



I.O.U. News

Iowa Ornithologists' Union Newsletter

Spring 1996 • Volume 12 Number 1

Birding by Canoe in Winter?

by Steve Dinsmore and Jim Sinclair

In 1986, Jim suggested that we canoe the 9-mile stretch of the Des Moines River from Saylorville dam to the Des Moines Botanical Center on the Des Moines Christmas Bird Count. It sounded a bit crazy, but hey - the river was open and there were probably some interesting birds using it. As it turned out, we had a great day and saw a number of species on the CBC seen by nobody else. We repeated that trip on the 1987 Des Moines CBC and again in January 1995. All of the trips were enjoyable and offered a good means of breaking the usual January birding doldrums.

On January 13, 1996, we decided to try another winter canoe trip. This time we planned to canoe the 10-miles stretch of the Des Moines River from Red Rock dam into southwest Mahaska County. The weather forecast was superb - sunny and warm with light winds. We put in below the Red Rock dam at 7:30 a.m. under partly cloudy skies and a cool 30°F. Hundreds of mallards and a few American black ducks were loafing on the river below the dam.

We were surprised to see a group of 16 wild turkeys, including eight males displaying and even gobbling. In the first mile and a half, we tallied six belted kingfishers. Red-tailed hawks were also conspicuous along the first river mile (we saw eight), but nearly absent along the remainder of the river.

By 9 a.m. we were below the iron bridge. Canada geese and bald eagles were everywhere. A few common goldeneye and

common mergansers were mixed in with the flocks of mallards. By 10:30 a.m., the sky had cleared and the temperature had warmed to around 50°F. We were now about 2 miles upstream from the Highway 92 bridge.

The number of bald eagles was impressive - we counted more than 40 in sight at one time. A large flock of Canada geese contained a lone American white pelican, seemingly healthy and able to fly. Suddenly, the bank exploded with great blue herons - we counted at least fifteen. And then the bird of the day. A small raptor flew upstream, passing directly over us - a female or immature merlin!

By 11:00 a.m. we had passed the Highway 92 bridge and crossed into Mahaska County. We saw another great blue heron, a couple of kingfishers, and lots of eagles, but the waterfowl had disappeared. At 12:30 p.m. we reached the car and hauled out. The weather, unbelievably mild for mid-January, had cooperated nicely and made for a great day. We tallied 34 species on the five hour trip.

Some notable totals were 16 great blue herons, 3,500 Canada geese, 2,500 mallards, 170 (66 adults, 104 immatures) bald eagles, and 19 belted kingfishers, of which all but one were males. This stretch of river is of major importance to wintering bald eagles. The thought of seeing 15-20 bald eagles per river mile would probably have been considered ridiculous just ten years earlier.

Iowa's winter weather can be harsh, but even the worst winters have a few fair-weather days. If you want to liven up your winter birding, why not try a mid-winter



canoe trip?

There are several stretches of Iowa's rivers below the four Corps of Engineers reservoirs, the Cedar River south of Cedar Rapids, the Des Moines River below the Ottumwa dam, and possibly portions of the Mississippi River below one of the many locks. Check the river before departing to make sure it is open and that there are no ice jams or lowhead dams. Ten miles is probably a reasonable distance to cover in a day. We usually stop several times to stretch and warm up.

Good weather is a must. Thirty degrees may sound warm, but it's not when you consider your lack of movement, wind, and the fact that you are over water. We would be hesitant to canoe when the temperature drops below 20°F. A canoe trip on a nice winter day is a great way to add some variety to your birding.

1-2-3 And a Songbird in a Pear Tree

DNR Counts Songbirds in E. Iowa for Habitat Study by Orlan Love

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Elkader - Bill Norris and Lisa Hemesath broke camp at a farmhouse northwest of here last week after spending much of the past four months counting songbirds in the woods of northeast Iowa.

Hemesath, a research biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Diversity Program, and Norris a doctoral student in botany at Iowa State University, were in the woods most mornings before 6, recording their observations of neotropical songbirds.

They head a \$200,000, three-year research effort designed to find out how forests can be managed to improve habitat for Baltimore orioles, indigo buntings, scarlet tanagers, rose-breasted grosbeaks and hosts of other neotropical migratory songbirds. The neotropicals winter in Central and South America and migrate to temperate areas such

as Iowa to nest.

The researchers counted birds in specific areas and carefully documented the vegetation in those areas. "We think plants affect the selection of forests by birds," said Norris. "We believe our research will show that birds use forests with high vegetative diversity - a well-defined canopy, a layer of shrubbery and vegetation at the ground level. And we think it will show that high diversity can counter the negative effects of forest fragmentation."

Forest fragmentation is a fact of life in Iowa, said Hemesath. "The question is," she said, "how can we best manage the remaining fragments to help songbirds? We want to know if we can manage forest vegetation in ways that will yield healthy populations of neotropical migrants."

She and Norris headed a team of more than a dozen researchers who worked this summer from a headquarters in a farmhouse near the Big Spring Hatchery. Their crew included summer interns for the Iowa Chapter of the Nature Conservancy; four research technicians, all recent college graduates with degrees in wildlife biology; and two other members of the DNR's Wildlife Diversity Program, Bruce Ehresman and Pat Schlarbaum.

The crew has just completed field research for the second year of a study sponsored by the DNR, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Iowa Chapter of the Nature Conservancy, Trees Forever and Iowa State University.

Other studies have documented the negative impact of timber fragmentation caused by agriculture and urban development on the neotropical songbirds. The northeast Iowa study is thought to be the first that correlates the availability of forest vegetation with the ability of the birds to survive and prosper.

The researchers marked 200 trees on 45 woodland tracts, primarily in Clayton, Allamakee and Winneshiek counties. Some tracts were in parks and preserves, but most were on private property.

"These are the bird points," said Norris. "We go back to each site three times to count birds in the area. We stay 10 minutes at each



site. Most of the observations are by sound, since the birds usually stay well hidden in the vegetation."

All the researchers had to know the songs of the birds nesting in eastern Iowa. To help them learn the songs, Hemesath made an audiotape that included the songs of more than 200 birds.

All field technicians arrived at the base camp two weeks before actual survey work began in order to learn the locations of the bird points and to make sure all participants were on the same page of the song book.

"The studies in other states have been conducted primarily in pristine woods," said Norris. "Most of our woods have been altered, and we want to find out how valuable altered woods can be as songbird habitat."

In year one, the researchers established their methodology, surveyed timber tracts and contacted landowners for permission to conduct research on their land. Year three will be another year of data gathering, followed by analysis and publication of findings.

Hemesath said the research project will yield practical advice on forest management for private owners of forest tracts. Hemesath and Norris said this year's progress exceeded their expectations. "We accomplished everything we wanted to," said Norris.

Hemesath said their contacts with the landowners have been rewarding. "They are proud of their timbers and very interested in the welfare of songbirds. It has been a pleasure to work with them."

Hank & Linda Zaletel, Editors
1928 6th St.
Nevada, IA 50201-1126
515/382-5427
Bird Hank @AOL.com
MadOwl@AOL.com



Biologists Paid in Sweat But Bird Song Was Payoff

by Orlan Love

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For researchers studying neotropical songbirds in the woods of northeast Iowa, the joy of hearing a symphony of bird song each morning occasionally heightened by the breathtaking glimpse of a scarlet tanager or indigo bunting - can sometimes be overshadowed by the misery wrought by head-high stinging nettles and unrelenting humidity.

"Nettles and the humidity were our two biggest problems day in and day out" said project co-leader Bill Norris, an Iowa State University doctoral student in botany.

Norris and Department of Natural Resources wildlife biologist Lisa Hemesath headed a team of researchers who visited 200 randomly selected bird points in northeast Iowa.

"We put dots on our maps, then used compasses and range points to find the dots," said Norris. "Once we found the spot, we marked the nearest big tree and that was our bird point."

Hemesath said anyone who visited the bird points would have no difficulty believing that they had been randomly selected. "Some were so remote and hard to get to that no one in his right mind would have deliberately chosen them," she said. Norris said it took a 45-minute hike "through pure nettles" to reach one of their counting sites. Although shorts were standard apparel in camp "you definitely wore jeans into the woods," he said.

Despite highly developed orienteering skills, Hemesath said she twice got lost during her summer timber forays. The researchers started locating and marking the bird points in mid-April, when many turkey hunters were in the woods.

"We wore blaze orange during the hunting season to ensure that we were not mistaken for turkeys," said Hemesath. Although the researchers feared they would need gallons of calamine lotion, mosquitoes and other insects were much less a problem than anticipated said Norris.

(Continued on page 6)

Partners in Flight Meeting

At our IOU meeting last spring, Lisa Hemaseth, biologist with the Wildlife Diversity Program asked our group to participate in the Partners in Flight effort to identify species of concern and identify management needs. The original intent was, and still is, to form a state planning group that will formulate a state plan. However before the state group could meet, the Midwest coordinator scheduled a meeting to discuss a regional plan for the southern Great Plains area. Most of Iowa, excluding north-central and extreme north-eastern is considered part of that region. Lisa, Mel Moe (DNR biologist), and I attended that meeting which was held on January 26-27 near Kansas City. (Which means coming home on Friday the 27th. What fun!)

The country has been divided into physiographic regions based on similarities of habitat and expected bird species to facilitate management. The goal of this meeting was to discuss the list of species of conservation concern and identify their habitats. The prioritization scheme is based on global abundance, breeding and non-breeding ranges, threats during both breeding and wintering, population trends, and the importance of the area under consideration for the species. (For a more detailed discussion of the scheme read Hunter et. al, 1992). Scores had been assigned to species for our sub-region (Iowa, northern Missouri, west-central Illinois) prior to the meeting for state consideration. States may have lists that differ in some respects from the regional based on state priorities. Species also may be listed because of a lack of information. There are two methods for presenting scores; sums which range from 7-35 or ranks which range from 1-5. They are essentially equivalent. The scores are ranked as follows:

- 5 (30-35) Very high priority, continued survival in doubt
- 4 (24-29) High priority, need monitoring and management
- 3 (20-23) Moderate, may need monitoring, management
- 2 (13-19) Low (this may include edge of range species of local interest)
- 1 (7-12) Very low

Species can be of concern in a region as a breeder, a transient (the area is a significant migration pathway), or as wintering.

Habitat subclasses were designated for each of 4 major habitats based on species preferences. Some of these classes may be less important in Iowa; they were developed for the larger region. The list for our region is quite large, because Iowa is at the crossroads of the major habitats having both woodlands and grasslands as a primary landscape component. The importance of grasslands, however, is reflected in that of the 15 species listed as high priority, 8 are grassland species and 4 require wet grasslands, while the rest are either woodlands or shrub species.

Future meetings will attempt to estimate area of habitat needed to support the targeted populations, and identify land use and management practices that can enhance habitat quality. State meetings will be held to further refine the list and discuss problems specific to Iowa. Comments on the list can be sent to Lisa Hemaseth, Wildlife Research Station, 1436 255th St., Boon, Iowa 50036.

Grasslands: G

Mosaic-mix of height and density classes G-MX
Undisturbed tallgrass (2-5 yrs old) G-UT
Disturbed tallgrass G-DT
Tallgrass with woody components (shrubs)G-TW
Savanna G-S
Rank annual G-A

Shrub/Brush/Riparian: S

no subclasses

Wetland Grasslands: W

Disturbed wet meadow W-DM
Undisturbed wet meadow W-UM
Undisturbed emergent wetland W-UE
Disturbed emergent wetland W-DE
Mudflats, beach bars W-M

Woody/Riparian: R

Fencerow R-F
Woodlots R-W
Wooded edge R-E
Upland hardwood R-U
Bottomland floodplain hardwood R-B
Narrow riparian hardwood R-N

Hunter, W.C., M.F. Carter, D.N. Pashley, and K. Baker. 1992. The Partners in Flight Prioritization Scheme in D. M. Finch and P.W. Stangel (eds.) Status and Management of Neotropical Migratory Birds, USDA Forest Service General Technical Report RM-229.



Species	Status ¹	Score	Habitats	Comments
Piping Plover	B, D	29	W-M	
Least Tern	B, D	28	W-M	
Henslow's Sparrow	B	26	G-UT	
Dickcissel	B, D	26	G-UT, G-TW, also ag	
Franklin's Gull	B, T, D	26	W-DE, W-UE	
Greater Prairie Chicken	B, D	25	G-MX	
LeConte's Sparrow	T	25	G-UT, G-A, W-UM	
Cerulean Warbler	B, P	25	R-B, R-U	
Short-eared Owl	B, W, D	24	G-MX	
Loggerhead Shrike	B, D	24	G-TW	
Field Sparrow	B, D	24	G-TW, S	
Bobolink	B, D	24	G-UT	
Red-headed Woodpecker	B, D	24	R-W, R-U, R-B, R-N	
Harris's Sparrow	W, T, D	24	S	Uncertain, needs monitoring
Sedge Wren	B, D	24	W-DM, G-UT, W-DE	Monitor, status unclear
Black-billed Cuckoo	B	23	R-U, R-F	
Bell's Vireo	B	23	S	
Chimney Swift	B	23	Urban, R-B	
Grasshopper Sparrow	B, D	22	G-DT	
Am. White Pelican	T	22	Lakes	
Baltimore Oriole	B	22	R-F, R-W, R-B, R-N, R-U	
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	B	22	R-W, R-B, R-N, R-F, R-U	
Great-crested Flycatcher	B	22	R-W, R-U, R-B, R-N, R-F	
Least Bittern	B	22	W-DM, W-UE	
Eastern Wood Pewee	B	21	R-U, R-W, R-B, R-N	
Northern Harrier	B, W, D	20	G-MX	
Whip-poor-will	B	20	R-U	
Gray Catbird	B	20	S	Monitor, status unclear
Orchard Oriole	B, D	20	S, R-F	
Upland Sandpiper	B	20	W-DM, G-M	
Western Meadowlark	B	19	G-DT	Monitor
Eastern Meadowlark	B	19	G-UT	Monitor
Black-crowned Night Heron	B	19	W-UE, W-DE	
Yellow-breasted Chat	B	18	S	
Blue Grosbeak	B, P	15	S	
Sharp-tailed Grouse			G-TW	
Bald Eagle	B, W		R-B	
Rufous-sided Towhee	B		R-W, R-U	

Status: B=breeder, T=transient, W=wintering, D=populations showing decline, P=peripheral population

Most of the following species although breeders, are at the edge of their range in Iowa. Most have a ranking of 20-22: Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Scarlet Tanager, Kentucky Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Red-shouldered Hawk, Yellow-throated Warbler, Whip-poor-will, Wood Thrush, Ovenbird, Prothonotary Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Worm-eating Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Northern Parula, Mourning Warbler, Veery

These species are on the list of concern for the region, but for the southern area, the focus of attention will be on grassland species or birds that nest in woodlots or narrow riparian areas since southern Iowa has very few large blocks of woodland habitat that could support more than a few pairs of the above species.

In addition to the above, there are two suites of transient species of concern, shorebirds and warblers. Some efforts may be directed towards management of habitat where available especially along the larger rivers.



(continued from page 3)

Norris, an inveterate (sic) bird watcher for many years, said it's great to get paid for observing his favorite creatures. But after slogging up and down steep muddy slopes on a steamy morning, he feels he earns his pay.

He and Hemesath also said the summer woods are lonely. Although many Iowans enjoy spending time in the woods during the spring and fall, the prospect of impenetrable undergrowth and buzzing, biting insects keeps most of them out during the summer.

The researchers conducted 600 10-minute surveys between May 30 and July 7, spending many hundreds of hours in the woods of northeast Iowa. And said Norris, "not once did a census taker run into anyone else."

Margrieta Treasures Her Simple Life

by Ann Scholl Boyer

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The happy chirping of a baby robin fills the living room of Margrieta Delle's modest Iowa City home. The sound, emitted from a reel-to-reel tape recorder, is music to Margrieta's ears.

Margrieta taped the infant bird in McGregor. The recording joins dozens of others she has taped over the years. Her interest in bird songs has intensified as her eyesight has worsened, she says with a laugh.

She traces her interest in birds back to her days in her native Latvia. "It bothers me now," she says. "I remember some of the songs (from the birds in her homeland) and I don't know who made them."

Margrieta grew up in Riga, the capital and Latvia's largest city. Latvia was an independent nation from 1918 until June 1940 when the Soviets occupied the country. In August, the Soviet government forcibly made it part of the Soviet Union.

"They came in and made it appear (Latvia) had asked for help, which is not true," says Margrieta, who was 18 at the time. "They just wanted us." Margrieta remembers the fear

she and others felt at the time. "You never knew who would disappear, if you would see them again. You couldn't talk to anybody because you didn't even trust our high school classmates because you didn't know."

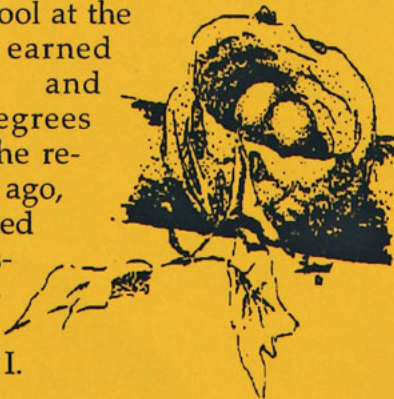
German forces invaded in 1941. Margrieta says Latvians thought they would be better off under the Germans. "We weren't much much," she says. In 1944, Soviet troops recaptured Latvia. "At the time, people were trying to leave because they were afraid of Russians," Margrieta recalls. "Some fled to Sweden in little boats."

Margrieta considers herself "one of the lucky ones." She went to Germany and when the war ended she stayed in a Displaced Persons Camp. I was lucky. I was never in much direct danger. There were bombs, but never anything extremely close. I don't know why somebody saved me."

Margrieta was an only child, born to older parents. "Oh, was I spoiled brat. I was the center of the world. If it hadn't been for all the experiences in the war that made me see that other people were people too, I would have been a pretty bad person. I see back now, I was the important thing. You unlearn that very quickly during the war."

Leaving her country "made me grow up. It made me much more resourceful, independent." Through the National Lutheran Federation, Margrieta secured sponsorship in Iowa. Margrieta lived with a minister in Iowa City for four years.

She began working three days after arriving in Iowa City, just after Christmas 1949. The following fall, she started school at the U of I. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees there. Until she retired four years ago, Margrieta worked as a research assistant in clinical and research labs at the U of I.



Before coming to the U.S., Margrieta says she lived "one day at a time. You got through one day, you were lucky. Coming here gave us hope to live a normal life." For a long time in the states, Margrieta cringed every time she heard sirens. To this day, she sleeps with the curtain open - something she couldn't do during black outs during the war.

"I like to see the sun come up in the morning." Margrieta hasn't been back to her native land since moving to the U.S. She had no plans to return. But in the past couple of years, she has had some contact with a former schoolmate in Riga. And an attorney has contacted Margrieta, to return to her the property her parents once owned in Riga.

While she now has a couple of reasons to return, she feels ambivalent about doing so. "I'm still an American. I've lived nearly 50 years here. Latvians have a saying, 'if you cut a slice off a loaf of bread, you can't put it back on.' I feel some like that slice cut off."

Her parents' Latvian land isn't important to her at all. "I don't intend to use it," she says. She wants to figure out a way the property could benefit her now independent homeland.

"If I sell it, I will not take the money here," she says. I don't need anything from there. They need every bit that they have."

She calls her life in Iowa City a "simple" one. She worked, lived alone, made good friends, played the organ for Latvian congregation in Des Moines. "Not much to tell," she says.

Helping with bird research fills her time now. Her peach-colored T-shirt under a blue knit vest reads "Johnson County Songbird Project," another interest. "My life was low key," she says. "I've never wanted to be in the spotlight. Maybe here it isn't necessary, but it's still in my gut. I don't want to stick out. That's one of the bad things I inherited from that era."

Margrieta adds: "About the "bird research" - that is too big a word for what I do. I did some atlasing and also participated in Tom Kent's survey of the Coralville Reservoir breeding birds.

I participated in the tanager study directed by Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology in 1993, 1994, and 1995, and hope to continue next year. You may be interested to hear that tanagers were scarce in my sites in 1995. I have 17 sites, three of them in the Amana Nature Trail area and the rest in 11 woodlots of different sizes. In 1994, I had tanagers in 9 sites on first visit, and in seven on both, probably breeding in five. In 1995 they were in only 5 sites on the first visit, and in four both times; two out of three in Amana Woods and the other two in Ryerson Woods, also a large area of about 70 acres."



Have You Thought About Doing A "Big Day" This Year?

Let's raise some money for the I.O.U. How? Just get some friends together and do a "Big Day." If you're interested, contact Reid Allen, 1601 Pleasant Street, West Des Moines, IA, 50265, 515/223-0563, by April 25, and he'll send you the forms and information. Return your monies and forms to Reid by June 1. Oh, and by the way, come to the Spring '96 I.O.U. business meeting and find out what exciting new ideas the Big Day Committee has for next year's "Big Day" doings!

North American Spring Bird Count by Pete Petersen

The 1996 North American Migration count and the Iowa spring count will be held on Saturday, May 11. This will be the fifth national count. The count is organized by county. The target is to record all birds, species and individuals present in each county



on May 11, midnight to midnight. As is the case with the Christmas Bird County this is an impossible task but birders are encouraged to do their best while avoiding duplication.

Several counties started out on a small scale and have built to a representative survey. The day is always the second Saturday in May, so it is conducted without regard to weather. While birding in rainy situations, I have often seen some unexpected birds as well as some known to be present but impossible to locate due to weather. Last spring Brian Blevins and I were in the car within the nesting territory of Chuck-will's widow in the predawn hour. The rain made so much noise on the roof of the car we could hardly converse. When outside the car, it was noisy rain on the trees and our rainwear. After fifteen minutes, we decided to give up when a lull in the rain allowed us to hear the "chuck", probably within 30 meters of our position.

Our county coverage was off slightly in 1995, so we hope it will be back up in 1996. It is an excellent club project. Any total is welcomed even if it only represents a portion of the day and one party. Feeder watching is also encouraged. For forms and addition information contact Peter Petersen, 235 McClellan Blvd., Davenport, IA 52803, or phone 319/323-2520 days.

Field Trips



Black Hills Field Trip

The Quad-City Audubon Society's 1996 extended field trip will be May 24-28 to the Black Hills. We plan three full days in the hills and have a target list of 30 primarily western species. Expenses will be shared, no fees will be charged. Deadline for reservations is April 20, contact Pete Petersen, 1108 Jersey Ridge Rd., Davenport, IA 52803, or phone 319/323-2520, MWFS, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. or 319/355-7051 evenings.

April 14 Field Trip to Southwest Iowa

On April 14th, the IOU field trip will begin at Waubonsie State Park in Fremont County. We'll hike some of the trails in the park and look for migrating raptors and passerines. Then we'll head to Riverton Waterfowl Area to look for ducks and shorebirds. We'll also be checking the Secret Pond, Sheldon Pond and Forney Lake. We'll round out the day at the Midwest Power Pond and Lake Manawa in Pottawattamie County.

In years past on this route in mid-April, we have seen a Golden Eagle, over a hundred Swainson Hawks, Chestnut-collared & Smith's Longspurs and White-faced Ibis.

We'll meet at 7:30 a.m. at Waubonsie State Park at the overlook parking lot. Accommodations are available in Nebraska City at the Days Inn at a rate of \$42 for two persons, one bed or \$44 for two persons, two beds, including continental breakfast. Call 800/329-7466 for reservations. Accommodations are available in Shenandoah at the Tall Corn Motel at the rate of \$35 for two persons, one bed or \$36 for two persons, two beds. Call 712/246-1550 for reservations.

April 27 Field Trip to Sweet Marsh

Sweet Marsh is located north of Waterloo in Bremer County. Take county road C28 1-3/4 miles east of Tripoli and meet at the entrance to the marsh at 7:30 a.m. Francis Moore will lead this trip and will look for waterfowl, shorebirds, hawks and warblers. Contact Francis at 319/232-0217.

Correction

The IOU's address on the Internet was incorrectly given in the last issue. It should have read:

<http://storm.simpson.edu/~birding/>



Nomination of Officers 1996

The nominating committee, composed of Rick Hollis, chair, Rita Goranson, and John Fleckenstein has presented the following slate of candidates for consideration at the election to be held at the spring meeting.

Treasurer: Jim Schieb
Secretary: Mary Kuhlman
Directors: (2 positions)
Beth Brown
Dan Dorrance
Tim Schantz

Library/Historical Committee by Carol Thompson

The Library/Historical Committee has not been active in some time. I would request that members interested in historical aspects of Iowa birding contact me if they would be interested in serving on this committee. Bud Gode has agreed to serve as the liaison for this committee.

For those of you unfamiliar with current procedures, our material is stored at the Special Collections room at the Iowa State University Library. Hank Zaletel has been adding material on a regular basis and has indicated a willingness to continue in this function. It may be necessary to redefine this committee's structure and bylaws.

Some possible topics that this committee might pursue are preservation of official IOU material, IOU membership data, newspaper clippings relating to Iowa birds and birders, preservation of early Iowa bird journals, information about Iowa birders - awards, histories, etc., and activities, newsletters of other bird clubs in the state. Preserving our history is an important function and I hope some of you are willing to step forward and help out.

State & County Bird Lists by Pete Petersen

Members are encouraged to submit their state and county bird lists for the 1995 calendar year. Submission can be for one or all of the counties. The threshold for the state is 200 species and 150 for counties. This is a life long total and covers all species of wild birds positively recorded within the county or state. It is hoped that everyone will be able to submit a total of 150 species for their home county. One does not need to be a resident of Iowa, just an IOU member. Lifetime records through 1995 are due by May 26 and should be sent to Pete Petersen, 235 McClellan Blvd., Davenport, IA 52803.

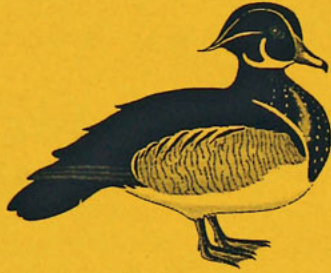
Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas Update by Carol Thompson

The Iowa BBA is alive and well and a finish is in sight. All of the species accounts have been reviewed by University of Iowa Press and have been returned for final editing. The introductory chapters are essentially done and will be to the press next month. All the maps, photos, and artwork are done. Final layout should start in late spring and with a little luck we should have a published book by the end of the year.

A few highlights:

508 observers put in 14,654 hours on data collection
162 species were confirmed during the atlas period, 84% of the state list
Of the original 861 blocks, 83% were worked in, 71% were completed
Species totals in completed blocks ranged from 112 to 27





IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION
1996 SPRING MEETING
MAY 17 - 19, 1996
BURLINGTON, IOWA

SOUTHEAST IOWA has always been an exciting place to bird and this spring should be no exception. Intrepid Iowa birders make their way each year to Burlington if for no other reason than to see their annual Eurasian Tree Sparrow. The Carolinian influence in the southeast makes such specialties as Summer Tanager and Bewick's Wren very real possibilities. Along the waters of the Mississippi River, nearly anything is likely to appear and usually does. Join our hosts for a fun-filled weekend in balmy Burlington. Most events will center around the Ramada Inn, 2759 Mt. Pleasant St.

Friday, May 17 th	6:30 p.m.	Registration/Social Gathering Ramada Inn
Saturday, May 18 th	6:30 a.m.	Field Trips leave from the Ramada parking lot
	12:00 noon	Lunch on your own
	1:00 p.m.	Fish Crow Expansion Along the Mississippi River – Kelly McKay
	1:20 p.m.	North from St. Louis - Eurasian Tree Sparrow Comes to SE Iowa – Chuck Fuller
	1:45 p.m.	The Future of Birding Optics – Michael & Diane Porter
	2:15 p.m.	Birding the World Wide Web – Ann Johnson
	2:45 p.m.	Break
	3:00 p.m.	Business Meeting
	6:30 p.m.	Banquet "A Bird For All Seasons" – Ty Smedes
Sunday, May 19 th	6:30 a.m.	Field Trips leave from Ramada parking lot
	12:00 noon	Lunch and Compilation at Starr's Cave Preserve, north on Irish Ridge Road (map available at meeting)



Accomodations:

Ramada Inn	(319) 754-5781
Arrowhead Motel	(319) 752-6353
Pzazz Best Western	1-800-373-1223
Comfort Inn	1-800-228-5150
Days Inn	1-800-325-2525
Friendship Inn	1-800-453-4511
Lincolnvillle Motel	(319) 752-2748
Super 8	(319) 752-9806
Fairfield Inn	1-800-228-2800

Camping:

Lake Geode State Park
 Skunk River Access – Des Moines
 County Conservation Area
 4th Pumping Station – Des Moines
 County Conservation Area

Registrations are due **no later than May 3, 1996**. For more information call Chuck Fuller at (319) 753-0710.



REGISTRATION

Name (s)	
Address	
Phone	

Make checks payable to Chuck Fuller and send to 420 S. Garfield, Burlington, IA 52601.

Registration	\$5.00	
Saturday banquet	\$12.00	
Sunday Lunch	\$5.00	
Total Enclosed		



Adopt-A-Book

by Pam Allen, West Des Moines

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 \$11.50 per book (payable to IOU) to Pam Allen, 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines, IA 50265-2331.



NEW I.O.U. Decals

The new I.O.U. decal features our logo. They are made of removable plastic and adhere to the inside of car windows or glass. Each logo costs \$1.00 and can be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Pam Allen, 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines, IA 50265-2331. Checks should be made payable to I.O.U.



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