

BREEDING BIRD ATLAS MEETING MINUTES 10/9/91

METHODS:

1) How were blocks selected?

Priority: Good habitat selected by steering committee. Included state areas, preserves, county and some private areas known to contain natural habitats. Does include state parks. Went county by county to choose priority blocks.

Standard blocks = SE corner of every other township. Stratified selection.

Block changes were made if original lines divided significant habitat unrepresentative. We need a list of blocks that were changed. How many? How many Standard were changed to P? Do we have list of blocks by township/range? Make an update proposed: Actual with ID by a quarter section (SE corner). Bruce has the updated list. So will ID that this block = this location.

Safe dates for nesting were generated by the steering committee and reviewed by some of Iowa's best birders.

FINAL STANDARD OF COVERAGE (Criteria to say block is completed)

**25 hrs are done

**If 75% of species are likely located there and 25% of species were confirmed.

**65 species in a priority block with 50% PR, CO

**Professional opinion with 50% PR and CO for agricultural blocks. Professional opinion based on habitat, evaluation by individual birder and reviewed by regional coordinators and steering committee.

COLLECTION OF DATA (We used...)

- Volunteers
- Hired personnel (list of blocks)
- CCB's
- Biologists
- State Park personnel
- USFWS
- Landowners
- Graduate students
- Wildlife notes
- Iowa Bird Life
- BBS data
- Nest box info
- Roadkills
- Pellets
- Nests

Typical types of species noted by landowners and agency personnel: pheasant, quail, turkey, GHO, partic. nest, waterfowl, barred owl, red-tailed hawks, hummingbirds, whip-poor-wills.

These sources were good for confirming common "backyard species" such as cardinals, purple martins, goldfinch, robins, house wrens, etc. Quality control was maintained by asking them to describe species or to affirm they knew which species they were talking about and to assess their knowledge of local birds.

BIASES & LIMITATIONS OF THE DATA

Under sampled nocturnal species such as owls
Small forest dwelling - rare/inconspicuous birds
Marsh birds because of drought
Species with localized habitat needs
Secretive
Species that nested early or late
Hard to identify songs
Undersampled: warblers, bobolinks, flycatchers, grassland sparrows, vireos, woodland raptors, rail, bitterns

Habitat data is not available if get 90-91 cover map-will not cover time frame that did survey but will represent some of Iowa's data. Will be most representative of priority. Kevin feels rural agriculture has not changed much and CRP will have been locked in.

- . Unequal coverage of habitats within blocks, (x did woodlands and skipped agric.). Did more edge birds.
- . Volunteer: expertise varied. Birders also improved as did the enthusiasm for project increased.
- . Most of our work was done 1988-90
- . Weather changes for each field season with fact of 2 droughts and flood & drought
- . Coordination problems, changes
- . Enrollment of CRP during survey and other habitat trends--marsh restoration--Dept Agric has trends. Jim and Carrol are aware of sources. Note corn-bean rotation. Ask forestry about forest trends.
- . Urbanization changes were probably not significant in state during survey period.

RARE SPECIES DOCUMENTATION

- . Little documentation on rare species was submitted.
- . Rare species were accepted or not based on coordinator's professional opinion on the birder's ability to correctly identify the species.
- . This species list was created because species rare, T/E or limited distribution but, Don't highlight as special species since we did not document.

VERIFY/CHECK DATA

- . Double-punched computer data.
- . Regional coordinators checked-->to Bruce as final editor--> coded & professionally keypunched.
- . During species account final check look for incompatible codes and distribution out layers.

INCOMPLETE BLOCKS:

. Use all the data for maps and species accounts. However if there is a case where need complete data sets (average number of species in priority vs standard blocks or regional comparisons) use only completed blocks.

REGIONS:

. Kevin can outline the classic geology map (Des Moines lobe etc.) and put a dot in the center of each block and determine what region a block belongs to. We could also use the DNR's pheasant region map (cash grain etc.) or test some N-S/E-W clines and see what kind of differences exist. If we end up with differences, could then see what it's tied to--Is it physiographic regions or habitat? In whatever regions we use, it would be good to have two BBS routes per region to possibly compare difference in abundance with BBS data as well as the differences in distribution that we get with BBA data. Likely distribution differences exist in species like cardinals (spreading northward), tufted titmouse (woodlands), and house finches (urban). Would we only want to test for differences in the species we already suspect have regional differences or routinely check for regional differences in all species so we aren't just confirming our preconceptions?

OVERALL GOALS OF THE BBA PROJECT

- . Document the distribution of Iowa's breeding birds.
- . Distributional differences between and within species.
- . Establish distribution of Iowa breeding birds 1985-1990 to allow comparison historically and in future.

MAPS

- 1) All blocks by S/P, complete/incomplete
 - 2) By increments of # of species < 50 species, 60-80, etc.
 - 3) Individual species map by CO, PR, PO, OB
 - 4) Rare, T/E, colony nesters--have BBA map then in text, state have additional information. Kevin can let us know how long--can produce maps. Maps include all data, even from incompleted blocks.
 - 5) Species for the USFWS contract
 - 6) Maybe confirmed species by waterways
 - 7) Species (confirmed ?) by region
- For description of Iowa have maps on physiographic areas, regional map, map of urban areas, waterways, counties with x percent forest (?), others??

Nonbreeders, just put in text.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS (What we want to include in the book)

GOALS:

Distribution

Iowa Life History:

When occurs in Iowa

Nesting dates (nest initiation fledgling of young)

Nesting habitat

Nest site/placement
Nest type
eggs
Egg description
Type of young
Parental care
Courtship

Nongame can write Cornell to get dates on eggs and young and structure OR get file of Iowa's data to possibly produce original data on nest parameters. If this is unavailable or too costly we will have to go to original data sources.

.Jim Dinsmore has info on sources such as Gray - Illinois Natural History will have dates for many species. Has 9 books that would give dates.

- . Have up to 1948 in some publication and 48+ on list.
- . 1) Try to get Cornell info
- 2) Get Dinsmore's source list of original data to use.

DISTRIBUTION:

- . BBS trends for abundance info
 - . Regional/Cline comparisons
 - . In species discussion do not include the 150 blocks that had no work in them at all or include them in percentages.
 - . # of blocks with species observations.
 - . % CO, PR, PO, OB within blocks observed.
 - . Historic distribution (Jim's sources)
 - . Vague statement of national/continent distribution like we're on the edge of its range.
 - . Habitat associations that might affect distribution in Iowa.
 - . # counties found in.
 - . Detectability of species and ID problems.
 - . Vague abundance data from like Dinsmore et al.
- For introduction could say range & broad habitat taken from X sources so would not have to cite in each account.

TEXT TEMPLATES

I. Distribution:

1. Opening statement: gross national distribution, gross habitat, gross abundance
2. Historic distribution in Iowa
3. Current distribution
 - a. Table: percent CO, PR, PO, OB
 - b. # counties found
 - c. Regional/Cline findings
 - d. Possible problems with data
4. Confirmation level

II. Life History

1. When occurs in state
2. Courtship
3. Nest

Table 2.

eggs
Description
Nesting period
Type of young

Foraging behavior
Habitat preferences

- a. placement
- b. description
- c. type of young }
- d. parental care

III. Factors limiting distribution (or enhancing)

- a. Habitat
- b. Competition
- c. BBS abundance trends. Dinsmore
- d. Concluding statement about the bird and/or future

OR

Place Life History section right after opening statements. We could try writing a few each way or just continue to refine this in advance until we have our exact template. The better we outline the template the less problems we'll have trying to make sure the species accounts have a similar format and style.

Set reference standards (as in Auk)

EDITING

A. Species accounts:

Review process, write, send to each other for comment

B. Chose species, this can be adjusted once people know how their work schedules are shaping up.

Incompatible Codes.

pairs - GBH, egrets, cormorant, TV

X - ducks, hummingbirds

B - woodpeckers, wrens

M - ducks, hummers, hawks

NB - wrens, woodpeckers, cowbirds, owls (except burrowing & short-eared)

ON - cowbird

Photographers

B.J. Rose in Omaha, 14937 N Street, Omaha NE 68137 (402/895-1005)

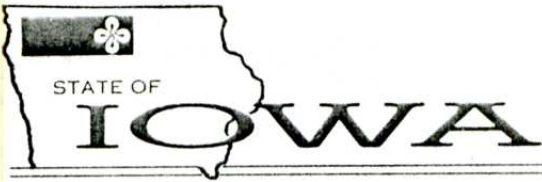
Don Poggensee, D. Jackson, C. Kurtz, T. Smedes, J. Messina
Particularly at nest--Laura will see if they'll donate.

Talk to artist to see if somebody would do hard cover.

Example: Prairie marsh: M. Reece
J. Landenburger
L. Zach

Could Nongame generate a bunch of mailing labels of each other's address?

Comments, changes, corrections???? Hopefully this will answer and generate a few more questions. Thanks everybody!



TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LARRY J. WILSON, DIRECTOR

DIR

SEP 30 1991

GEOL. SURVEY

To: Breeding Bird Atlas Committee Members

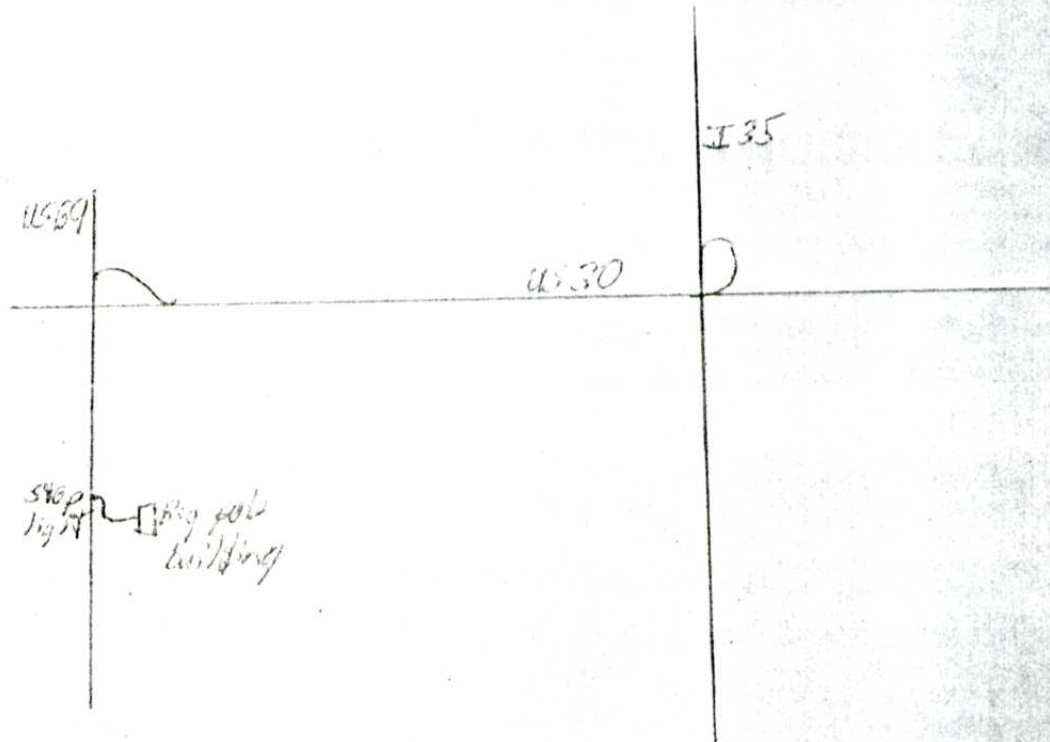
From: John Fleckenstein

Date: 27 September 1991

Subject: Our next meeting

I was amazed to find that we could all meet on Wednesday, 9 October. I have scheduled the meeting room at the State Forest Nursery at Ames (map on this page), starting at 9:00 am. There is an ugly rumor that the meeting may take all day, so schedule accordingly.

We will go over the sample species accounts which I sent out last week. Carol and Laura will also present what they learned at the BBA meeting in Colorado last week. This material will cover data analysis, text preparation, publication, and sale of the atlas, so I'll see to it that there's plenty of coffee available.



515 - 242 - ~~515~~ - 5966
~~5986~~

242

→ 281 - 5145

GEORGE BOWEN

2015-10-10

- ① National range, abundance, secrecy
- ② Historic ^{form} distribution
- ③ ~~Habitat~~ Current Distribution ^(Biases, limitations, factors of detectability, other sources) ~~that might affect~~
- ~~Factors influencing distribution~~
- ④ Habitat controls on distribution
- ⑤ Other limiting or enhancing factors
- ⑥ Population trends - abundance
- ⑦ Life history

when in state
 courtship
 nest emplacement, description
 who builds,
 cowbird parasitism

table ← young type, parental care

- ⑧ Discussion of certification codes

Certification codes

of 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 4, 5, 6

Carver - ^{Hawks, Owls} Raptors

Jim P. - Grebes, Rails, Shorebirds, Terns

Bruce - Ducks, - Cormorants, Gallinaceous

Barb - Cuckoos, Doves

Carol - Sparrows

Bob - Warbler, Vireos

John - Night hawks, Woodpeckers, Flycatchers

When in Iowa

Nesting chronology

Habitat, nest site

Nest type

of eggs

Type of young, parental care

Nesting period Nest initiation to fledging of young

Cornell

Original sources

BBS

Regional done comparisons

Historic information

John
351-1049

Multiple authors bring multiple perspectives
1-2 editors

Vermont sold 2000 copies

Ontario sold 3200

Reviews to outside authors, specialists
on the subject

We need to recompile hours, dates, observers
Plot species vs hrs

Atlas resolution: To attach qualifying statements
to BBA data. Steering committee will publish
suggested text in proceedings

Ideas for future work:

Spot checks in partial atlas blocks

Linear transects in woods

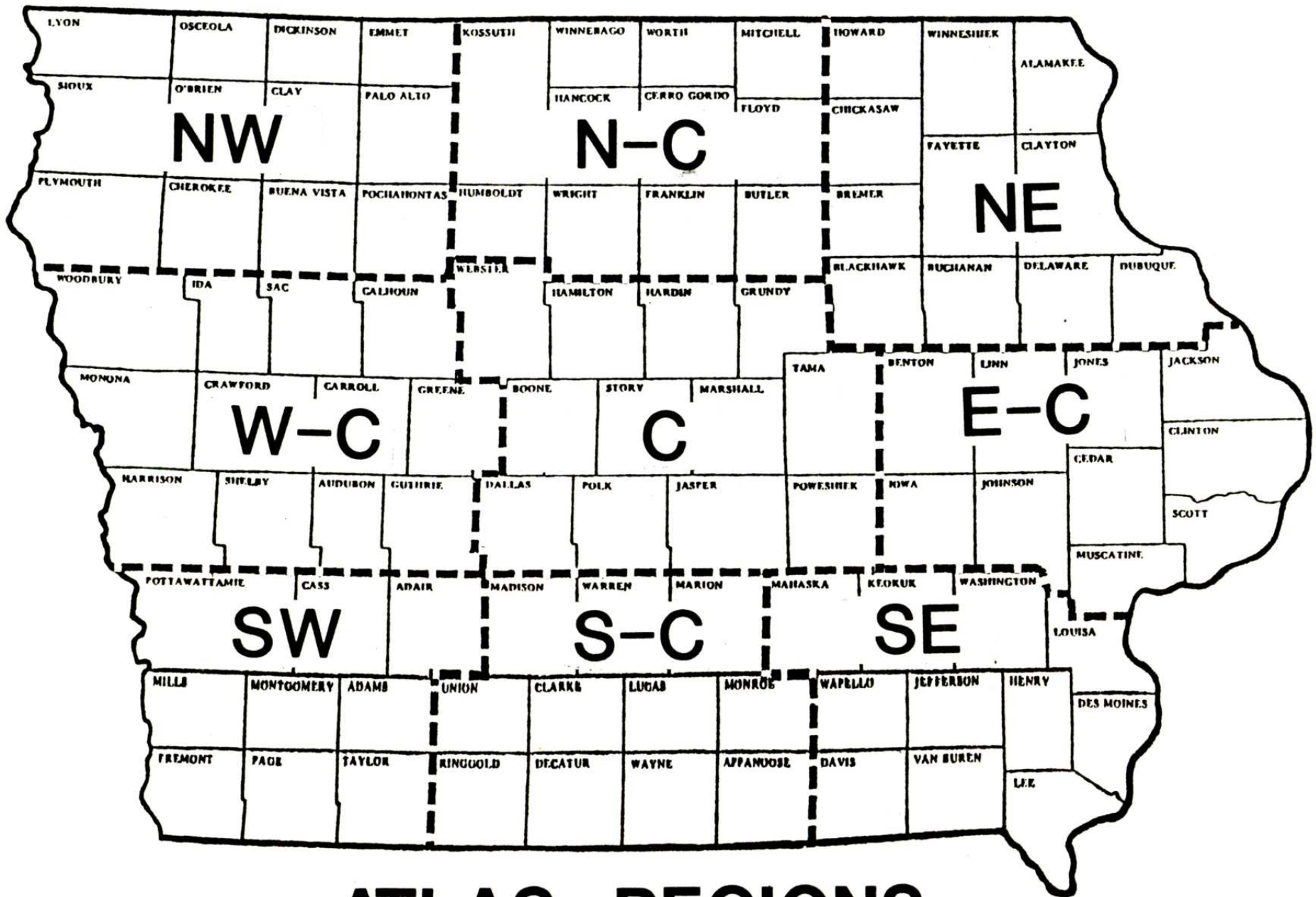
BBC type project in atlas blocks

Breeding Bird Count - CBC in June

Perpetual atlas - no publication, just data base
updates

338-3417

+ House Finch, Lark Bunting, Bewers Blackbird
Summer Tanager → Goldfinch



ATLAS REGIONS

BREEDING BIRD ATLAS QUESTIONS
from meeting in Colorado, September 1991

Can we compare regions by % occurrence in a region and χ^2 ? yes

Since we don't know the habitat in all the blocks completed, what can we do?

→ *Yan* Could we do gross: *Alfalfa, pasture* x% Forest, x% Agricultural, x% Wetland, etc. Existing aerial photos - field checks.

Rice crop, Grasses, Trees, Water, Barren, Artificial
Can we do species richness comparisons? By region? *July next year 1990-1991*

How can we choose best region? Which will be meaningful when pool counties/blocks?

Who "owns" the data? DNR/IOU both?

Will we "charge" for people to use data?

When we "give" data to other people, will we need to give them limitations?

→ Could you compare regional BBA to BBS regional? Will Iowa's BBS routes even fall into our regions? yes, you could use this or just state wide.

→ Can we convert our mapping stuff to postscript for publishers from our current data?

Who could review our accounts?

Should we have coded number of visits?

→ Should we rerun the data to see number of blocks with 50% species confirmed?

→ Can we hire a text editor?

Can we get data from surrounding states? their BBA data? -- IL, MO, SD, MN?

All possible data runs we anticipate--what about other state requests for data, maps, slides? Will our data go on the screen in map form for slides?

Where did we get the "safe dates" for breeding?

What kind of meeting schedule do we need?

Are we going to use frequency of codes per species and per block?

→ Code checks

Are we going to add to the BBA data base so it is an active, more up-to-date database? How would we solicit updates? Do we go with incomplete blocks or new species, higher confirmation when done? Should we monitor areas that are changing quickly? Would BBA's work for monitoring or would point counts etc. be better?

Weaknesses in Iowa's Data

- Lack habitat until ^{G15}GD cover type
- Low nocturnal findings
- Low raptor in general
- Don't use the word abundance

BOOKS TO GET

The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Vermont. ed. S. Laughlin & D. Kibbe. Univ. Press of New England, 1985.

IDEAS

Table w/physiographic regions in which reported

# of P	% P in region	% species total in region
A		
B		
C		
D		

x Vermont

For what possible code errors could we write a program just to see/flag any possible bad codes we have for deleting?

Matrix for birds like Ontario, but can you compare species like this? Difference in visibility could affect perceived relative abundance.

After getting ^{G15}GD covertime map, can we map birds by habitat?

Use photographers--get Don P., Carl Kurtz, J. Messina, D. Jackson, L. Stone and give photo credit.

Do we want to host the 1994 BBA meeting?

Breeding Bird Atlas Results 9/10/91

376/380 (P) priority blocks finished

Counties lacking P blocks finished: Clay (2), Davis (1), Harrison (1),

65/99 counties with all P blocks and 2 S blocks finished.

Using goal criteria that if a county has $\geq 50\%$ of total blocks listed as priority, and all priority blocks are finished, 17 additional counties are completed to satisfaction, even though 2 standard blocks were not completed.

Total counties completed to satisfaction would then be 82/99.

14 counties with all blocks completed include: Appanoose, Boone, Dallas, Dubuque, Ida, Johnson, Louisa, Lucas, Lyon, Mills, Page, Scott, Story, and Wayne.

17 counties with all but 1 block complete.

9 counties with less than half of total blocks complete: Bremer, Buena Vista, Clarke, Davis, Jasper, Sac, Wapello, Woodbury, and Kossuth. 90 counties with $\geq 50\%$ total blocks complete.

331 out of 481 total standard blocks were worked in with 232 standard blocks completed.

711 of 861 total blocks were worked in with 608 blocks completed.

1st Draft

10/9/91

Birds are the bellweather of environmental change. As the nation's prairies were plowed, its forests cleared, its wetlands drained, its birdlife either struggled to adapt, or vanished. Due to habitat changes and other man made impacts, we no longer have the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, the Carolina Parakeet, or the Passenger Pigeon. The Whooping Crane was nearly wiped out by hunting and habitat destruction, and the Peregrine Falcon and Bald Eagle almost exterminated by DDT. While ornithologists have an awareness of those species similarly imperiled, until recently, there was no coordinated process to determine the actual range and status of our country's breeding birds.

In 1981 (?), an ambitious, nationwide project was begun to provide this information. It soon grew to become the most comprehensive project in ornithological history, involving 33 states and 12 Canadian Provinces. In 1984, Iowa became a participant, initiating a six year project. During that time, 267 volunteers, from amateurs to professional ornithologists, spent over 12,000 hours in the field.

Prior to undertaking the actual field surveys, project planners identified 845 3x3 mile "blocks" to be studied. Most of the blocks were selected on the basis of a statewide grid, insuring a complete sample from the full range of Iowa's areas and habitats. Others were selected as "priority" blocks, containing segments of high quality Iowa habitats. During the six years of this project, Iowa's volunteers completed all of the state's priority blocks, and 86% of its non-priority blocks. This amazing achievement included the study of some 7,000 square miles of Iowa countryside.

field

It now appears that after years of work, tens of thousands of miles by car and on foot, and countless additional time in data entry and processing, that the most difficult part of the Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas is yet to come. Until it is published, this unique and valuable information will remain unavailable to students and nature lovers, and Iowa will be unable to enter its piece of the solution to the puzzle of our nation's knowledge of its breeding birds. However, due to the high costs of publishing, even with the use of desktop publishing and camera-ready copy, individual copies would be prohibitively expensive except for ~~some~~

some researchers and libraries.

It is the goal of those who have developed this information to make it accessible to classrooms, public libraries, and individuals at an affordable price. In doing so, we bring to them new and relevant information about one of our most precious natural resources. But to achieve our goal, we need help in bringing down the cost of publication. Already, Iowa State University has expressed an interest in publishing the volume, but anticipates a per-volume cost of \$60,000 on a run of 1000 copies. In order to bring the cost down to a more affordable \$20,000, this effort needs \$40,000.

This is your opportunity to play an important part in bringing our work to the people of Iowa. Attached are sample pages and artwork which will give you the flavor of the finished text.

Please be generous.

Corporate contribution	\$5000
Supporting contribution.....	\$1000
etcc...	



PEREGRINE FALCON

Photographed by Don Poggensee

Contributions to the Iowa Nongame Program have been used to restore peregrine falcons and river otters, survey Iowa birds, purchase land, landscape urban parks and provide educational programs to more than 20,000 Iowans each year. Remember to check line 60 of the 1040 Iowa income tax form or line 13 of the 1040A form. Invest in their future -- give to the Fish and Wildlife Protection Fund checkoff.

HELLO COMMITTEE! The BBA meeting in Colorado was great--except it caused even more questions and sometimes outright fear from the magnitude of the project. Other than a few panic-attacks Carol & I survived. We did however think of a variety of questions and picked up a paper on Maryland's writing process. We enclosed these so we could all start visualizing the project more. We'll have a lot to talk about at the meeting. We'll see you in Ames October 9!



NONGAME PROGRAM
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Wildlife Research Station
Route 1
Boone, Iowa 50036



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