

Season: Summer Year: 1983

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Use first few lines to give weather and habitat conditions. Use line(s) below species data to give additional details, if needed. Mail to:

Scott, Malme, Frank Sellman, Mrs. Dale Moritz, Dav.

T. H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City IA 52240 by 1 Mar, 1 Jun, 1 Aug, or 1 Dec.

use initials of obsv. on species line

SPECIES NO. DATE LOCATION - COMMENT - OTHER OBSERVERS

Am. White Pelican 20 9 Jul Forney's Lake - also seen by MLP, C.B.

Cattle Egret 3 9 Jul Riverston " " " " " " Joe Schaefer, Stuart, Bureau

Snow Goose 2 9 Jul Forney's Lake " " " " " "

Canada Goose 1 16 Jun Goose Lake, Clinton Co.

Ring-necked Duck 1 16 Jun " " " " " "

Cooper's Hawk 1 9 Jul near Forney's Lake (7 mi. E.) - also seen by MLP, C.B.

Western Kingbird 1 9 Jul Lake Manawa " " " " " "

Veery 2 1 Jun 2 mi. N. W. Princeton " " " " " "

Black-thr. Green Warbler 1 1 Jun Wildcat Den State Park " " " " " LL

Worm-eating Warbler 1 1 Jun " " " " " " " " " "

Savannah Sparrow 30 16 Jun Bryant BBS route - vs. 1982 total of 27

" 25 17 Jun Cedar Valley " " " " " " 15

Orchard Oriole 1 1 Jun 1/2 mi N. W. D. S. P. - new location - with LL

Great-ld. Grackle 4 9 Jul Riverston area - doc. submitted. - slides not developed yet.

C. Moorhen 3 juv. 13 Jul. Goose Lake - L.L. + C.S.

Ringed Turtle Dove 1 15 Jul - 18 Jul - daily - W. Dan. near Fatgrounds, F.S. + D.M.

House Finch 2 17 Jun near Eldridge Bill's Ann Barker - should have submitted a doc.

Billie Ann Barker, Dav. P.C.P. on obs. other forms B.C.V. N. Heron

Wood Duck Hooded Merganser

Am. Woodcock H. & R. - blue

Olive-backed Thrush

Tree Swallow

Protn. N. Parula Chat

only no table BBS changes from 1982

Dickcissel Lark Sparrow

Others only

SUPPLEMENTARY BREEDING BIRD
CENSUS OF BIG SAND MOUND NATURE PRESERVE
LOUISA COUNTY, IOWA --1983

Peter C. Petersen
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Submitted to Iowa-Illinois Gas & Electric Co.,
Environmental Services Division, Davenport, Iowa
July, 1983

*Tom - Records of
interest marked
in red. Pete*

Aims and Methods

This survey was undertaken to enlarge upon the thorough 1982 baseline breeding bird data. Three visits were made in June to repeat the ten point counts established in 1982. This was done on June 1, 15 and 29 between 5:00 and 7:00 A.M. C. S. T., under favorable weather conditions as described in the 1982 results. Details are recorded in Table 1. After the point counts were censused, the observers visited the more remote areas of the preserve and checked the five nesting boxes erected in the fall of 1982. Three boxes are along the edge of Spring Lake, one is just south of the Beatty Pond Road and the last is at the south pond. The following table shows the changes noted in category for the species present.

Observations by Category — 1983 Revision

These listings represent an update of the listing on pages 2 & 3 of the 1982 report. Details of the basis for change can be found in the full species listing which follows.

Confirmed breeders (+)

Tree Swallow
Prothonotary Warbler

Others Seen (in June)

Black-crowned Night Heron
Ring-necked Pheasant
Herring Gull
Olive-sided Flycatcher

Probable breeders (x)

Barred Owl
Northern Parula

Summary

The number of species recorded during the breeding season now totals 92, with 31 confirmed and 30 probable breeders.

Recommendations

It would be advisable to repeat the 1983 program of three point count surveys in June of 1984. All five small nesting boxes erected in October of 1982 were used, three by Prothonotary Warblers and one each by Tree Swallows and House Wrens. It would be beneficial to erect another five small nesting boxes in the fall of 1983 since we had at least one pair of Prothonotary Warblers which were unable to use a box due to its take over by Tree Swallows. More Wood Duck boxes would help but are less critical as they seem to be doing well.

Species List

All species observed on the three visits are included. The first number after the species is the average number found per visit at the ten point count locations in 1982. The next number is the 1983 comparable figure. The symbols + and x before the species name is the breeding status category, + for confirmed and x for probable.

+ Pied-billed Grebe - (2.4, 2.7) - Seen and heard regularly at Beatty's Pond and Spring Lake.

X Double-crested Cormorant ^(1.7, .3) - One seen 1 June at Beatty's Pond, probably representing a non-breeding individual.

Great Blue Heron - (1, 5.7) - Much more common than in 1982, they are probably from the New Boston heronery.

X Great Egret - (1.4, 3.3) - Seven were seen at Beatty's Pond on 1 June. This single observation, since only three visits were made, resulted in the high average count.

x Green-backed (formerly Green) Heron - (1.1, 1.7) - Usually seen at the south end of the preserve in flight.

X Black-crowned Night Heron - (0, .7) - Two at Spring Lake on 1 June, probably from a colony outside the preserve. Not seen in 1982.

x Mallard - (1.6, 1.3) - They were seen on Beatty's Pond and Spring Lake.

+ Wood Duck - (12.4, 46.3) - Many broods were seen, especially on 15 and 29 June.

The average was increased artificially by the lesser number of visits.

x + Hooded Merganser - (2.3, 1.3) - A female with 2 young was seen on 15 June at Beatty's Pond and a female or large young was there 29 June.

Turkey Vulture - (0, .7) - One seen 15 and 29 June. In 1982 none were found at a point location but several were seen later at nearby locations within the preserve.

x Red-tailed Hawk - (.1, 1) - Seen on 15 and 29 June near Beatty's Pond. The observations were close enough to the same area to indicate possible breeding.

American Kestrel - Seen near the plant entrance on 29 June.

Ring-necked Pheasant - (0, 1.7) - Heard at five points on 1 June, not located at any points in 1982 or later in 1983. The burn may have influenced their distribution.

x Bobwhite - (.4, 1.7) - Found in the south part of the preserve and along the western border pine plantings, may also have been helped by the burn.

Killdeer - (.4, .7) - Several seen flying over as in 1982.

✓ x American Woodcock - (.3, .3) - One was flushed at point 10 on 15 June and another was flushed in the south end of the preserve while checking a nesting box on 29 June.

✓ Herring Gull - A probably non-breeder was seen along the levee near point 6 on 29 June.

✓ Ring-billed Gull - Three were seen 29 June just after the Herring Gull passed.

Rock Dove - (.6, 2) - Birds from the plant passed over counting points occasionally.

+ Mourning Dove - (18.1, 11) - It remains a common breeder.

+ Yellow-billed Cuckoo - (3.4, 3.7) - Regularly found in heavily wooded areas.

✓ + Black-billed Cuckoo - (2.3, .3) - One on 29 June at point 5 was the only record.

+ Great Horned Owl - (0, .7) - One at point 3 on 15 June and point 4 on 29 June, chased by crows and blackbirds were recorded.

x Barred Owl - (0, .3) - One was seen 1 June near Beatty's Pond, still present several hours later. Also heard calling in this area on 15 March.

Chimney Swift - (2, 2.3) - They were foraging overhead on several occasions.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird - (0, .3) - One seen at point 5 on 29 June.

Belted Kingfisher - (0, 1.3) - They were seen on each visit this June. It still seems unlikely they nest on the preserve but they must be very close to it this year.

+ Common Flicker - (3, 2.7) - They were well distributed and regularly encountered.

✓ x Pileated Woodpecker - (1.1, 1) - It was found twice at Spring Lake and once near Beatty's Pond.

x Red-bellied Woodpecker - (.7, 1.3) - It was found throughout the heavily wooded portions of the preserve.

+ Red-headed Woodpecker - (7.3, 5) - This species was as common as in 1982, still evenly distributed and regular.

✓ x Hairy Woodpecker (.3, 1) - It was more regular than in 1982 and more widespread, even seen along the western pine borders once.

+ Downy Woodpecker - (3, 3.3) - This species was widespread and common again.

x Eastern Kingbird - (1.4, 2.3) - They were usually found at the south end and western border of the preserve.

+ Great Crested Flycatcher - (6.3, 3.7) - This species was again common in the heavily forested areas.

✓ x Willow Flycatcher - (.4, .7) - They were found at point 6 on 1 and 15 June.

+ Eastern Wood Pewee - (2.1, 2.3) - They were regular in heavily wooded areas.

✓ Olive-sided Flycatcher - One late migrant was seen on 1 June along the edge of the woods west of Spring Lake.

x Horned Lark - (2, 2.3) - This species was again found only along the southwest edge of the preserve.

+ Tree Swallow - (1, 2.7) - They nested in the box just south of Beatty Pond road,
3 young were banded on 15 June.

Bank Swallow - (.7, .3) - One at point 1 on 1 June was the only sighting.

Barn Swallow - (2.3, 1.7) - They were regularly seen foraging over the preserve.

+ Blue Jay - (12, 13.7) - Jays were common throughout the preserve.

+ American Crow - (23.4, 16.3) - Crows were down a bit from 1982 but were still
very common.

+ Black-capped Chickadee - (5.1, 5.3) - They were common in all wooded areas.

x Tufted Titmouse - (1.1, .7) - They were regular west and south of Beatty's Pond.

x White-breasted Nuthatch - (1.3, 1.3) - This species was regular in heavily wooded
areas.

+ House Wren - (8.6, 7.3) - A nest was found in a box along the east shore of
Spring Lake on 15 June empty. They were well distributed and common.

x Gray Catbird - (2.6, 2) - They were regular in the south end of the preserve.

+ Brown Thrasher - (4.9, 4.3) - They were found mostly along pine plantings and
the edge of woodland.

+ American Robin - (7, 6.3) - Robins were common throughout the preserve.

✓ x Wood Thrush - (1.1, .3) - One was heard near Spring Lake on 15 June.

x Cedar Waxwing - (8.9, 23.3) - Two flocks were seen on 1 June accounted^{ing} for the
sharp jump in average count. Without these flocks the average would have
been 12.

+ European Starling - (82.1, 134) - Flocks of young were seen 29 June. They
increased the average tremendously. Total counts on 1 and 15 June were
18 and 14.

✓ x Yellow-throated Vireo - (.7, .7) - It was heard twice south of Beatty's Pond.

✓ x Red-eyed Vireo - (1, 3.3) - The count was up due to 7 on 1 June which probably
included late migrants.

✓ x Warbling Vireo - (4, 5) - They were most regular in the heavily wooded areas.

- ✓ + Prothonotary Warbler - (.4, 2.3) - They were clearly helped by the placement of nest boxes. Three pair occupied boxes, all were successful. Two broods were at Spring Lake, we banded 4 young in one brood and saw 4 small young and one egg in the other box on 15 June. One box with 5 eggs on 15 June had young fledged by 29 June in the south pond. Another pair was territorial near the box used by Tree Swallows just south of Beatty's Pond.
- ✓ x Northern Parula - (0, .3) - A male was very territorial all morning on 29 June at point 6. This bird is a very rare breeder in Iowa.
- x Common Yellowthroat - (2.7, 1) - They were not as common as in 1982. They were found near Beatty's Pond.
- ✓ x Yellow-breasted Chat - (.3, .3) - One was heard at the south end on 1 June.
- House Sparrow - (1.6, 1.3) - They were found near point 1 on the edge of the preserve only.
- Eastern Meadowlark - (.3, .3) - It was heard once at point 3 on 29 June.
- Western Meadowlark - (0, .3) - It was heard once at point 2 on 29 June.
- + Red-winged Blackbird - (24.1, 7.7) - We banded 2 young on the south end of Spring Lake on 15 June from a nest which also contained one egg. No recently fledged young were observed which kept the average count much lower than 1982.
- + Northern Oriole - (19.7, 21) - This year's counts indicate our 1982 figure was not unusually high as we thought. The habitat along the woodland edge seems ideal for orioles.
- + Common Grackle - (22.7, 18.7) - They were most common in the pine plantings again.
- + Brown-headed Cowbird - (15.6, 22.7) - This parasite is up, a discouraging trend.
- Found at all but 2 of the 30 stops for the 3 days.
- + Northern Cardinal - (16.1, 17.7) - This species is also very widespread and common.
- x Rose-breasted Grosbeak - (5.1, 2.7) - They were down a bit from 1982, but still regular.
- + Indigo Bunting - (14, 19.3) - They were widespread and showed a noticeable increase.

+ Dickcissel - (10, .3) - One seen on 15 June at point 8 was the only record.

This sharp decrease of a common species could be a result, to some extent, of its continued population decrease. It is much persecuted on the wintering grounds since it eats rice.

x American Goldfinch - (9, 14) - They were widespread in grassy areas.

+ Grasshopper Sparrow - (8.4, 9.7) - They were also found throughout the grassy areas.

Vesper Sparrow - (.3, .3) - Listed as 3 rather than .3 last year in error. This year one was heard at point 5 on 1 June.

+ Lark Sparrow - (2.1, 7.7) - A nest with 5 very small young was found 1 June just outside the preserve at point 3. The species was spread along the western border of the preserve.

x Chipping Sparrow - (.7, 4.3) - They were very regular this year along the western border.

+ Field Sparrow - (17.3, 12) - This species was not as common as in 1982 but still regular and widespread.

Spring Observations

I visited the preserve on 15 March and 16 April and observed some migrants which I had not previously observed on the preserve. On 15 March I saw 5 Canada Geese, 12 American Wigeon, 16 Ring-necked Ducks, 1 Common Golden-eye, 2 pair and a single female Hooded Merganser, 1 Cooper's Hawk, 7 adult and 3 immature Bald Eagles which were obviously migrating, 1 Northern Harrier, 6 early Tree Swallows, 1 Brown Creeper, 2 Purple Finches, 4 Dark-eyed Juncos and 2 American Tree Sparrows, plus other species previously recorded. On 16 April the unusual species were 14 Buffleheads, 10 Ruddy Ducks, 3 female Hooded Mergansers, 1 Red-breasted Merganser, 1 Cooper's Hawk, 1 Northern Harrier, 1 Ring-necked Pheasant with a golden back, over 200 Tree Swallows and 2 Golden and 40 Ruby-crowned Kinglets. Weather information for these trips is recorded in Table 1.

Table I

Date	Arrived (CST)	Departed (CST)	No. Obs.	Weather	Temp. °F	Wind-MPH	# Species
15 Mar.	9:00 AM	2:00 PM	2	O.C.	36-40	5-15	43
16 Apr.	8:00 AM	2:00 PM	3	P. Cloudy	32-42	10-20	44
1 Jun.	5:30 AM	10:30 AM	2	Clear	50-55	2-5	61
15 Jun.	5:30 AM	10:30 AM	3	Clear	55-78	5-15	56
29 Jun.	5:30 AM	10:00 AM	4	O.C.	65-70	5-12	61

P.C. Larry Linder

P.C. LL Corey Blevins

P.C. LL, C B, + Brian Blevins