the Fall of 2002, no less than 8714 hawks, eagles, and vultures of 20 different species were recorded by volunteer counters at Hitchcock in over 427 hours of observation. Literally millions of other migrants ranging from butterflies and dragonflies to robins, blackbirds, and pelicans were also seen. Such counts



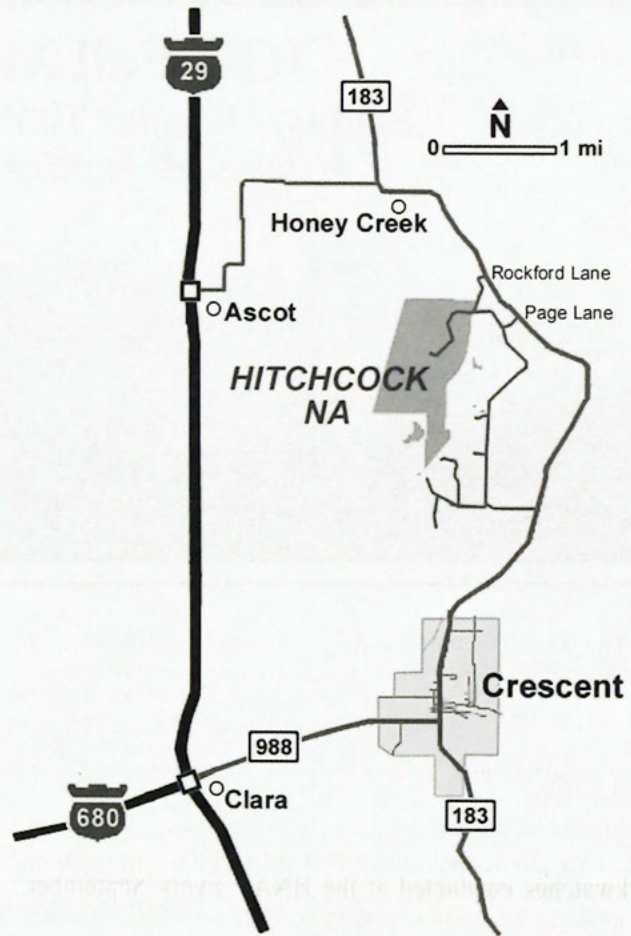
are not only fun and challenging for participants, but they also yield valuable data about the health of the populations of a variety of migratory species. Hitchcock's count is affiliated with HMANA (Hawk Migration Association of North America), an organization that specializes in monitoring North America's birds of prey.

Fall migration seasons at Hitchcock follow a general pattern from year to year, but since the weather and other factors affect migration, no two years are exactly alike. In September, the larger flights come on days either just prior to, or just after, the passage of a cold front. Turkey Vultures, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Swainson's Hawks, Broad-winged Hawks, Cooper's Hawks, American Kestrels and Ospreys are the species most commonly seen. In October through December, the day of the passing cold front and the day following it often produce the best flights. Red-tailed Hawks dominate the count during October and November, but Sharp-shinned Hawks are still fairly commonly seen along with Northern Harriers. In November and December, Bald Eagles begin to appear in larger numbers. Majestic Bald Eagles and a few strikingly-patterned Rough-legged Hawks (down from the arctic tundra) can usually be seen right until the watch ends on December 20th.

Volunteer counters are regularly present on weekends. Watchers gather on both the Lodge deck and on a hill along the Badger Ridge Trail. Counting during the week is somewhat more sporadic. If you are interested in helping with the count or merely want to visit or find out more about the count, please contact Mark Orsag at (402) 826-4162 or send him an e-mail.



On Saturday, Mark Orsag will present a talk on hawkwatching techniques. The photo, of a Red-tailed Hawk floating above the Hitchcock Nature Area hawkwatchers, was taken by Wayne Nicholas.



Hitchcock Nature Area is about 7 miles from the interstate 29/360 junction (Crescent Exit #44) at Clara. Take highway 988 east to Crescent, or take highway 183 north from US Highway 6 to Crescent. From Crescent, continue north on highway 183 for about 5 miles. A sign along 183 announces the turn for the Hitchcock Nature Area.

The HNA is an 806 acre Loess Hills preserve managed for both ecological integrity and enjoyment of the public. The miles of trails provide opportunities to hike and cross-country ski through the oak woodlands and ridgetop prairies typical of the Loess Hills. The deciduous forests— a direct result of human induced fire suppression— are a relatively young biological community. Typically, they include indigenous open-grown Bur Oaks mixed with younger Hackberry, Ash, and Elm. Moderately moist exposures also have Red Oak and Yellowbud Hickory, and an occasional stand of Walnut trees.

The driest ridgetops and southwestern exposures have remnants of mixed-grass prairie that give a faint impression of what the hills were like prior to Euro-American settlement. Many of these remnants are home to prairie species more typical of drier western grasslands than of Iowa's lush tallgrass prairies. The hot, dry climate of these slopes support plant species such as yucca, and animals like the Ornate Box Turtle, and Plains Spadefoot. Efforts to restore the health of these prairie remnants are ongoing and include tree removal, exotic plant control, and prescribed fires.

Schedule

All programs and meals will take place at the Hitchcock Nature Center lodge. IOU participants will not be charged the \$2 per day user fee.

Throughout the weekend, IOU members will have an opportunity to observe and participate in the HNA Hawkwatch. Those with prior experience offer the following advice: Bring a chair and warm layers depending upon weather. It can be 10 to 15 degrees cooler than surrounding areas.

Saturday morning: Breakfast
Field trips: (Clem Klaphake)
Fontenelle Forest
DeSoto Bend NWR
Boyar Schuete NWR
Lake Manawa
Mid America Power Plant
Hitchcock Nature Area

Saturday noon: Lunch

Saturday afternoon:
Programs:

- In honor of our 80th anniversary: *History of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union*; Thomas H. Kent
- *Birding Trinidad and Tobago including Asa Wright Nature Preserve*; Dick Stilwell
- *Update on Important Bird Areas*; Ric Zarwell
- *Hawks over the Heartland: Hitchcock Nature Center Hawk Watch, 1992-2003*; Mark Orsag

Saturday evening: Banquet
Program:
Birds and Mammals of Africa;
Ty Smedes

Sunday morning: Breakfast
Field trips:
Same locations as Saturday
Program:
Digiscoping Workshop— an opportunity to share tips, compare results and solve problems. Participants are welcome to bring equipment and photos.

Sunday noon: Lunch, compilation

Lodging

The following hotels are offering a group rate for IOU. All rooms are standard with 2 queen beds or 1 king. Pricing does not include 12 % tax. Please reserve at least 30 days in advance.

Country Inn & Suites at the Mid-America Center \$82
17 Arena Way
Council Bluffs, IA
(712) 322-8282 or (402) 850-9660

Days Inn \$55
I-29, 9th Ave. Exit 53A
Council Bluffs, IA
(712) 323-2200 or (800) 329-7466

Hampton Inn Hotel & Suites @ Ameristar \$99
I-29 Nebraska Ave. Exit 52
Council Bluffs, IA
(712) 328-2500 or (800) 426-7866

Heartland Inn \$53.50
1000 Woodbury/I-80 Exit 5
Council Bluffs, IA
(712) 322-8400 or (800) 334-3277

Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites @ Ameristar \$99
I-29 Nebraska Ave. Exit 52
Council Bluffs, IA
(712) 322-5050 or (800) 682-0900

Motel 6 \$49.99
3032 S. Expressway/I-80 Exit 3
Council Bluffs, IA
(712) 366-2405 or (800) 466-8356.

Super 8 Motel Call for rates
3167 Joliet Ave
Missouri Valley, IA 51555
(712) 642-4788 or (800) 800-8000

Camping:

Hitchcock Nature Area— requires hiking in to the sites, so plan accordingly! You must pack in your water and pack out your trash. Tents: \$5 per night. Email the Hitchcock Nature Area Park Ranger at fordhna@earthlink.net or call (712) 545-3283

Wilson Island State Park— Modern Areas \$13 per night/electric site \$8 per night/non-electric site. General questions about campgrounds, fees and cabins should be addressed to Kevin Szcodronski, 32801 Campground Lane, Missouri Valley, IA 51555. phone: 712/642-2069, email szcodronski@dnr.state.ia.us

Loess Hills Routes

Driving Routes near Hitchcock: (All of these routes pass through private land that is not open for birding—much can be seen from the road though)

Valley Routes

1. The Missouri Ave-152nd Loop can be accessed from either Hwy 988 or from Hwy 183. This can be an excellent route for a wide variety of birds. In fall and spring, it can be particularly good for migrant sparrows. When entering the loop from Hwy 183, follow Missouri Ave. to the west. When Missouri Ave. intersects 152nd St. turn south (left). Follow 152nd until it links up with Hwy 988.

2. Ski Hill Loop— Accessed from either Hitchcock or Hwy 183, this can be another good route for sparrows and other passerines during migration. From 183 exit at Ski Hill Loop and follow Ski Hill Loop up to Hitchcock.

Loess Hills Routes Good variety of passerines along these routes. They are a bit more heavily traveled than the valley routes, so be extra cautious.

1. 185th-190th Loop— Exit Hwy 183 south of Hitchcock at Coldwater Ave. Take Coldwater east until it intersects 190th. Take a left(north) on 190th. This route will take you a long way north through varied Loess Hills habitat— farms, meadows, and woods. All of this land is private. After you pass Westgate Ave. on the right take the next left to link up with 185th St. and loop back south.

2. 170th-175th Loop— Exit Hwy 183, well north of Hitchcock and immediately south of the I-680 interchange, onto 170th St. Follow 170th south past Scotchpine lane until 170th intersects Sumac Rd. Take Sumac Rd east (left) until it intersects 185th St. Turn left (north) on 185th. Watch for the intersection with 175th and follow 175th north until it intersects Whippoorwill Lane. Follow Whippoorwill Lane back west and south until it rejoins 170th. Turn right on 170th, and you will soon find yourself right back where you started.

Hitchcock Trails— Here are some of the better ones for birding. Directions are printed on Nature Center the maps.

1. Fox Run Ridge— A pretty easy trail that runs along a ridgetop. Sparrows and other passerines are the expected birds.

2. Habitat Loop— Follow the gravel path down and past the archery range out in into a small fairly open valley. Easy to moderate hike.

3. Dozer Cut— Passes through thick tangle, woods and finally out into a more open area down at Hitchcock's back gate. Quite a variety of habitats. The open area at the end of the trail is good for blackbirds and sparrows. Moderate to Difficult Hike.

-Mark Orsag

IOU 2003 Fall Meeting Registration

Name (s) _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Email _____

			Number of People		Total Cost	
Registration	\$ 10.00	X	_____	=	_____	
Saturday breakfast	\$ 6.00	X	_____	=	_____	
Saturday lunch	\$ 6.50	X	_____	=	_____	
Banquet	\$ 11.50	X	_____	=	_____	indicate choice: <input type="checkbox"/> grilled Iowa chop
Sunday breakfast	\$ 6.00	X	_____	=	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> chicken breast
Sunday lunch	\$ 6.50	X	_____	=	_____	
Total				=	_____	

Please register by **September 26th**. Make checks payable to Sharon Stilwell

Mail to: Sharon Stilwell *rssstilwell@att.net*
 218 S. 33rd St. (515) 223-6518
 West Des Moines, IA 50265

Birding Two Power Plant Properties in Western Iowa

Ric Zarwell

The following information is provided to help birders who wish to use properties in Western Iowa that are owned by MidAmerican Energy.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, security at various facilities across the United States has been tightened significantly. Birders and other citizens should respect and appreciate these changes, and abide by the new policies and procedures currently in-place.

MidAmerican Energy has been and continues to be very willing to allow birders to come onto their two properties (Council Bluffs Energy Center south of Council Bluffs, and Neal Energy Center south of Sioux City) to view Piping Plovers, Least Terns, and other species.

However, it needs to be recognized

that these two sites are private property and permission to come on-site must be obtained prior to your visit. There are established procedures to obtain permission that include completion of a background check. To avoid unnecessary problems, MidAmerican asks that in advance of driving to the property, you contact Joe Bannon by phone at (563) 333-8620, or by email at JBannon@midamerican.com, for more information.

MidAmerican has provided much enjoyment to the birding community, and a vital opportunity for Audubon Iowa's Important Bird Area (IBA) Program to gather data on the Globally Threatened Piping Plover and the Continentally Threatened Least Tern. Both sites have been nominated to receive official Iowa IBA recognition and pri-

ority conservation attention. The IBA Program looks forward to working closely with MidAmerican to protect and possibly enhance these special habitats.

It is critically important that everyone who visits either the Council Bluffs Energy Center or the Neal Energy Center avoid disturbing the plovers and terns in any way during their nesting season, which could run from early May through July. Through cooperative, long-term recovery efforts it should be possible to increase the populations of the Least Terns and Piping Plovers. MidAmerican is to be highly commended for their concern for these two species, and for their very positive cooperation.



Results of the Questionnaire on IOU Publications

At the end of June 2003, a questionnaire on IOU publications was distributed to the members with the spring issue of *Iowa Bird Life*. Of 360 mailed, approximately 25% were returned either by mail or through on-line entry. The Publications Committee thanks members who took time to reply to the questionnaire.

The relatively low response rate and subjective nature of the ratings make statistical comparisons of minimal value; however, the results will help the committee make recommendations to the editors on the allocation of space in the three principal publications. We want to maintain a high quality scientific journal and provide popular items of information—something for everyone, though not necessarily in each article.

In the survey, the various types of content of *Iowa Bird Life*, *IOU News*, and the web site *Iowa Birds & Birding* were rated on their value or enjoyment using a 5-point scale (high, high-medium, medium, low-medium, and low). The items judged to have the most value to readers are listed below, by publication.

Publication	Feature	Respondents Ranking 5 or 4
<i>Iowa Bird Life</i>	Field Reports	85%
<i>Iowa Bird Life</i>	Iowa birding area articles	78%
<i>Iowa Bird Life</i>	Notes on rarities	77%
<i>Iowa Bird Life</i>	Records Committee reports	69%
<i>Iowa Bird Life</i>	Bird identification articles	68%
<i>Iowa Bird Life</i>	Christmas Bird Count	67%
<i>Iowa Bird Life</i>	Research articles - Iowa birds	67%
<i>Iowa Bird Life</i>	Cover Photo	56%
<i>IOU News</i>	Feature articles	75%
<i>IOU News</i>	Articles: birding experiences	66%
<i>IOU News</i>	Events calendar	64%
<i>IOU News</i>	Articles: conservation	63%
<i>IOU News</i>	Christmas Count Schedule	59%
<i>IOU News</i>	Announcements	56%
<i>IOU News</i>	Annual Bird Listing Totals	55%
<i>IOU News</i>	Field Trip Schedules	55%
<i>IOU News</i>	Meeting Notices	52%
<i>IOU News</i>	Annual Bird Listing Form	51%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	Birding area articles	79%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	Current Iowa Rare Bird Alert	77%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	IA-BIRD Listserv access	73%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	Events calendar	69%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	How to find rare species	68%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	State & county checklists	67%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	Iowa Maps	67%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	Access to rare bird alerts	66%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	Records Committee reports	63%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	RC Documentation form	56%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	Christmas Count Information	55%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	Links to other birding web sites	54%
<i>Iowa Birds & Birding</i>	Local Contacts	51%

The complete results of this survey can be viewed at the web site by visiting the page

http://www.iowabirds.org/iou/survey_results.asp.

Several written comments related to the expense of using shiny (coated) paper in the journal, *Iowa Bird Life*. Coated paper costs the same as uncoated paper and is far superior in reproducing photographs and provides a cleaner type. The committee will continue to consider new publication alternatives, balancing the ease, timeliness, and cost with the need to preserve information on Iowa birds for future generations.

In line with some national trends, there were a few comments related to replacing some printed content with web publishing, an idea considered but not endorsed by the committee at this time. Unlike print publications, there is minimal out-of-pocket expense to put material on the web site and particularly in times of financial struggles, this alternative appears very attractive to many. The committee, however, believes that the lack of permanence of information stored there and membership-wide access are two relevant, limiting considerations. We will certainly continue putting efforts into further enhancements of the web site as they fit with the overall mission of the organization. The committee encourages use of the IOU Nature Store on the web site, *Iowa Birds & Birding*, and the on-line link to Eagle Optics—we get a commission on sales, which helps support the cost of our publications. Increased use of on-line membership payment and completion of documentations of rare birds on line would be of benefit to users and the IOU.

The IOU Publications Committee consists of Jim Dinsmore, Paul Hertz, Ann Johnson, Kay Niyo, and Thomas H. Kent, Chair.

Regional Rare Bird Alerts

Iowa	(712) 364-2863
Missouri	(573) 445-9115
NW Illinois	(815) 965-3095
Wisconsin	(414) 352-3857
Minnesota	(763) 780-8890
So Dakota	(605) 773-6460

Bookmarks

James J. Dinsmore

<http://www.bringbackthecranes.org>

The amazing story of the four Whooping Cranes that visited Iowa briefly this past spring is but part of the story of the attempt to establish a breeding population of Whooping Cranes in eastern North America. A group called the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership has developed a website that describes this effort in more detail. The website provides detailed information on how the birds are cared for as they grow and become conditioned to the ultralight plane. It also provides additional details on how the migration flights are handled and some of the human aspects of this restoration attempt. It also has detailed information on the current status of the Whooping Crane population including both those in the wild in western North America as well as captive populations and birds that are part of the restoration attempts.

Fall Field Reports — Paul Hertzell

The fall reporting season consists of the four month period from August through November. Please consider taking part in this important function of the IOU. Record your sightings, especially of early and late migrants, large concentrations or interesting combinations of birds, lingering nesters, rare or out-of-season birds, and send to the fall season editor within a few days of the close of the season.

At times in the fall, possibly as many as 50% of birds seen are immatures. It is interesting to note to what extent these birds are recognized in the field, so please consider including this information when certain. Send your report to Paul Hertzell, 240 12th Street SE, Mason City, IA, 50401, or by plain text email to phertzell@rconnect.com. Electronic attachments created by a universal editor are okay too.

HawkWatch at Effigy Mounds

The Annual Hawk Watch at Effigy Mounds National Monument is scheduled for the weekend of September 27-28, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Also on Saturday there will be an 8:30 a.m. bird walk. This free event is for the entire family and features interpretive displays, presentations with live birds of prey, kid's activities including dissecting owl pellets, painting feathers, innovative raptor painting, and making tracks. Knowledgeable individuals at the count site will aid visitors in spotting, identifying and counting migrating hawks. Binoculars and scopes are available for visitor use. There is a HawkWatch store with articles relating to raptors. Raptors will be released at the visitor center after being trapped and banded at our trapping site.

The location is on Highway 76 about 2 miles north of Marquette, IA. For further information contact Effigy Mounds at 563-873-3491, www.nps.gov/efmo, or Pam Kester at 563-873-1236, kestrel@alpinecom.net

Whooping Cranes *continued from page 1*

to adjust to airplanes and to follow an airplane in flight. And it wasn't just any airplane but rather an ultralight plane! And so in 2001, the first group of five young Whooping Cranes were brought to Necedah and conditioned to airplane. That fall, the five cranes took off and, with a crew of biologists following them on the ground, followed the ultralight plane south to Chassahowitzka where they wintered. The next spring they reversed the direction and the cranes returned to Necedah and spent the summer there or nearby. During the summer of 2002, a second group of 16 Whooping Cranes was brought to Necedah where they too were conditioned to the ultralight plane. In fall, they too followed ultralight planes south to Chassahowitzka where they spent the last winter.

The return trip to Wisconsin went on schedule this spring as the birds made their way north. However, once they were safely in Wisconsin, four of the Whooping Cranes did a bit of unscheduled exploring. On the morning of 22 May, these four birds took off from Crawford County (along the Wisconsin River east of Lansing, Iowa) and flew directly west. They continued on across the Mississippi River and eventually flew almost to Decorah where they abruptly changed course and flew back toward Wisconsin, crossing the river and ended up spending the night in Richland County east of where they started the day. These birds were on their own, that is they were not following an ultralight plane, and thus they were basically out exploring the area. The birds were tracked by people working on this project. Each of the birds had both a standard radio transmitter so they could be followed as they moved about. There is no indication that anyone other than the crane workers knew that they were in Iowa or saw them here. Most likely they were flying quite high and were out of eyesight unless one knew exactly where to look. Still, they provide an interesting new chapter in the story of Whooping Cranes in Iowa. Already, crane workers at Necedah are training a third group of 18 birds that will fly south this fall. The hope is that many of these birds will survive and eventually establish another breeding population at Necedah National Wildlife Refuge. However, if the program is successful, it is likely that at least some of the birds will move beyond the boundaries of the refuge and try to nest there as well. With at least four of the birds already known to have visited Iowa, is it possible that sometime in the future some of these or other cranes will return and try to nest here? If so, a long unfinished chapter in story of Whooping Cranes in Iowa will have come full circle with their return to a state where they once nested.

I thank Matt Kenne who first made me aware of this crane incursion into Iowa. For additional information, see Bookmarks on this page.

In Memorial

Jim Landenberger, a long-time IOU member and world-renowned, wildlife artist died Thursday, July 3, 2003 in Naples, Florida at age 65 after a short illness. He donated many of his paintings and prints to promote conservation and the IOU. Over the years, Landenberger competed in and won several nature stamp competitions. In recent years, he was very active in the Naples Alliance for Children.

A Museum of Natural History and Hageboeck Hall Update

Chris Caster

Work continues in the University of Iowa's Hageboeck Hall of Birds (pronounced Hedge-beck) despite continuing staffing limitations. New educational labels will go up in the Laysan Island Cyclorama this month, exploring the ecology of the island and describing the Cyclorama's unique place in the history of museum exhibits. A new sound system will feature twenty-two bird calls mixed into the traditional narrative providing an audio tour of all but two of the species on display.

In early July, with the help of a grant obtained from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), two professional conservators spent two days examining the Cyclorama. They reported the mural and specimens are generally in excellent condition but in need of a thorough cleaning—not surprising after 90 years. Their detailed recommendations for cleaning and preserving the Cyclorama for another 100 years are expected next month.

In the fall the Museum anticipates turning to the east room of Hageboeck Hall where two major exhibits remain to be finished.

The Birds and You exhibit will draw upon University collections and donor-supplied memorabilia to document the long-standing relationship between birds and humans as illustrated by bird's long history as religious and cultural symbols. The exhibit will also explore of the role of birds in the lives of some of the important contributors to the Museum's bird collection.

A 45-foot mural on the east end of the gallery will form the backdrop for the Iowa Environmental History Wall that will tell the 12,000 year ecological, biological and cultural history of Iowa through birds. The plan is to create a multi-layered collage of antiques, historic memorabilia, images, text

and bird specimens, that will describe the cultural forces that have shaped the Iowa landscape since the arrival of humans. Drawing on various collections on campus, and with the help of donors, the aim is to create an exhibit that will be an invaluable teaching tool and a vivid message for visitors of all ages.

If you want to help support the completion of Hageboeck Hall contact the Museum or the University of Iowa Foundation.

Release of Film—*Winged Migration*

Winged Migration is an 85-minute movie by French filmmaker Jaques Perrin, originally released in Dec. 2001 under the French title, *Le Papele Migrateur*. It won a French Academy Award for Best Editing in 2002, and has won prizes at film festivals around the world. Although it is a 2003 Oscar nominee for Best Documentary, it doesn't seem to be a documentary in the traditional sense. In fact, there is very little narration other than the use of swift explanatory titles. One reviewer described it as a mosaic of tiny narratives that track the birds on their travels toward successful migration. Another reviewer described the film as alternately stunning and dull—there's a whole lot of flapping going on for 85 minutes. But another reviewer described the results as intimate and spectacular.

Perrin was inspired to make the film after receiving aerial footage from Canadian Ultra-Light pilot Bill Lishman of his 15 imprinted goslings. According to Perrin, "When you make a movie about nature it should be like opening a window in the viewer's soul." This film will bring you closer to the mystery of migration than you would have ever thought possible. The making of this film took over four years and utilized the skills of more than 450 people including 17 pilots and 14 cinematographers traveling with the birds across 40 countries and 7 continents. It is being distributed in the United States by Sony Pictures Classics and was first released in New York City on April 18th. It is scheduled to appear in many locations around the country, but most of us are going to have to travel to see it.

Please join us in Iowa City, Saturday, September 27th, for a special showing of *Winged Migration*. Enjoy this spectacular Academy Award-nominated film in the company of fellow bird enthusiasts, learn more about plans to finish **Hageboeck Hall of Birds**, and raise money to accomplish this goal.

Saturday, September 27

5:00 - 5:30

7:00 - 8:45

Reception at the Museum of Natural History, Macbride Hall

Film Showing at the Bijou Theater, Iowa Memorial Union

Sunday, September 28

8:00am

Optional outing with the Iowa City Bird Club to Hawkeye Wildlife Area

Fee: \$25 per person. Seating is limited so please RSVP before September 20th. Make checks payable to the University of Iowa Foundation and mail along with this form to: The University of Iowa Foundation, P.O. Box 4550, Iowa City, IA 52244-4550

Yes, I wish to reserve seats for the special showing of *Winged Migration* to raise funds for the completion of the Hageboeck Hall of Birds on September 27th.

Name _____

Address _____

Number of Seats to Reserve _____ Amount Enclosed _____

FALL 2003 GRAND MARAIS BIRDING FESTIVAL



OCTOBER 24 - 26, 2003

• Guided Field Trips • Special Presentations

Join us for guided field trips along Lake Superior and the Grand Marais harbor. Experience culture and comfort in our harbor-village setting.

For event information:

North House Folk School 1-888-387-9762

For area information:

1-888-922-2225 www.grandmarais.com

Grand Marais
MINNESOTA

A NORTH SHORE WORK OF ART

Hawk Owl illustration by Keith Morris

2nd Annual Rivers & Bluffs Fall Birding Festival

The 2nd Annual Rivers & Bluffs Fall Birding Festival will be held November 7, 8 & 9, 2003, along the Mississippi River in Allamakee County. This festival is in the peak season for close-up views of thousands of tundra swans, hundreds of ducks and geese and numerous bald eagles and hawks. Enjoy the majestic Mississippi River ecosystem and bluff over-looks!

Highlights include: Two half-day field trips, a Live Bald Eagle program, a cruise on the Mississippi River in a unique glass covered tour boat to look at birds. Meals will be together at local restaurants. There will be door prizes and gift certificates, and live music and special fun on Saturday night. Registration is \$5.00.

Headquarters: KBSB Community Center, 395 Main Street, Lansing, IA. Contact Ric or Betty Zarwell for more information and registration at zarxzar@salamander.com or 319/538-4991.

Festival co-sponsors: Lansing Chamber of Commerce, Lansing City Council, Audubon Iowa-IBA program, Alliant Energy, Upper Mississippi River Campaign of National Audubon, Upper Iowa Chapter-Audubon, www.lansingiowa.com, IOU, Iowa City Bird Club, and Allamakee County Economic Development.

Dates, Things To Do

September 5

Audubon Iowa's Pelican Gala at Jester Park Lodge. Jim Dinsmore, speaker.

September 7

Jester Park Annual Pelican Festival.

September 11-14

W.S.O. Midwest Birding Symposium, Green Bay, WI.

September 20

Necedah 3rd Annual Whooping Crane Festival, Necedah, WI. email: wiscft@tds.net

September 25

Hawk Talk Live, Jester Park Lodge. Polk County Conservation Board Educational program. For info: (515) 323-5300

September 26

Deadline for registration for IOU Fall Meeting

September 27

Special showing of the film *Winged Migration*, Bijou Theater, University of Iowa Memorial Union, with proceeds going to the U of I Foundation.

September 27-28

Hawk Watch at Effigy Mounds, with Upper Iowa Audubon. Contact Pam Kester (563) 873-1236 or kestrel@alpinecom.net.

October 10-12

IOU Fall Meeting, Hitchcock Nature Center, Loess Hills. Details on pages 4 - 7.

October 24-26

Fall 2003 Grand Marais Birding Festival, Grand Marais, MN.

November 7-9

2nd Annual Rivers & Bluffs Fall Birding Festival in Allamakee County. Contact: Ric Zarwell at zarxzar@salamander.com

November 30

End of fall reporting season. Send field reports to the fall season editor.

Saylorville Pelican Festival

Polk County Conservation, Audubon Iowa, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Saylorville Lake, and the Iowa DNR Wildlife Diversity Team are once again partnering to host the 4th Annual Pelican Festival. Saylorville Lake provides a resting spot for one of the largest fall gatherings of the American White Pelican in the world. Up to 10,000 pelicans appear at the lake between mid-August and September as they make their way south for the winter. The hosting partners welcome the public to capture breathtaking views of these birds at Jester Park in Granger, Iowa, on Sunday, September 7. The Pelican Festival will take place from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Activities for all ages will educate participants about pelicans, waterfowl, osprey, and their amazing migrations. Public education programs will take place all day on the half hour. Youth activities and refreshments will be on-site. Spotting scopes, staffed by trained birders, will be available for public use. This free public event drew over 3,000 spectators last year.

Iowa Ornithologists' Union
2308 State Avenue
Ames, IA 50014

[Address Service Requested]

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MASON CITY, IOWA
Permit No. 251

Thomas H Kent
211 RICHARDS ST
IOWA CITY IA 52246-3519

I o w a O r n i t h o l o g i s t s ' U n i o n

IOU News

CONTENTS

Whooping Cranes Return to Iowa <i>James J. Dinsmore</i> 1	Results of Questionnaire <i>Publications Committee</i> 8
From the President <i>Richard Tetrault</i> 2	Bookmarks <i>James J. Dinsmore</i> 9
IOU Fall Meeting 2003 4 - 7	Hageboeck Hall Update <i>Chris Caster</i> 10
Birding Two Power Plants <i>Ric Zarwell</i> 7	Dates, Things To Do 11

