



I.O.U. NEWS

Summer 1989 Newsletter of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union Volume 5 Number 2

Come Hike With Me, I'll Show You a Kingfisher! Marlys Huff, Marshalltown

In the YWCA brochure listed under Adult Classes (along with China Painting and Calligraphy) is Bird Watching. Each spring and fall at least twelve women sign up for the three sessions. We meet Monday mornings during migration. After "scouting" during the weekend, I usually can find a concentration of bird life nearby.

My preference is Union Grove Lake near Gladbrook. It has a good trail through a wooded area, a marsh, a pine grove, a waterfall, a plot of reestablished prairie, and a quarry pond. The three mile hard surfaced road around the lake has the necessary rest stops. A variety of birds, wild flowers, trees, and insect species can be seen.

One particular time as we were approaching the quarry pond, I casually mentioned we should see the Kingfisher. He cooperated by perching on an overhanging branch providing his impressive reflection in the water. The class members were so thrilled and thought I was so smart to know he would be there. (That's how I've built my reputation!)

As we left the lake, we passed an old cemetery where we observed woodpeck-

ers in the oak trees, bluebirds frolicking on the tombstones, pheasants crossing the road, and killdeer following a tractor in an adjacent field.

Highlights of the field trip to Saylorville Reservoir last fall included seeing the Pelicans and watching Ring-billed Gulls spiraling upward to catch the upper air currents. (I had seen Broad-winged Hawks in kettles but not gulls.) They flew so high that some of us laid down on our backs to follow the overhead spectacle.

On a spring field trip to a quiet pond behind our local cemetery, we flushed a pair of Wood Ducks and then began to hear the voices of the buzzers, chippers, squeakers, and whistlers (thank you Carl Bendorf). We identified six warblers and saw fleeting glances of six more. We all agreed to do some "listening" homework to help us on the next field trip.

Ours is not a class of expertise, but we do enjoy the out of doors and comradeship, and I suspect we enrich others around us by being aware that the Yellow-rumped Warbler is already flitting along the banks of the Iowa River this April 3, 1989.

1989 Spring Meeting Ann Barker, Princeton

The spring meeting of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union was held May 19-21 at Davenport. Seventy-five members and guests were hosted by the Quad City Audubon Society.

The weekend began with a social gathering at the Deere-Wiman house in Moline. The house, a century-old mansion, is located on a seven acre estate high atop the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River.

Members explored the house and its exquisitely manicured gardens and grounds and enjoyed refreshments before retiring to the carriage house where information about the weekend's field trips was available.

For the remainder of the weekend, the meeting headquarters was the Izaak Walton League in Davenport. After breakfast on Saturday morning, field trips departed for Princeton Marsh and Scott County Park; Cordova and Albany, Illinois along the Mississippi; Wildcat Den State Park and bluebird trail; Credit Island, Sunset Marina and Blackhawk Park, and a Scott County breeding bird atlas trip.

Comparing notes over lunch back at the Izaak Walton League, members found that birding had been good, with many migrants still in the area.

The program for the afternoon was diverse and of interest to all. It included the following presentations: "Birds of Big Sand Mound Nature Preserve" by Tim Brush of Marycrest College. Big Sand Mound Preserve is located near Muscatine. Comparisons were made between birds found during last years drought and that of normal years; "Genesis, the Jub-

jub bird, Che-wink, Che-bec, Jamaicensis, Walt Whitman - and other (good?) stuff about bird names and the naming of birds!" was the presentation given by Jim Sandrock. Word origins and references to birds in classical literature were presented; "Iowa Geology and Landforms" denoted the various land features in Iowa and the types of birds to be found there. Carol Thompson was the presenter; "Introduction to Falconry" was given by Ed Timper of the Iowa Falconer's Association. A hybrid Peregrine Falcon and a Harris Hawk were on display; a flycatcher identification workshop was given by Pete Petersen.

During breaks in the program and whenever time was available, members could amuse themselves with a poster quiz showing unusual plumages or habitat, a "Mother's Day" skin quiz, or a bird song tape quiz. The general business meeting convened at 4:00.

Keynote speaker for the banquet Saturday evening was Deere-Wiman ornithologist Peter C. Petersen. His program was on the "Natural History of the Galapagos Islands." In addition, Laura Jackson gave a short slide presentation on the DNR Peregrine Falcon reintroduction project.



Sunday morning, birders had even more enticing choices as field trips set out to cover nearly every hot spot in east-central Iowa. Destinations included: Syracuse State Wildlife Areas, Mockridge, and Sherman County Park; Cone Marsh; Big Sand Mound Nature Preserve; Princeton Marsh and Goose Lake; Scott County breeding bird atlas trip; and Credit Island and Oakdale Cemetery, Davenport.

At noon, back from a fruitful adventure, members enjoyed a catfish fry at the Izaak Walton League. Pete Petersen led the compilation of the bird list, collecting an amazing report total of 168 species for Sunday. An additional 10 species were seen on Saturday only. As far as those present could recall, this may be a record high total for an IOU meeting. Highlights were: Yellow-crowned Night Herons, Snow Goose, Bald Eagle, King Rail, Sandhill Crane, all five Empidonax species, Northern Mockingbird, Bell's Vireo, Pine, Cerulean and Connecticut Warblers, Blue Grosbeak, Clay-colored and Lark Sparrows.

Our special thanks go to the Quad City Audubon Society and its members Pete Petersen, Tom Rockwell, Joyce Spillers, Larry Spillers, Leslie Spillers, Don and Jean Moeller, Camilla Bowman, Ruth Rittmanic, Dorothy Monahan, Beck Morgan, Fran Hensley, Doris and Gil Sandvick, Tim Brush, Brian and Louis Blevins, Kelly McKay, Walt Zuurdeeg, and Ann Barker.

The official species list may be obtained from Ann Barker, 25368 250th St., Princeton, Iowa 52786.

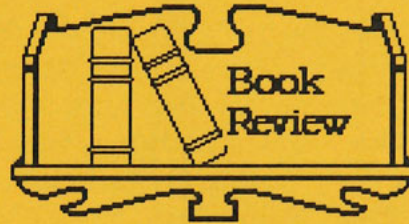
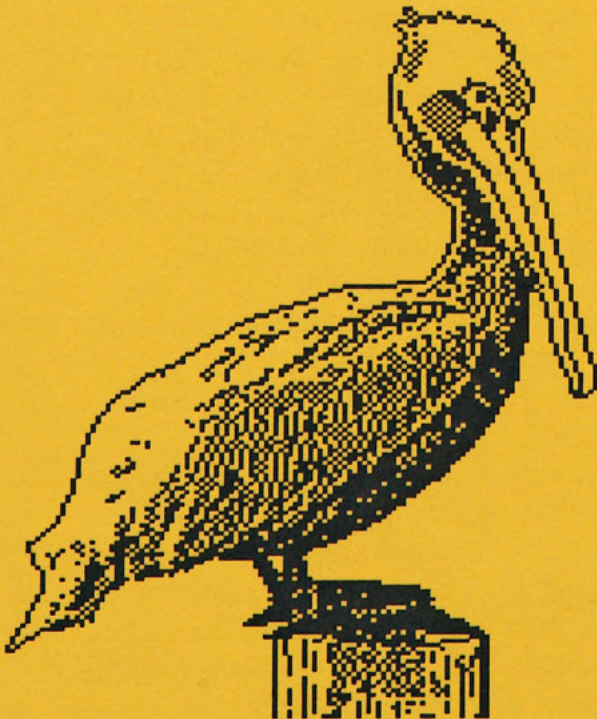
Attendance:

Adel: Janet Eppard
Algona: Matthew Kenne
Ames: Jim Dinsmore

Bettendorf: Walter Crawford, Francis Hensley, Becky and Brian Morgan
Blue Grass: Ruth Rittmanic
Booneville: Eloise and Eugene Armstrong
Centerville: Ray Cummins
Churdan: George Naylor
Clear Lake: Jim Hansen
Clinton: Jacqueline Gardner
Colo: Hank Zaletel
Davenport: Camilla Bowman, Tim Brush, Elton Fawks, Margaret Flesher, Mary Lou & Pete Petersen, Carol Rogers, Daniel Ryan, Joyce & Larry Spillers, Cecelia Thorn-Olson, Richard Weis
Des Moines: Bob & John Cecil, John & Mary Fleckenstein, John & Maggie Hoogerheide, Hilda Sickels
Fairfield: Diane & Michael Porter
Hastings: Barb Wilson
Indianola: Jim Sinclair
Iowa City: Karen Disbrow, Bud Gode, Rick Hollis, Mary Noble, Jim Sandrock, Carol Thompson
LeClaire: Don & Jean Moeller
Liscomb: Beth & Mark Proescholdt
Long Grove: Nancy Anderson
Madrid: Laura Jackson
Marshalltown: Jean Eige, Alice Smith, Linda Tasler
McCausland: Doris Sandvick
Norwalk: Susan Spieker
Osceola: Beth Brown
Pella: Gay & John Bowles
Princeton: Ann Barker
Sioux City: Wayne Livermore, Phyllis & Robert Nickolson
Tama: Garret, Margo & Nick Kubik
Waterloo: Francis Moore
West Des Moines: Pam & Reid Allen
Coal Valley, Ill.: Tom Rockwell
Milan, Ill.: Joan Fisher
Moline, Ill.: Ralph Horton, JoAnn Whitmore
Bellevue, Neb.: Babs & Loren Padelford
Omaha, Neb.: Tanya Bray

1989 Fall Meeting

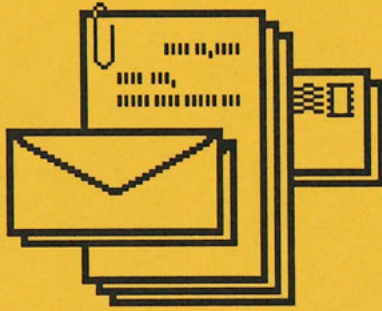
The fall 1989 Iowa Ornithologists' Union meeting will be held at the Presbyterian Camp on the weekend of 15-17 September. This camp has 60 acres of land and 600 feet of shore on West Lake Okoboji. It is located near a number of excellent birding areas including Cayler Prairie, Kettleon Hogsback, Spring Run Wildlife Area, and the various Iowa Great Lakes themselves. A variety of water birds including White Pelicans, ducks, rails, and herons are all strong possibilities for the weekend. Although land birds are less numerous there, they are concentrated in the woodlots along the lakes and thus are easier to find. The area has a number of good prairies and grasslands so birds of those habitats are possible too. We last met in the area almost ten years ago so this will be a first for many members. Mark the dates and plan to attend. Harold White of Estherville is in charge of the arrangements.



Jim Dinsmore, Ames

Sill, B.L., C.P. Sill, and J.C. Sill. 1988. A field guide to little-known & seldom-seen birds of North America. Peachtree Publishers, Ltd., Atlanta. 82 pp. \$7.95 paper.

Some of the new field guides have been called second generation field guides. If so, this has to be the forefront of the third generation. This book features brief descriptions and color illustrations of 33 bird species you won't find mentioned in any of the other field guides. Where else can you learn about the Blunt-billed Woodpecker, Least Minitwit, Omaha Dabbler, or Southern Snake Strangler? Range maps are provided for some species. The guide is at its best in its coverage of the Yellowlegs. Two new species, the Least Yellowlegs and the Middle Yellowlegs are described. The authors point out that there may be several other species of yellowlegs (Greatest Yellowlegs, Slightly Lesser Yellowlegs, and Very Least Yellowlegs) but very sensibly refrain from cluttering the literature with descriptions of them here. My only criticism is that somehow the Little Brown Bird was left out. This is a book that you won't want to take in the field. Keep it at home and read it when you think you need to add a few new species to your list. Or give a copy to another birder. With this as a start, maybe you too can discover a few little-known birds. I know I have seen some that these authors don't know about.



Open Letter to the IOU

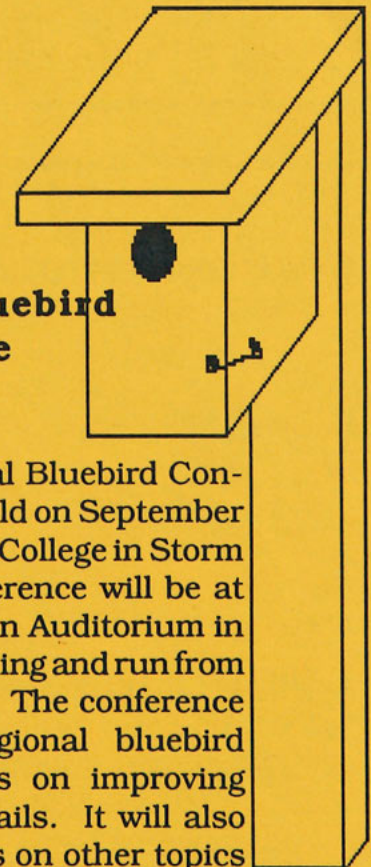
As much as I enjoyed the recently concluded Iowa Ornithologists' Union's spring convention, I feel I must address a growing problem within our organization. Stated simply the problem is the continuing decline in IOU convention attendance. The problem has been evident for at least two years now and shows no sign of abating - this despite the fine job done by the local hosts at virtually every IOU convention I have attended over the last ten years.

Although I am sure there are a number of factors influencing the IOU convention attendance decline, I would like to bring attention to what I feel is one pivotal factor. Of the thirty-six positions within the IOU hierarchy including editorial staffs, field report editors, officers and standing committee members - many individuals counted more than once, for example Jim Dinsmore an amazing five times, only twenty were represented at Davenport. This works out to a paltry fifty-five percent of the key players, of the people who apparently want to have an influence with the IOU, in attendance at the 1989 spring convention. I can not imagine an organization which meets twice a year having a more dismal attendance record by the people responsible for the organization.

IOU's spring and fall conventions are our organizations showcase events. They represent an opportunity for the rank and file to meet and enjoy the individuals who make up the IOU. If the Iowa Ornithologists' Union's membership is to grow, if the organization is to continue with its vitality then the leadership will have to display its concern and conviction by attending the conventions.

With that said, I hope to see everybody this fall at Lake Okoboji.

Jim Sinclair, Board Member 1987-1989
810 North B St.
Indianola, IA 50125



1989 Bluebird Conference

The annual Bluebird Conference will be held on September 9 at Buena Vista College in Storm Lake. The conference will be at the Estella Sieben Auditorium in the Science Building and run from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The conference will include regional bluebird reports and tips on improving your bluebird trails. It will also include speakers on other topics and hopefully a field trip. Contact Jim Hansen, 515/357-3517 for more details.

WELCOME

NEW MEMBERS FOR 1989

Please take the opportunity to welcome these new members to our organization:

Pamela & Reid Allen, Des Moines
Cthryn Baldner, Calmar
Glorine Berryk Iowa City
Beverly Brook, Runnels
Daniel Case, Beaman
Jane Clark, Des Moines
Anne Crane, Des Moines
John Daniel, Cedar Rapids
Catherine Emanuel, Yucca Valley, CA
J.C. Enyart, Des Moines
Jeff Flam, Afton
James Freeland, Orlando, FL
John Gaffney, Swaledale
Tim Gedlar, Waterloo
Charles Hamilton, Cedar Rapids

James Hay, Iowa City
Alice Hennessey, Maple Grove
Paul Hertzell, Ames
Jaacqueline Hill, Ellsworth
Beck Johnson, Centerville
Whealen Koontz, Cedar Rapids
Kennith Lowder, Iowa City
Dr. J. Stephen Munzinger, Sioux City
Marty Pauley, Mason City
David Poldervaart, Clare
Izen Ratzloff, Omaha
Mrs. Ronald Reetz, Waukon
Donald Roth, LeMars
Cecille Thompson, Des Moines
A.W. Turner, Lake City
Tina Van Dyke, Sioux Center
Jim Walter, Mason City
Gladys Wanek, Coralville

IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION



STATE BIRD OF IOWA: THE GOLDFINCH

Thomas H Kent
211 Richards St
Iowa City, IA 52246

HANK & LINDA ZALETEL
715 WEST
COLO, IOWA 50056

IOWA BIRDLINE



319-338-9881

