

Iowa Ornithologists' Union



STATE BIRD OF IOWA: THE GOLDFINCH

I. O. U. NEWS

Spring 1986 *Newsletter of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union* Volume 2 Number 1

BLUEBIRDS IN IOWA

The 1986 Iowa Bluebird Workshop was held in Des Moines February 15. Sponsored by the Iowa Conservation Commission's Nongame Program, nearly 50 people attended. A slide-tape program from the North American Bluebird Society was shown followed by an update on the bird's status here in Iowa. Nest boxes of all types were discussed and plans for many were made available. Bluebird trail enthusiasts were encouraged to submit nest cards to the Nongame program since there is little nesting information available for Iowa.

Two IOU members, Dick Bierman and Gil Sandvick, have started and maintained successful Bluebird trails. We have asked them to tell of their experience. Dick Bierman is from Cherokee in northwest Iowa: "About 1978 I had the good fortune to take over the maintenance and care of a Bluebird trail in Cherokee County. The trail consisted of about 35 maintained houses that had been in operation for about 20 years. So, I already had a good population of Bluebirds. With the help of Marion Brewer and Vernie Bierman, we have expanded the number of houses to around 150. We clean them in March and try to check them every two weeks or so through mid-September.

Our boxes are located in Cherokee County along the Little Sioux River along highway right-of-ways and in County Conservation Board areas. We try to locate our boxes in pastured areas away from brush and heavy timber to discourage wrens from using the boxes. Boxes are on a steel post about 5 feet off the ground. We have experimented with various types and designs of houses. Our luck with the open top boxes has been marginal. The best box to keep predators out seems to be the Audubon style except we use a 1½" diameter hole instead of a slot.

Our fledge rate through the years would probably be about 50%. Various reasons for failure would include: competition with wrens or other birds, predation, poisoning, and parasites. In 1985 110 Bluebirds fledged from our boxes."

Gil Sandvick is from Long Grove in eastern Iowa: "I became interested in Bluebirds about 5 years ago when I learned of their rapidly decreasing numbers. Most people under the age of 50 have never seen our Eastern Bluebird.

My trail is located in the McCausland/Princeton, Iowa area in Scott and Clinton counties. It consists of 24 nesting boxes that I monitor weekly. Open pastureland with trees in the background, away from all buildings, makes for the best nest box location. Last year was my best year as 51 babies were successfully fledged."



BLUEBIRDS (cont'd)

The North American Bluebird Society was organized to alert the public to the slow, but gradual disappearance of the Bluebird due to lack of suitable nesting cavities and severe weather. It also encourages the establishment of bluebird trails and maintenance of scientific records of nesting. The Society acts as a clearing-house for this data. Members are updated by their quarterly journal, Sialia. For further information write: North American Bluebird Society, Box 6295, Silver Springs, MD 20906.



BOARD UPDATES - Carl J. Bendorf, President

The editors of I.O.U. News have asked me to make a regular contribution to help keep you up to date with the activities of the Board of Directors and other related matters. We are lucky in having a very dedicated and hard-working Board, and I welcome the opportunity to summarize its actions.

Board Meeting at Centerville - Oct. 5, 1985:

- * Prepared recommendation to membership for revised dues structure.
- * Report from Jim Sinclair on upcoming IOU Birdathon. Approved 50% of funds to IOU and up to 50% to local groups.
- * Discussed proposal for IOU projects committee from Rick Hollis.
- * Approved appointment of Francis Moore to Records Committee.
- * Report from Jim Dinsmore on the Publications Committee
 - Approved plan for storage of library materials.
 - Approved newsletter start-up expenses.
 - Approved reprinting of Birding Areas of Iowa by Pete Petersen (and not as IOU project).



BOARD UPDATES (cont'd)

Mail Ballot of December 2, 1985:

- * Approved Publications Committee recommendation of Tom Kent as editor of Iowa Bird Life.
- * Approved projected 1986 budget for Iowa Bird Life.
- * Approved Publications Committee recommendations of Hank and Linda Zaletel as co-editors of I.O.U. News.
- * Approved projected 1986 budget for I.O.U. News.

Mail Ballot of January 22, 1986:

- * Approved re-appointment of Linda Zaletel to Publications Committee
- * Approved appointment of Bob Cecil to Publications Committee to fill term of Tom Kent who resigned to assume duties as editor of Iowa Bird Life.
- * Approved appointments of Francis Moore, Jim Sinclair, and Bernie Knight to Membership Committee.

The next Board meeting will be Saturday, March 22 at 10:00 AM at the Silhouette Restaurant at the highway #146 exit of I-80. Board meetings are open to any IOU member.

Other IOU Business:

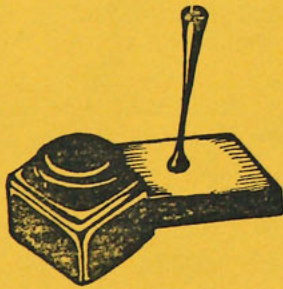
Francis Moore of Waterloo has offered to coordinate hosting our fall meeting, probably in September. This Board will discuss this and present to the membership for approval.

We are preparing a restated Articles of Incorporation which will be mailed to you in advance of the May meeting at Springbrook.

We need meeting sites for the 1987 spring and fall meetings. This is a fun project for local groups. The Board helps with much of the planning, and this makes it fairly easy to host a meeting. Please contact me or any of the Board members if you are interested.

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS/COMMENTS

We would like to thank the many people who wrote to us with suggestions and criticisms and to the many contributors to the newsletter. It really makes our job easier. Several commented on wanting inserts for such things as registration forms, feeder surveys, etc., so that they would not have to tear up the newsletter. This and other suggestions will be presented to the Publications Board. We encourage local clubs to send us their newsletters and relevant newspaper articles so that we can have a meeting and field trip calendar that is complete as possible.



IOU MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Barb Wilson of Hastings and Rick Hollis of Iowa City were lauded as "Leaders in Conservation" by the January, 1986 Iowa Conservationist.

Gil Sandvick of Long Grove was featured in an article on Bluebirds in the February 8 issue of the Cedar Rapids Gazette.



REMEMBER THE BIRDATHON!

Deadline to enter is April 1.
Send to: Jim Sinclair
810 N. B Street
Indianola, IA 50125

BIRD WATCHERS MIGRATE??!



At 5:00 PM on January 23, 1986, I received a call from John Ribble of Austin, Texas. He and his wife, Barbara, had heard about the N. Saw-whet Owls at Ledges State Park and were interested in driving up to see them. They left that night at 7:00 and drove straight through, arriving in Ames at 1:30 PM the following afternoon. Gordon Brown and I met the Ribbles, and we drove to Ledges State Park. We found the owl in a few minutes. For the Ribbles, who have seen more than 700 species of birds in the United States, the N. Saw-whet Owl was a life bird. We also found a Northern Shrike just outside the park, one of the few the Ribbles had ever seen. They treated us to dinner, and then they returned home.

- Steve Dinsmore, Ames



1ST IOU SUMMER FIELD TRIP

Date: June 7, 1986
Time: 7:30 AM
Place: Shimek State Forest
Croton Unit, Lee County
Contact: Bob Cecil
327 S. 6th
Keokuk, IA 52632
319-524-6407 evenings

Birds: Extreme southeast Iowa is unique for its summering warblers. Parula, Cerulean, Louisiana Waterthrush, Worm-eating, Kentucky and Yellow-breasted Chat are common. A Prairie Warbler is a possibility. Other species include Pileated Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, White-eyed Vireo and Scarlet Tanager.

Preregistration is requested. An informal "I can't get enough of south-east Iowa" Sunday trip will be held at Lacey-Keosauqua State Park.

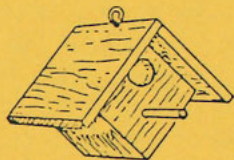
COMING EVENTS IN EASTERN IOWA

- Sat., Mar. 29 - Quad City Audubon Society and Mississippi Bend Bird & Nature Club field trip to LaSalle County (Illinois) Nuclear Plant for waterfowl and open country birds. Meet at Moline Airport Holiday Inn at 7:00 AM; bring a lunch. Leader: Pete Petersen (319) 355-7051.
- Sun., Mar. 30 - Iowa City Bird Club field trip to Cone Marsh. Meet at Iowa Memorial Union parking lot at 7:00 AM. Leader: Bud Gode (319) 351-5245.
- Fri., Apr. 4 - Big Bluestem owl party. Parking Design Bldg., ISU, at 6:30 PM going to Ledges State Park. Marianna Loy (515) 292-0769.
- Mon., Apr. 7 - Mary Hardin of Blackmore Nursery will discuss the various native plantings that attract birds. 7:00 PM at Lime Creek Nature Center, Mason City. Ellen Lipp (515) 423-5309.
- Wed., Apr. 9 - First meeting of the newly formed Iowa City Bird Club, Bud Gode, president. 7:30 PM at the Iowa City Rec Center, 220 S. Gilbert. Program: Workshop and panel discussion on Warblers.
- Sat., Apr. 19 - Story County Conservation will present a program, "Become a Bird Brain: An Introduction to Bird Watching." 8:00 AM at McFarland Park. Cele Burnett (515) 232-2516.
- Sat., Apr. 19 & Sun., Apr. 20 - Eden Valley Nature Center exhibit, "Iowa's Vanishing Wetlands" by Cathy Medden. 1:00-4:00 PM both days, Eden Valley Nature Center, Clinton County. For information: Sharon Kaufman (319) 847-7202.
- Sun., Apr. 20 - Quad City Audubon Society and Mississippi Bend Bird and Nature Club field trip to Sherman Park for migrant birds and Woodcock nuptial flight at dusk. Meet at parking lot on north side of Ramada Inn, Brady St., Davenport at 2:00 PM. Bring a picnic supper. Leaders: Bill and Ann Barker (319) 285-9425.
- Thur., Apr. 24 - Mississippi Bend Bird and Nature Club field trip, "Woodcock Watch." To Syracuse Wildlife area 6:30-8:00 PM. Leader: Sharon Kaufman (319) 847-7202.
- Sat., Apr. 26 - Iowa City Bird Club field trip to English River Wildlife Area. Meet at 6:30 AM at Iowa Memorial Union parking lot. Leader: Barb Henderson (319) 646-2733.
- Sat., May 3 - Quad City Audubon Society, "May Dawn Bird Concert." Meet at the lodge on Credit Island at 5:30 AM. If park is flooded, site will be Duck Creek Park. Leader: Pete Petersen (319) 355-7051.
- Sat., May 3 - Waterloo Audubon field trip to George Wyth State Park. Meet at Wyth Lake parking lot at 5:30 AM. Francis Moore (319) 232-0217.
- Sat., May 3 - Iowa City Bird Club field trip to Hickory Hill Park. Meet at 7:00 AM at north parking lot of the park. Leader: Rick Hollis (319) 338-4834.
- Sat., May 10 - Mississippi Bend Bird and Nature Club field trip - canoe down the Wapsi from Toronto to Syracuse. For reservations and information: Sharon Kaufman (319) 847-7202.
- Sat., May 10 - Big Bluestem Audubon (Ames) field trip to McFarland Park. Meet at 8:00 AM at McFarland parking lot. Hank Zaletel (515) 377-2889.
- Sat., May 24 - Waterloo Audubon field trip to Yellow River State Forest and northeast Iowa. Meet at Power Mfg. at 5:00 AM. Francis Moore (319) 232-0217.
- Sat., May 24 - Quad City Audubon Society and Mississippi Bend Bird and Nature Club field trip to Louisa Unit, Mark Twain NWR for migrant warblers and shorebirds. Meet at 7:00 AM at the lodge on Credit Island. Bring a lunch. Leader: Pete Petersen (319) 355-7051.
- Sun., June 1 - Iowa City Bird Club field trip to Amana Woods. Meet at Iowa Memorial Union parking lot at 6:30 AM. Leaders: Cal and Bernie Knight (319) 337-9140.



PHILIP DUMONT PAPERS

During the 1930s, Philip A. DuMont was probably the most active ornithologist working in Iowa. His greatest contribution was his comprehensive Birds of Iowa, for over 30 years the best summary of information on Iowa birds. He also was active in the conservation movement in Iowa. From Iowa, he went to work for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service where he had a long career, mostly working with national wildlife refuges. Now retired, he has donated many of his papers to the Iowa State University Library. These papers consist of reprints of DuMont's papers on Iowa birds, papers by others such as Althea Sherman, T.C. Stephens, William Youngworth, and Paul Errington on Iowa birds, and a number of other papers on Midwest birds. There also are some notes on unfinished manuscripts of DuMont. The whole collection is in the Special Collections section at Iowa State where it is available for study.



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

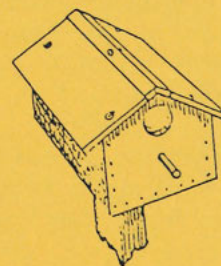
I am preparing an article for Iowa Bird Life on the history and status of the "Big Day" in Iowa. I am interested in hearing about any and all records with a high species total achieved during one day by a single party of observers in Iowa. Please send me an account of your Big Days, including the following information (if known):

- date and year
- species total
- main areas visited
- names of all observers
- was count done according to American Birding Association rules for Big Days? (don't worry if it wasn't)

Send to: Carl J. Bendorf, 825 7th Ave., Iowa City, IA 52240.

INDIGO BUNTINGS WANTED

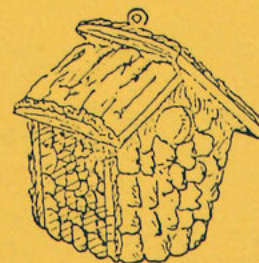
Two researchers from Colorado State University are looking for an area that has a dense breeding population of Indigo Buntings. They need to mistnet about 20 female and 5 male buntings this summer. They would prefer to work near Vinton as they have relatives there but could travel if necessary to find a suitable population. If you know of such a location, please contact Ann Baker, Zoology Dept., Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523.



MARKET PLACE

Single copies of the following are available free. Address requests to the Publications Distribution Center, Printing and Publications Bldg., Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011. A self-addressed mailing label will speed delivery.

- WL-20 Weather Vane Bird Feeder
- WL-21 A Simple Bluebird House
- WL-31 Four Room Martin House
- WL-32 Iowa Bird Migration Calendar
- WL-42 Pheasant Cover
- WL-43 Woodpecker Attacks on Houses
- WL-44 Controlling Bird Roosts
- WL-48 Wild Turkeys in Iowa's Private Woodlands
- WL-49 Wildlife Needs That Dead Tree
- Y-2 Common Hawks & Owls of Iowa



NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY

The Natural Areas Inventory collects records of rare plants, animals, and natural communities for the purpose of protection and management. Our list of species of interest includes 34 birds. For many we have recent records. Several are represented only by old records. We need recent information on the following:

- Eared Grebe
- Double-crest Cormorant
- Swainson's Hawk
- Worm-eating Warbler
- Henslow's Sparrow
- Heron and Egret colonies away from the Mississippi River
- Long-eared Owl
- Barn Owl
- Short-eared Owl
- King Rail

We need records of breeding locations. Data should include: type of observation, singing male, nest with eggs, etc.; location as precise as possible, preferably township/range/section; habitat type; date of observation; ownership if known.

If you have questions about this project please call John Fleckenstein at 515-281-7614.



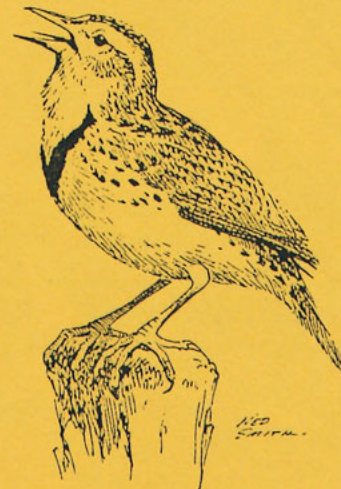
ATLAS PROJECT

The results of the first year of the Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas are gradually coming in. To date, about 120 blocks have had some coverage, and at least 13 have sufficient coverage to be considered done. At least 41 counties have had some coverage. Surprisingly, most of the work has been in the northwest half of Iowa. About 100 people have participated. Over 60% of the species found in the completed blocks are either confirmed or probable nesters, the most valuable categories of information. Some of the more interesting finds were Burrowing Owl, Northern Harrier, Ring-necked Duck, Least Bittern, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Common Barn-Owl (2 blocks), Louisiana Waterthrush, and Northern Parula. Some common species (American Robin, Mourning Dove) were reported from most of the blocks while others like Loggerhead Shrike and Upland Sandpiper were on about 10% of the blocks covered.

We still have not received reports from many blocks that we think had some coverage in 1985. Please send your 1985 Atlas cards to Doug Reeves, RR 1, Ledges Road, Boone, IA 50036. We also need to increase our coverage in 1986, especially in south-central and southeast Iowa. There are many good blocks that are untouched. Please contact your county or regional coordinator or Doug Reeves for atlas packets.

Iowa Birdline Phone Number
1-319-622-3353

Keep informed! Spring is here and birds are moving. Call the Iowa Birdline



IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS UNION

The Des Moines Audubon Society invites you to attend the annual spring meeting to be held May 16, 17, and 18, 1986 at Springbrook Park Education Center, Guthrie Center, Iowa. The emergency phone number is (515) 747-3460.

SPRING MEETING 1986

The spring meeting will be held at the Springbrook Conservation Education Center located just east of Springbrook State Park in Guthrie County. Modern dining facilities, meeting rooms, and good sleeping accommodations are all available. Because of the distance to any nearby town, it will probably be easiest to plan to have all of your meals at the Center. The food is good, and the prices are reasonable. Accommodations at the Center are limited though, so get your reservation in early. Camping facilities are available in Springbrook State Park, and a list of motels in nearby towns is provided below.

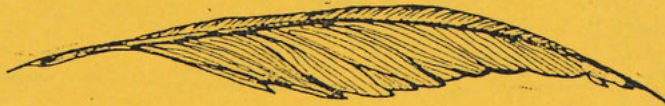
Birding the weekend of the meeting should be excellent. Wild Turkey, Whip-poor-will, Barred Owl, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Acadian Flycatcher should be found nearby. Some local areas that are good for birding include Springbrook State Park, Sheeder Prairie, Bays Branch, Lakin's Slough, Dunbar Slough, and McCord Pond. Other activities planned include workshops, a paper session, and a business meeting with election of officers.

Planned Events:

Fri., May 16. 7:30 PM - Informal gathering, dining room basement lounge. Refreshments served.

Sat., May 17. Breakfast - 6:00 AM. Field trip at 6:30, lunch at 12:15. Afternoon programs, dinner - 6:30, followed by after-dinner program.

Sun., May 18. Breakfast - 6:00 AM. Field trip at 6:30, lunch at 12:15. Bird count and discussion. Adjournment approximately 2:00 PM.



REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Approximately what time do you plan to arrive? Date _____ Time _____

Costs

Registration fee, \$2 per person \$ _____

Dormitory, \$8 per night, 104 beds available _____

Meals:

Breakfast	Sat. _____	Sun. _____	@ \$1.75 each =	_____
Lunch	Sat. _____		@ \$2.50	_____
	Sun. _____		@ \$2.25	_____
Dinner	Sat. _____		@ \$4.75	_____



Total Enclosed \$ _____

Please send a check for the amount of registration fee, dorm accommodations, and meals to Sally Avercamp, Treas., 200 Terrace Rd., Des Moines, IA 50312.

Registrations MUST be received by May 1, 1986

Area Motels

Cottage Motel, 201 S. 3rd
Guthrie Center, 50115 747-2211

Midway Motel, Hwy. 44 East
Guthrie Center, 50115 747-2261

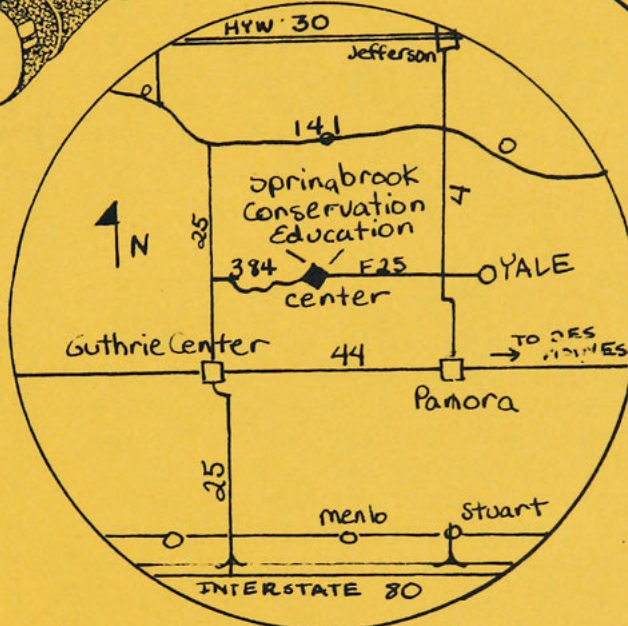
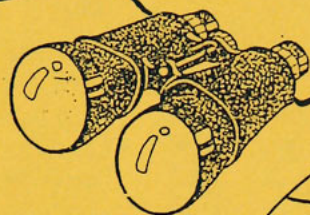
Redwood Motel, Hwy. 30
Jefferson, 50129 386-3116

Coon Rapids Motel, 718 Hwy.
Coon Rapids, 50220 684-5213

D & D Motel, 3300 Willis
Perry, 50220 465-3541

Escadrille Motor Inn, 1112 Willis
Perry, 50220 465-3511

Red Carpet Motel, Hwy. 141 & 169
Perry, 50220 676-2063



MAP NOT TO SCALE

It should be a great meeting. See you there!

Iowa Ornithologists' Union



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