



THE BLUEBIRD

The voice of ASM since 1934

September 2014

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*The Audubon Society of Missouri
Missouri's Ornithological Society Since 1901*

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Spring (Mar. 1-May 31)—to Kristi Mayo by June 10

Summer (June 1-July. 31)—to Josh Uffman by Aug 10

Fall (Aug. 1-Nov. 30)—to Peter Kondrashov by Dec. 10

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Front Cover—A Brood of Barn Owls. Found by Allen Gathman at Mantz Conservation Area, Cape Girardeau County, June 24, 2014. Photographed by Allen Gathman.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER—JUNE NEWMAN



Dear Fellow Birders,

It's mid-July, but the deadline for the September issue of *The Bluebird* makes me think on the end of my term as president of ASM at our fall meeting at Lake of the Ozarks State Park. Please find registration information for the meeting in this issue, and from the home page of mo-birds.org.

When I promote Fall Meeting, I usually focus on the personal benefits of attending, on how much fun we have. I tout the beauty of the Ozarks in the fall, the entertaining challenge of fall plumaged warblers, the opportunity for long-time members to catch up with friends they seldom see except at our meetings. I point out that new members will get to put faces to names, will get to know all manner of birders from old-timers to other beginners, and will discover what a unique, friendly bunch of folks we are. And all of that is so.

Please consider, too, that The Audubon Society of Missouri needs you. Your membership is essential, but ASM needs more than names on a list and annual dues or lifetime memberships, as important as those are. It needs your unique contribution of voice, opinion, talent, time. Share your visions, opinions, questions, approval and disapproval. In short, engage in what we do.

The long, faithful engagement of many of you in what we do has inspired me when the job felt overwhelming. You are board members, executive board members, and regular observers and recorders of bird sightings. You are past presidents who are still willing to give your time—willing always to listen and advise, continuing to serve as directors on the board, or quietly maintaining membership records, mailing lists, preparing *The Bluebird* for mailing. You donate hours to maintenance of the website, to ownership and administration of our email list, or serve on the scholarship committee. You negotiate annual agreements with MDC and DNR and spend many untallied hours meeting and facilitating the deliverables in those agreements. You host spring meetings, plan fall meetings, and come to those meetings. You serve on the Missouri Bird Record Commit-

tee. You present workshops and respond to questions on the list. You edit our journal, serve as seasonal editors, or submit material for publication. You are teachers, parents, and grandparents who promote our values wherever you are.

To each of you, thank you.

June Newman,
President

**ASM WEEKEND AT
CURRENT RIVER STATE PARK
PAT LUEDERS**

No cell phone service—no Wifi—no TV nor cable—no radio—Sound like heaven????

Seldom these days do we have the chance to escape all of the technology above and spend a weekend simply enjoying nature. The recent ASM weekend at the new Current River State Park provided this rare opportunity! Organized and orchestrated by ASM President June Newman with help from her sister, Kay Wood, Terry McNeely, and park volunteers Carla Bascom and Kevin Hogan, 24 participants birded all weekend, enjoyed 5 delicious meals, and re-connected with Mother Nature.

In 1937, the Alton Box Company purchased 800 acres along the Current River in south central Missouri between Salem and Eminence near Hwy 19. The plan was to log the area to provide material for manufacturing boxes. However, upon seeing the beautiful location, the management suggested it would be better used as a company retreat. The property includes a historic main lodge with a large living room and dining area, a well-equipped kitchen, and comfortable air-conditioned and renovated sleeping rooms. Additional buildings include an indoor gymnasium, a pantry building, a lake house on the lake, and an adjacent sleeping building, all built on an elevated ridge overlooking the Current River. After Alton Box sold the property in 1996 to MDC, the complex was used to train teachers. It was then transferred to DNR and became part of the park system in 2008. The buildings are currently being restored and updated.

Saturday and Sunday morning, our group of birders surveyed two glades on the property, one that is in the beginning stages of resto-

ration and the other fairly well established. Wild flowers and butterflies were numerous, as were many summer resident birds. The bird list of sightings on the property included 74 species, and large numbers of those species were heard all day long. After sunset and before dawn, both Chuck-will's-widow and Whip-poor-will were vocalizing.

On Saturday afternoon, many of the group took a road trip to the Blue Spring area, about a 40 minute drive, and found 2 Swainson's Warblers, as well as Cerulean and Kentucky Warblers, life birds for many in the group! Blue Spring was beautiful with many birds vocalizing around us.

The opportunity to enjoy nature without today's technological interruptions was a real treat and truly inspirational. Thank you to June Newman for providing the ASM membership this rare chance to reconnect with the unique Missouri river habitat. We are pleased to report that our birds are enjoying the river, forest and glade habitat as much as we did!

HMM—IS SOMETHING MISSING??

Alert readers will notice something missing from this issue—the Seasonal Report. For some time, and for most issues, the seasonal editors have managed to miss the deadline for material for *The Bluebird*. This problem has managed to get worse over time. Why? In the “old” days, seasonal editors were mailed sightings for the seasonal report, scanned them for notable information, included this in the report, and submitted it. Then, MoBirds came along. Some seasonal editors chose to ignore sightings reported on MoBirds, while others included them. Then, CACHE and SPARKS were developed as joint projects between ASM and the Missouri Department of Conservation and Missouri Division of State Parks, respectively. Concurrently, eBird broke onto the scene, providing even more bird sightings, and including many other observers outside and inside ASM. The result has been greater and greater amounts of sighting information, delays in completion of the reports, and delays in *The Bluebird*.

So, we are intentionally breaking continuity to get on a new schedule of seasonal reports. This should work out better for everyone connected with *The Bluebird*. The seasonal editors will have sufficient time to review and incorporate all bird sightings, the Missouri Bird Records Committee can adequately review the draft Seasonal Reports, and the editor will receive the final draft in plenty of time to avoid being rushed or delayed. Note that this will not affect the deadlines for reports to the Seasonal Editors.

400 in 2014—Part II

Bill Eddleman

Riverlands

I realized almost as soon as I began my quest that I would need to visit Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary early in the year. There is simply nowhere else in the state that has reliable concentrations of winter gulls and waterfowl. So, when I noticed on MoBirds that St. Louis Audubon had a trip scheduled for February 2, I emailed the trip leader, my friend Bill Rowe, to get some details. This would give me an opportunity not only to see some birds, but to renew acquaintance with St. Louis area birders I've birded with before. Bill suggested we meet early at the lock on the "Missouri" side of the river (a site which is actually in Illinois). Because my limit was the 50 states, no problem with crossing the state line. So, Hope and I made arrangements to travel up to Alton, Illinois to stay the night and meet early the next morning.

Hope stayed in the room to read and relax, while I headed out into the pre-dawn hours to meet Bill. The day was cold (in retrospect, one of the colder days of last winter), and a breeze began picking up. Nonetheless, birds were pretty active around the dam, and I tallied American White Pelican, Herring Gull, Thayer's Gull, Common Goldeneye, and several others. After 30 minutes or so, it was time to meet the group at Heron Pond. Once we were organized, the caravan headed over to the vantage point at the northwest corner of Ellis Bay. Because ice had restricted waterfowl to a relatively small area, we got some good views of all three swans (Mute and Trumpeter being new for my year), Common Merganser, Cackling Goose (among the numerous Canada Geese), and a variety of other waterfowl. At one point, the Peregrine Falcon that hangs around the bridge swooped into view for some of us—a nice bonus! It also became obvious at this point that my parka was way too thin for prevailing conditions. The wind seemed to cut right through it! After 20 minutes or so, many of us (me included) needed to warm up!

From there the group proceeded to the Visitor Center, with a stop at the limited open water around the culvert into Heron Pond. At this point, a first-year Great Black-backed Gull was on the Ellis Bay side on the ice with other gulls, and a first-year Glaucous Gull was on the Heron Pond side! Nice contrast! Another bonus on the Heron Pond side was a look at *all five* bay ducks at once: Ring-necked, Can-

vasback, Redhead, and both scaup! I don't think I've ever seen them all at the same spot before.

The group stopped at the Audubon Center to look over the bay (which was largely frozen) and warm up. I did pick up White-crowned Sparrow for the year at the feeder. At the dam, we got additional looks at the species I saw earlier with Bill, but otherwise there was nothing new. Some of the pale-winged gulls bordered on being in the Kumlein's Gull range, but we could not tell for sure. I think Bill submitted some of the photos taken to an expert for an opinion after the trip. At that point, the trip headed to the Visitor Center on the Illinois side of the river, where we got a very good look at a first-year Thayer's Gull.

By this time, it was nearing 9 a.m., and I had promised Hope I would retrieve her for brunch at that time. It was also getting colder and starting to snow, with a forecast for snow later in the day. So, I bade farewell to the group, and went on to a nice breakfast in Alton. Total species at this point for the year: 91. A nice start!

San Diego

From extreme cold, to absolutely pleasant! Two days after my time at Riverlands, I was on my way to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities winter Academic Affairs meeting in San Diego. Dave Starrett and I were both attending the meeting, and he actually took some vacation and started birding in Arizona, then Salton Sea before arriving in San Diego on the same day. Upon arrival, I spotted a few birds before dark—Willetts, Western Gulls, and others. I walked around the hotel grounds the next morning and picked up Anna's Hummingbird, Marbled Godwits on the bay, Black Phoebe, and others.

I had laid some groundwork for this trip by contacting a local birder through Birding Pal. We found a willing pal (John), and decided it would be best if he guided us to some coastal areas that might be good in the morning. He was only available half a day, and so we would buy him lunch, and then visit some inland sites in the afternoon. In addition, Dave and I had been monitoring eBird for local sightings, and had some other spots picked out for early morning and late afternoon short trips.

So on February 5, we found ourselves in a rental car headed down the outer coast from Coronado Island. Our first stop was at 7th Street on the south end of San Diego Bay. Not much to see, although

we did see Savannah Sparrows (which in this area are Belding's Savannah Sparrows, a larger and darker subspecies) and Say's Phoebe. We next drove on down to Tijuana Estuary National Wildlife Refuge. Several species were evident in a native species planting in front of refuge headquarters, including Hermit Thrush, Orange-crowned Warbler, and Common Yellowthroat. A particular treat here and elsewhere were displaying Anna's Hummingbirds—reminding me of some great footage on a PBS *Nature* documentary on sound production during the display of males.

A really nice trail leads through the marsh, and netted quite a few birds for my year list. Tijuana Estuary is one of the sites where the Light-footed race of Clapper Rail may be found. I had worked with Dick Zembal and Barb Massey learning study methods for a couple of days in Upper Newport Bay back in the early 1980s on this subspecies, but had not been in the range of the bird since. Much to my gratification, we observed a Clapper in the main tidal creek during our walk on the trail! Among the other additions to the list on this trail were Cinnamon Teal, Whimbrel, Long-billed Curlew, Short-billed Dowitcher, Dunlin, Black-bellied Plover, and Western Meadowlark.

From there, we drove further down the outer beach road to a beach access. Walking south on this beach led us to the mouth of the Tijuana River, nearly at the Mexican border. Sanderlings were on the beach, and we looked carefully on the upper beach above the wrack line to see a scattering of Snowy Plovers. Hundreds of gulls and other birds loat in this estuary at low tide, and we were able to see Eared Grebe, both pelicans, Brandt's Cormorant, Greater Yellowlegs, Ruddy Turnstone, California Gull, and Royal Tern, among others on the mudflats along the braided channels of the river. All in all, a very nice morning of birds I had not seen in many years!

After a fine lunch at a very nice Mexican restaurant, and a lot of discussion of birds and potential inland birding sites, Dave and I dropped John off at his car and headed for one of his suggested sites: Tecolote Canyon in San Diego. Tecolote Canyon is a linear park that is original chaparral vegetation in the midst of urban/suburban development. John suggested it might provide a good sampling of upland birds (or as I put it, all the birds with "California" in their common name—all of which would be life birds for me). Within 20 feet of the car, we quickly located California Towhees. We headed into the park on the paved trail, and within a few feet had a small group of Bushtits scolding us. A bit further, and we saw and heard California Thrashers and Western Scrub-jays.

One of my target species was still missing, though:—Wrentit. We continued to walk on a side trail, hoping to find one. Suddenly, I looked up and saw a raptor, and realized it was a White-tailed Kite! Not outlandish, but unexpected in town! We also managed to kick up a Fox Sparrow—the same race as back in Missouri in winter.

It was starting to get pretty late, and we wanted to visit another site, so we started back. FINALLY, we managed to see a bird that we had been hearing for quite a bit of the walk, and lo and behold, it was the hoped-for Wrentit! We had pretty much found every species we had hoped for at the park except California Quail (difficult to locate in winter, when they are relatively silent) and California Gnatcatcher.

Our next stop was Mission Trails Regional Park east of San Diego. This was a site of one of the first dams built in California, to impound water for small fields in association with an old Spanish mission. It was also another potential California Gnatcatcher site. It's a very popular site, too! Lots of people, and we saw almost no birds before we had to leave with approaching dusk.

The next day was taken up by parts of our meeting, so we did no birding. February 7, though, we had some time early in the morning, so we headed out to a couple of close sites. First, we went to the San Diego River Estuary. Highlights of this very “birdy” spot were Eurasian Wigeon and Little Blue Heron.

Another spot further downstream in the estuary appears quite a bit in eBird reports: Robb Field. This site is a park with a large open, grassy field. Good views of the estuary and river occur along the park drive. The first thing that was evident when we got there was hundreds of gulls in the field. All proved to be Western Gulls, however. Among the waterfowl and other birds in the river was a small flock of Brant, a new one for the year list. In addition, an Osprey was circling over the water.

We both noticed what appeared to be a yellow-bellied kingbird pair perched in a single tree on one end of the field. At this time of year in San Diego, there are several possibilities. Closer examination, and one of the birds' vocalizations showed these to be Cassin's Kingbirds.

We still had some time left before we needed to be at the hotel for morning sessions, so I suggested to Dave that we might want to try Rosecrans National Cemetery. This is on a peninsula on the north

end of San Diego Bay. It's a very scenic spot—on a hill overlooking the Pacific on the west and the city and upper end of the bay on the east. It is also well-kept, and apparently is a great migration trap in season. The morning we were there, however, it was only good for a flock of Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warblers and a Say's Phoebe. Dave and I split up and I walked the west boundary fence. Outside the fence is coastal scrub on a steep hillside. Workers had cut back much of the scrub, and left it piled outside the fence. I thought I would try "pishing" to raise something out of the brushpiles. After looking at a lot of yellow-rumps, a small bird flitted up briefly. Hmm. Small size, brownish, scolding, short, vertically-held tail. At home, I'd say Winter Wren. But wait a minute! The local possibility in San Diego in winter is....Pacific Wren! One more lifer!

That evening, we took a bit of time and headed over to the beach outside the historic Hotel del Coronado. Checking out this hotel is well worth it if you are in San Diego. It is over 100 years old, and has some spectacular architecture and woodwork. It also has some nice beach-side birding and a large rock dike in front of it. We managed to see Black Turnstones on the rocks, and Herrmann's Gulls flew by as we walked down the beach.

We were pretty well tied up in meetings until our last evening there. So, we skipped the closing reception, and headed back to Mission Trails Park again. This time, we came from a different end of the park, and toured the Visitor Center. From the overlook at the Visitor Center, we were able to make out a Spotted Towhee foraging in the brush. Dave and I both saw some obvious swallow-like birds in a cut bank a few hundred meters away, and after looking hard, were able to make out White-collared Swifts.

Of course, I still had among my "wish list" two birds that should have been at this park. Although I have been to southern California on several occasions, I was either there to visit relatives, or was focused on studying rails. So, I really lack a lot of the local species. One of these was Nuttall's Woodpecker.

We decided to walk along a trail from the Visitor Center and try and locate California Gnatcatchers, which had been seen within the previous couple weeks at the park. Once we walked out to the paved road to get to the trail, a bird flew into a nearby tree. It was obviously a woodpecker, and was exasperating in managing to sit on the opposite side of the tree from us. We FINALLY managed to get the bird into view, and yes, there was my Nuttall's Woodpecker! One more lifer!

The shade was deepening as we walked the trail down from the Visitor Center. We heard quite a number of Wrentits singing as it was getting later, and continued to walk the trail until it came back onto the road. Not much left to do before dark except walk up the road to the car!

As we walked along, we managed to see sparrows in the shrubs along the road—White-crowned Sparrows as it turned out after we “pished” them into view. Suddenly, we heard something else that WASN’T a sparrow. The bird came into partial view, and the gnat-catcher stance was obvious to me in profile. Dave got an even better look, and confirmed: California Gnatcatcher. A perfect way to end our birding for the trip!

So, a tally of species for the year after San Diego indicated I had added over 50 species to the year list. The total as of February 8 was 146 species.

Next Time: Spring Migration Count and Alaska!

A BIRDERS’ GUIDE TO MISSOURI PUBLIC LANDS Edge Wade & Others

ST. JOE STATE PARK

Judy Bergmann and Edge Wade, summer 2014

8,242.98 acres; St. Francois Co.; DeLorme 49, H/J-6; GPS: 37.821961,-90.535100; DNR owned; contact (573) 431-1069 during office hours;
<http://www.mostateparks.com/park/st-joe-state-park>

Directions: From I-55 at Festus, take exit #174B to merge with US 67 south toward Bonne Terre for 30 miles. Take MO 32 west toward Leadington/Park Hills and go right and onto MO 32 Bypass west for about 3.3 miles. Turn left onto Pimville Rd. into the park.

From eastbound MO 8 from Potosi, turn right (south) onto Rt. Z (a.k.a. Main St.) in Park Hills. Follow W. Main St. 1.7 miles to a right onto Flat River Dr., continuing onto Federal Mill Rd/Sports Cpmplex Rd. for .2 mile, then merge onto 32 Bypass W. Turn left onto Pimville Rd. into the park.

The St. Joe Lead Co. began using the diamond-tipped drill in 1869 and brought lead mining from small digs into the industrial age. The “Lead Belt” of southeast Missouri produced nearly 80% of the lead produced in the U.S. for 100 years. St. Joe Minerals Corporation closed operations here in 1972

and donated the land for the park in 1976. The 2,000 acres of tailings (crushed limestone) designated for ORV use are crisscrossed by a trail system; the remaining 75% of the park provides a variety of habitats of accessible, potentially very good birding.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: St. Joe State Park has several long trails, which are much under-birded. DNR sources are not consistent as to the trail lengths. The main trail (officially called the Paved Bicycle Trail) is a loop blazed in yellow that goes all the way around the main areas of the park. Distance around the loop varies, depending on the trailhead used. The loop can be from 11 to 14.5 miles.

The Pine Ridge Trail Loop is a 10.0 to 13 mile natural surface loop blazed in red. The Hickory Ridge Trail loop is 3.75 to 4.00 miles of natural surface blazed in green that includes portions through hardwoods and pine; white connectors can vary the route. The trailhead is at the equestrian staging area, with additional access from two points in Campground 2. Lakeview Trail is a 1.25 natural surface loop blazed in orange.

Walking along the footpaths can be very productive for those who may not want to walk a long trail. After entering Pimville Rd. from Highway 32, continue east past Harris Branch Trailhead for .6 mile to a service road on the left. This has a locked gate. Walk back along the road. The Pim Prairie restoration area can be seen through some trees on the right with mature woods on the left. This restored prairie remnant has been managed with fire for decades to encourage native species to thrive and expand across a very disturbed landscape.

Expect a variety of passerines along this service road. Warblers during migration often include Magnolia, Golden-winged, American Redstart, Black-throated Green and many more. A Black-throated Blue has been viewed here.

Continuing on Pimville Rd. eastward for .5 mile, there is a service road on the right, again with a locked gate. Park and walk back. Immediately on the right you will see a wide, brushy ravine with an old field on the left. Many birds can be seen here, often at eye level. During migration expect many warbler species, including Yellow Warbler and American Redstart, and vireo species (including Blue-headed). Several swallow species and flycatchers (E. Kingbird, Willow, E. Phoebe) hunt over the ravine or the adjoining open field. Swallows, flycatchers, Gray Catbirds, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Yellow-breasted Chats, Tanagers and others nest in the area. Listen for Northern Bobwhite.

Continuing eastward on Pimville Rd. for .5 mile turn left into the main entrance. About .5 miles on the right you will see the Pim Day Use Area. Walking along the slope above the wooded area often yields warblers, in-

cluding Black-throated Green, Magnolia, and others, especially in migration, along with vireos, flycatchers, orioles, and both tanagers. The 1.5 mile Lake View Trail has a trailhead in this day use area. This loops along through a mature forest to Monsanto Lake and back to the day use area. Expect tanagers, Black-and-white Warblers, Kentucky Warblers, Wild Turkey and other forest species. Near the Monsanto Trailhead the trail leads along the lake. Watch for Spotted Sandpipers and Solitary Sandpipers during migration. Scan Monsanto Lake for waterfowl.

Leaving the Pim Day Use Area, the main road through the park comes to a "T." Straight ahead is the ORV area. The trees immediately across the ORV area can yield raptors including an occasional Merlin. Listen for a Prairie Warbler in season. To the right is Monsanto Lake (previously discussed) and the Lake View Trail. Scan the small lake on the right for Prothonotary Warblers in summer. In migration scan the tall trees leading to Monsanto Lake for warblers. Backtracking and entering the ORV Staging Area, scan Pim Lake on the left for Kingfishers or Killdeer. The trees that surround the staging area can be very fruitful. The hillside above Shelter 5 has yielded many vireos and warblers, including Golden-winged, especially during migration.

Before leaving the park, going back toward the park office, the last road on the right leads to Campground 1. Near the entrance to the campground on the left is the MDC Pim Prairie restoration project, a series of fields that are periodically burned. There is no footpath through the prairie area. Wintering sparrows can be found in abundance here. In summer Indigo Buntings nest here as do Blue Grosbeak, Yellow-breasted Chat, Gray Catbird and others.

Back on Pimville Rd., continue east 2.4 miles to the Equestrian Trail parking lot. A creek just beyond the parking lot with several old fields and mature forest adjoining can be very productive. Park and walk past the parking lot to the footpath that goes off to the left at the recycling bins. The old fields here yield Blue-winged Warblers during migration. Yellow-breasted Chats, Prairie Warblers, Common Yellowthroats, Eastern Bluebirds and others nest here. In early spring listen from the parking lot for American Woodcock. If lucky you may have an irate Woodcock buzz you as it flies across the road from an old pasture (private) and creek beyond. In season listen for Whip-poor-wills.

Features of interest to birders: Four lakes, three of which (Jo Lee, Pim, and Monsanto) can be viewed from or near roads; Apollo Lake is in the ORV area. Much of the park is in early-stage second-growth oak-hickory forest, with some of the most mature trees in or near the campgrounds. There are intermittent streams and some wetland. Blankshire Savanna can be accessed from the paved bicycle trail; Pimville Prairie from Pimville Rd.

Toilets: Flush toilets in season in campgrounds; vault toilets in day use areas, at the two beach areas, and trailheads

Camping: Two campgrounds. Campground 1 has 40 electric pull-through and 35 back-in asphalt sites and is open year-round. Campground 2 has 13 electric back-in gravel sites and 12 basic back-in gravel sites. There are hitching posts at each campsite. Five basic trailside sites are available along the paved bicycle trail.

Hazards/Limitations: Weekdays are recommended for birding. 2000 acres, largely on St. Joe mine tailings, are designated for off-road vehicle riding. The ORV Staging Area can be congested and hazardous with youngsters entering and leaving the ORV riding area. Weekdays have lighter use.

In addition, all of the foot trails and paths can be rugged with steep inclines and/or slippery loose rock. Most trails are open to equestrian traffic and can be deeply pitted by horses' hooves, especially in low-lying areas. Mountain bikes may be encountered.

Nearby Birding Sites: Hawn State Park, Farmington City Lakes (Giessing, Hager and Thomas), Leadwood Access, Mineral Area College Range and Pond, Bismarck Lake CA, Iron Mountain City Lake.

BRICKYARD HILL CONSERVATION AREA

Edge Wade

2609.7 acres; Atchison Co.; DeLorme 14, B-2; GPS: 40.4633900087,-95.5680081498; Site Map: http://extra.mdc.mo.gov/documents/area_brochures/6301map.pdf; MDC owned; for more information call 816-271-3100

Directions: From I-29 Exit 116 go east on Rt. B for one-eighth mile, then turn southeast on Route RA for one-eighth mile to the main area entrance. Staying on Rt. B will take you to a lot near the north boundary with bluff prairie as described below.

The area can be entered on the southeast side by taking US 136 west of Rock Port, and going north on US 275, then left on 185th St.

Brickyard Hill is named for the brick factory built here about 1900 to exploit the 10 to 90 foot deep deposit of loess. The area is a fine example of the yellow, wind-blown loess soil formed as glaciers retreated, and the plants supported by the loess and the fairly dry conditions reminiscent of the steppes further west.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: 120 species have been recorded here. On a day in mid May, 10 to 15 species of warblers can be found. Catbirds, thrashers, tanagers, grosbeaks and orioles are summer residents. In May and September Olive-sided Flycatchers come through, adding variety to the resident

flycatcher population that includes Great-crested and Acadians. October brings a good suite of sparrows that may be seen well into November, among them, Grasshopper, Vesper, Lark, and Harris'. Winter can be harsh at Brickyard Hill, but Winter Wren and Golden-crowned Kinglets may live the day. A good woodpecker population is resident year-round.

Curiously, none of the 29 trip reports as of July 2014 has included any geese or ducks. Waterfowl and many other species, such as Red-breasted Nuthatch and Hermit Thrush may be added to the checklist by a venturesome birder.

Features of interest to birders: Erosion has formed a rugged terrain of ridges and gullies supporting dry prairies with several plant species that are state listed species of conservation concern. There are six parking lots. The parking lot off Rt. B on the north end of the area is a good place to access dry bluff prairies unique to this part of Missouri and western Iowa. The 13-acre Charity Lake has a 1-mile moderately difficult hiking trail around it that gives several vantage points to see birds on the lake while traversing a varied terrain.

Rt. RA becomes 165th St. and goes about 1.6 miles from the northwest portion (near the lake), cutting across the area and through private land to a right (south) on G Avenue to reach the south portion of Brickyard Hill.

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About 1 mile south along G Avenue from the intersection with 165th St. is a road leading west to a parking area. 125-acre Brickyard Hill Loess Mounds Natural Area in the southwest corner of the area is accessible by trail (an old field road) from this parking area. It has loess prairie plant communities maintained with controlled burns and cutting of woody invasives. The more than 1,500 acres of forest and woodland is a mix of lowland species like cottonwood and willow and upland hardwood oak-hickory. Savannas, grasslands and old fields add to the matrix of potentially bird-rich habitats.

Toilets: 2 privies. See the camping section below for locations.

Camping: There are primitive sites near the lake with fire rings and a nearby privy. A second camping area with a privy is near the intersection of G Ave. and 125th St. in the southeast portion of the area.

Hazards/Limitations: Rugged terrain, occasional presence of hunters, and the usual precautions appropriate for Missouri weather, are the only limitations noted.

Progress Report: “Use of Hayed and Non-Hayed Conservation Reserve Program Fields in Johnson County, Missouri”

Jamie L. McCallum

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) was established by the Food Security Act (Farm Bill) of 1985. It was designed to control soil erosion, improve ground and surface water quality, and enhance wildlife habitat on environmentally sensitive agricultural land (USDA 2012). To participate in the Conservation Reserve Program, producers take highly erodible or environmentally sensitive lands out of agricultural production and plant them with approved resource-conserving covers. They enroll the land in contracts for 10-15 years and receive financial compensation for participation. A site-specific conservation plan must be developed before contract approval (USDA 2012). Participants must maintain the CRP cover in accordance with the conservation plan. Specific maintenance activities may include mowing, burning, and/or spraying (USDA 2012).

CRP lands benefit grassland bird species across the Midwest (Patterson and Best 1996, Best *et al.* 1997, Herkert 2007) and may act as a source habitat for some species in Missouri (McCoy *et al.* 1999). Mowing or haying CRP fields can result in fewer grassland bird species and lower overall bird abundance (Frawley and Best 1991). Female, nestling, and nest mortality are often high when hay cutting occurs during the nesting season, and nest abandonment and predation also increase after haying (Warner and Etter 1989, Bollinger *et al.* 1990). Conversely, haying may be beneficial to grassland birds in some cases, and some species may be more abundant in hayed fields (Dale *et al.* 1997, Horn and Korford 2000, Murray and Best 2003).

Emergency haying or grazing of CRP lands may be authorized in periods of drought or excessive moisture. The Farm Services Agency (FSA) allowed Missouri farmers to perform emergency haying and/or grazing on qualifying CRP fields in response to the severe drought of 2012 (USDA 2012). This opportunity allowed me to investigate if emergency haying influenced grassland birds in Johnson County, Missouri.

Methods

This study was conducted over the 3-month nesting season (May, June, July) in 2013. Fourteen CRP fields, ranging from 1.24 - 12.2 ha, were used as study sites. The seven hayed and seven non-hayed fields were paired by similar size and treatment (hayed paired with non-hayed). Each field was sub-sampled using 1 grid point per 1.60 ha placed randomly across the habitat. Twenty five percent of grid points were visited in a study site during each sampling period (1 month). Two or more investigators were always present during the sampling, and no grid points were revisited during the study.

To flush birds from their nests, a 30 m dragline was attached to a central pivot at each point and drug 360° through the vegetation. 30 m wide transects were used when a field was too narrow to accommodate the 30 m radius circle. Visual point counts and digital audio recordings were used at all grid points to identify birds.

Species richness and diversity was recorded and compared between hayed and non-hayed fields for breeding grassland birds and for total (breeding and non-breeding) grassland birds (Table 1). Diversity was calculated using the Simpson's Index of Diversity. A two-sample t-test with an alpha of 0.05 was used to test if species richness, diversity differed between hayed and non-hayed fields.

Results

No significant difference was found in either species richness (Fig. 1) or species diversity (Fig. 2) between hayed and non-hayed CRP fields.

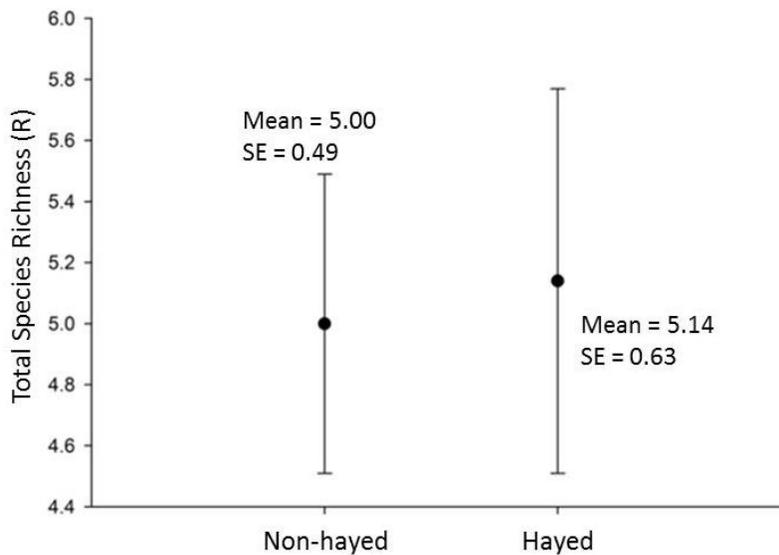


Figure 1. Total species richness (R) observed from May through July 2013 in non-hayed and hayed Conservation Reserve Program fields in Johnson County, Missouri.

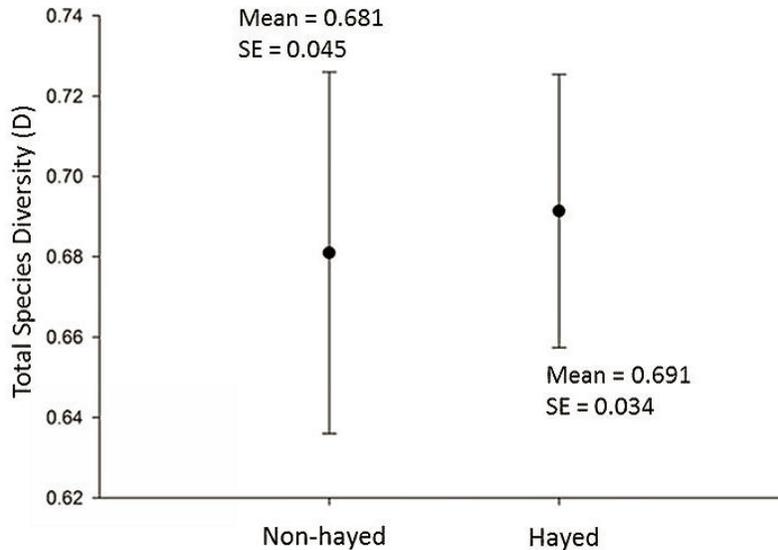


Figure 2. Total species diversity (D) observed from May through July 2013 in non-hayed and hayed Conservation Reserve Program fields in Johnson County, Missouri.

Conclusion

The findings of this study suggest that emergency haying of CRP fields in Johnson County, MO had no observable impact on the grassland birds I studied. Therefore, future emergency haying practices should not impact grassland birds in this area. Further studies on a larger scale will be necessary to determine if emergency haying has an impact on grassland birds elsewhere.

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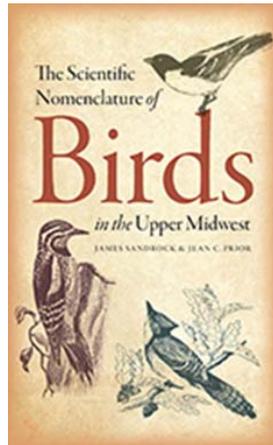
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**Wild Turkey gobbler near Pocahontas, Cape Girardeau Co., April 18, 2014.
Photo by Allen Gathman.**

BOOK REVIEW

Bill Eddleman



The Scientific Nomenclature of Birds in the Upper Midwest by James Sandrock and Jean C. Prior. 2014. University of Iowa Press, Iowa City. (Bur Oak Guide). Softbound. 180 pages. \$25.00. Additional details and ordering information at: <http://www.uiowapress.org/books/2014-spring/scientific-nomenclature-birds-upper-midwest.htm>

With the exception of those of us who might have taken Latin or Greek, the meanings of scientific names (aka Latin names) are, well, Greek. Perhaps if we learned some of the languages derived from Latin, we might just know a few of the names (for example, *alba* or *albus* for white, *rubra* for red). However, most mean very little to the average birder. If you

have been curious about those meanings, then this is a very helpful book .

The introduction covers several topics related to naming organisms and explains how the book is arranged. Its stated purpose is to "...list and explain the scientific names of birds that occur in one or more states of the Upper Midwest...." Included is a very lucid, non-technical discussion of why we use scientific names, why Latin or Latinized Greek words are used, and how the Carolus Linnaeus developed the system. A short, very nice description of the concept of priority in scientific names, and then the setup of the book follow. Birds are arranged alphabetically by genus, with species listed alphabetically underneath. The etymology of the genus and species names are given, often accompanied by a brief history of the discovery and naming of the species, as well as nomenclatural changes over time. Separate indices are listed by common name, and then by specific name.

I decided to look up my favorite--the Black Rail, *Laterallus jamaicensis*. The genus is from Latin *latēre* meaning "to lie hidden or concealed" and postclassical Latin *rallus*, meaning rail. The specific name is a coined Latin adjective for Jamaica, and *ensis* or "from," referring to where the species was first collected and described. So, hidden or concealed rail from Jamaica!

Despite the authors' hope that people will read through the book, I would suspect this will be a reference book for most birders or ornithologists. Considering the price (a bit more than that of the average field guide), I suspect most birders will probably rely on the internet to answer their questions about scientific names of their favorite birds. However, if you want it all under one cover, this is a very readable, compact reference for your birding bookshelf.

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