

Wayne County Breeding Bird Atlas Newsletter

Rouge River Bird Observatory

Volume 1, Issue 1
Winter 2005



Upland Sandpiper at Willow Run Airport (T3S R8E block 2). Photo by Darrin O'Brien.

Results of 2005 nesting season

Over 20 participants (see left) contributed over 2600 records for Wayne County in 2005, nearly half the total number of records received over the last four years of the Atlas project. Six new species were recorded in 2005:

- Wild Turkey — Due to Walt Pawloski's determined efforts, Wild Turkeys were confirmed in Sumpter Township, T4S R8E block 1, and they were also possible in block 4. These are apparently the wandering transplants or offspring of the bird introduced into northern Monroe County by the Michigan DNR.
- Common Moorhen — A pair of moorhens at Crosswinds Marsh, T4S R8E block 4 got listed as probable. Despite regular observations by Walt Pawloski and Daryl Aspery, no chicks were ever seen. Common Moorhen is a species of special concern in Michigan.
- Bell's Vireo — The biggest surprise of the season had to be the persistently singing male Bell's Vireo, apparently paired with a female Warbling Vireo, found by Julie Craves in T4S R9E. It remained all summer on private property. Bell's Vireo is a rare summer resident in Michigan, and is nearly always found in the southwestern part of the state. This is the first solid record for Wayne County.
- Hooded Warbler — Hooded Warblers were found in two blocks: T4S R8E block 3 (singing in Sherwood Park) and in Romulus in T4S R9E block 3, where a male sang for weeks in a woodlot near Lower Huron Metropark. There were at least two pairs of Ovenbirds in the same lot.
- Dickcissel — This was an excellent year in the region for these nomadic and enigmatic grassland birds. Four pairs were in Romulus (T3S R9E block 2, probable), one male in Huron Township (T4S R9E block 1, possible), and three pairs at Oakwoods Metropark (T4S R9E block 4, confirmed). T
- Pine Siskin — Three pairs at Westcroft Gardens on Grosse Ile (T4S R11E block 2, probable).

Many thanks!

The following participants submitted checklists and covered full or partial blocks in 2005:

Daryl Aspery, Cathy Carroll, Allen Chartier, Julie Craves, Paul Cypher, Andy Dettling, Laura Kaplan, Fred McDonald, Joanne Mittlestat, Darrin O'Brien, Frank Omilian, Tom Pavlik, Walt Pawloski, Bill Rapai, Jerry Sadowski, Keith Saylor, Rick Simek, and Bruce Szczechowski.

Many other individuals submitted casual observations. See below for how to participate.

This brings the total number of breeding species in Wayne Co. to 132, with 104 confirmed!

To view more results and find helpful links, please visit the Wayne County Breeding Bird Atlas web site at: www.rrbo.org/bba.html. To submit data or for information on participating in 2006 in Wayne County, contact county coordinator Julie Craves, Rouge River Bird Observatory, University of Michigan-Dearborn, Dearborn, MI 48128; jac@rrbo.org. Participants outside of Wayne County can contact Atlas Headquarters at the Kalamazoo Nature Center by calling 269-381-9738 or miatlast@naturecenter.org

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Some Species Rankings

Species found in the most blocks, top ten slots:

1. European Starling (61)
2. American Robin, House Sparrow (60)
3. Song Sparrow (57)
4. Mourning Dove, Warbling Vireo, Red-winged Blackbird (56)
5. Northern Cardinal (55)
6. Gray Catbird (54)
7. Northern Flicker, House Wren, American Goldfinch (52)
8. Downy Woodpecker, Barn Swallow, Baltimore Oriole, Common Grackle (51)
9. Blue Jay, Chipping Sparrow, Brown-headed Cowbird (50)
10. Eastern Kingbird, Yellow Warbler (49)

Species confirmed in the most blocks, top ten slots:

1. European Starling (56)
2. American Robin (52)
3. House Sparrow (48)
4. Common Grackle (43)
5. Mallard (39)
6. Canada Goose (37)
7. Baltimore Oriole, Red-winged Blackbird (33)
8. Barn Swallow, Song Sparrow (31)
9. Mourning Dove, Northern Cardinal (28)
10. Black-capped Chickadee, Chipping Sparrow (24)

Compared to last Atlas...



Comparing the Wayne County results for this Atlas period so far (2002-2005) to the last Atlas period (1982-1988), we have added 14 new species, of which we have confirmed 17. They are (bold have been confirmed):

Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, American Bittern, Least Bittern, Cattle Egret, Hooded Merganser, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Wild Turkey, Virginia Rail, Wilson’s Snipe, Bell’s Vireo, Prothonotary Warbler, and Clay-colored Sparrow.

**We have added
14 new species
and elevated 17
since the last
Atlas!**

We have elevated 17 species from last Atlas, including 15 of them to confirmed. They are (bold have been confirmed):

Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Blue-winged Teal, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Alder Flycatcher, White-eyed Vireo, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Carolina Wren, Sedge Wren, American Redstart, Mourning Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Scarlet Tanager, Swamp Sparrow, and Dickcissel.

A number of species were recorded in the last Atlas that we have not recorded this time around. After examining the records, I think a few of them were well within migration and probably should not have been counted as possible. But here is the list of species recorded last Atlas that we can be on the lookout for:

American Black Duck, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Northern Harrier, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Black Tern, and Barred Owl.

Last Atlas, we were able to confirm Common Moorhen, Upland Sandpiper, and Northern Mockingbird; they are only at probable now. Golden-winged Warbler was probable in one block and possible in another last time, but we have it only as possible in one block this Atlas period. Still we have two years to go, find birds, and set records!