

June 15 1994

Dear Dr. Dinsmore,

I hope you are having a nice summer! I am currently involved in a joint Nature Conservancy/Iowa DNR Non-Game Department project in which we are monitoring birds in five state preserves/state parks in NE Iowa: White Pine Hollow ^{Preserve} (Dubuque County); Brush Creek Canyon State Preserve (Fayette County); Bixby and Mossy Glen State Preserves (Clayton County); and Backbone State Park (Delaware County). We are doing five/ten minute point counts to monitor birds. Among the birds that we are encountering frequently in these parks/preserves are cerulean warbler, Louisiana waterthrush, blue-gray gnatcatcher and Acadian flycatcher. Consequently, I am accumulating quite a data base of information which I would like to compile in a form suitable for Iowa Bird. Therefore, I would ask that you send me appropriate forms (for four counties, one set for spring and one set for summer) with appropriate instructions.

I would also like to submit to you details of four significant observations that I have made this month: worm-eating warbler, Canada warbler and golden-crowned kinglet at White Pine Hollow ^{Preserve} and chestnut-sided warbler at Backbone State Park. The details are taken from a daily log that I am keeping here. I have also observed Kentucky warblers in two locations at White Pine Hollow and one location at Brush Creek Canyon, but since this species is not starred in the Iowa checklist I have concluded that you do not need documentation for this bird.

William Norm
527 1/2 Penn. Ave 2
Stn Ch 50240

Jun 3 1994

A chestnut-sided warbler was present at Backbone State Park on Jun 3, 1994 in brushy roadside vegetation along Hwy 187 (north side of the road) approximately 1/4 mile west of the entrance to the primitive campground.

I had been working in the woods ^(north of Hwy 187) that morning, and as I approached Hwy 187 to leave (about 10 AM) I heard a familiar "please, please, please to meet you" song. I am very familiar with the ~~song of~~ the chestnut-sided warbler song, having heard it and observed the species only five days earlier in northeast Wisconsin (Machickanee Forest, Oconto County) as well as earlier in May at Brookside Park in Ames, IA during the spring migration. I attempted to track the bird down by following the song, and after ten minutes it finally emerged in an exposed perch between me and Hwy 187 . I immediately confirmed the bird by observing the yellow crown patch and the chestnut patch on the flanks through my 7X35 Bausch and Lomb binoculars.

I revisited this location several times later in June, but the bird could not be relocated.

Jun 6 1994

A worm-eating warbler was present in White Pine Hollow on Jun 6 1994. I made this observation with Bruce Ehresman of the Iowa Non-Game DNR at approximately 10:15 AM in a deep ravine.

At about 9 AM that morning, we heard a chipping sparrow like song emerging from this ravine. The song was distant and only repeated at very infrequent time intervals. Although I have had very limited prior experience with worm-eating warblers (having heard and observed several individuals singing at Mammoth Cave National Park, Kentucky in June 1988), I suspected from the habitat that it might be this species. We returned at about 10 AM and slowly walked halfway down the steep north slope forming part of the ravine. Almost immediately, we heard the song again. We crouched low and as if on cue the bird perched on the limb of a small tree in an opening about 30 feet below us on the slope. I immediately saw an olive-green bird with three black stripes running across the crown of its head parallel to the long axis of the bird's body (I was using 7X35 Bausch and Lomb binoculars). Bruce agreed with me that it was a worm-eating warbler. The bird threw its head far back like a meadowlark each time it uttered its song. We observed the bird for about 30 seconds then it flew off.

I attempted to relocate this bird on Jun 13 by returning to this location, but I was unsuccessful.

Jun 6 1994

A Canada warbler was present in White Pine Hollow on June 6. I heard this bird with Bruce Ehresman of the Iowa DNR Non-Game Program sometime between 10:30 and 11:30 AM, and I observed the bird through my 7X35 Bausch and Lomb binoculars.

Bruce and I were climbing a steep north-facing slope in the Preserve when I heard the song of a Canada warbler from a thicket of blowdown trees and Canada yew on the slope. I immediately recognized the song as belonging to a Canada warbler, having heard it earlier this year when the birds were migrating through NE Iowa (this is the first Canada that I actually saw this year though), and from observations of singing birds in Pammel Woods (Ames Iowa) in late May of 1993 and 1992. I am also very familiar with this bird's vocalizations from years of birding woodlands in northeastern Wisconsin during the 1980's.

After hearing the song, Bruce continued up to the top of the slope. I remained behind and attempted to ferret the bird out for a confirming observation. I stayed still and spished several times (having had great success with this tactic with Canada warblers in the past) and eventually it came into view on a perch about 20 feet off the ground, about 50 feet in front of me. Immediately I observed the fine streakings of the bird's necklace down its breast, and the yellow spectacles. I watched the bird for about 45 seconds, then it dashed off to the brush again where it continued to sing.

I heard the bird again on June 13 and June 14 in the company of Pat Schlarbaum of the Iowa DNR Non-Game Program, though it could not be spished out into view for us to see. I will continue to monitor this bird's present on this slope through the summer on a weekly basis.

Jun 9 1994

Two golden-crowned kinglets were present at White Pine Hollow on Jun 9, 1994. They were heard by myself and John Fleckinstein of the Iowa State Preserves Board at about 10 AM on a relatively flat terrace supporting a very mature oak-maple woodland. I have observed this species singing on its breeding grounds in northeastern Wisconsin and on Isle Royale National Park in Michigan during the late 1980's, but not recently.

The following is taken directly from my log that day (comments in parentheses are added now).:

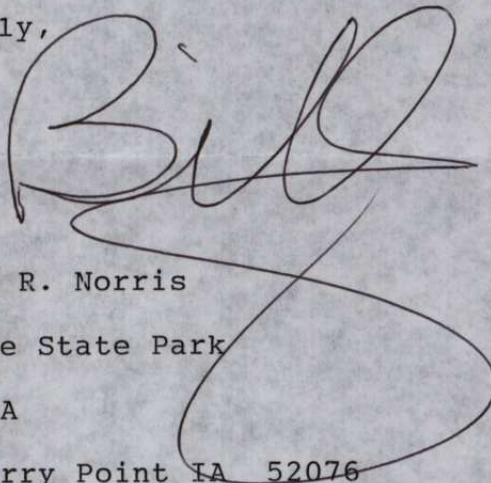
"John and I were exploring woods west of the east entrance, and stumbled upon point E (a bird census point we are monitoring). Here, we heard (but did not see) two golden-crowned kinglets, high in the canopy of a red oak. The song: 4 ascending whistles, each at a higher pitch (than the one before it). The short jumble of notes sometimes heard after the last whistle was not detected by us. Both brown creeper and Blackburnian warbler went through my head while we were here (around 10 AM) but 1.5 hours later John and I listened to the Petersen tape back in my cabin and we both agreed that it was the same song (as the golden crowned kinglet)".

I hope these species accounts are suitable for you.

Please send appropriate forms for spring and summer reports
to me when it is convenient.

Have a good summer Dr. Dinsmore!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill", with a large, sweeping flourish underneath that extends across the address lines.

William R. Norris

Backbone State Park

Box 210A

Strawberry Point IA 52076