

Minnesota BIRDING



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Tracking the Upland Sandpipers and Grasshopper Sparrows

by Jason Hill

By now, most of us are well aware of the plight of grassland bird species over the last 60 years. The U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) North American Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) has documented that grassland birds declined faster than any other habitat guild of birds in North America over recent decades. These declines are likely caused by a suite of factors, especially habitat loss and degradation from the increasing scope and intensity of agricultural practices. As grain and farmland prices increase, so does the need for effective management of the remaining suitable grassland habitat such as Department of Defense (DOD) training lands. Many of these DOD training facilities (e.g., Camp Ripley, Minnesota) contain areas that are actively managed as grasslands which provide important habitat for many grassland bird species.

We expend much effort investigating the breeding biology of grassland bird species, but most of Minnesota's grassland bird species are migratory and spend at least two-thirds of the year elsewhere — on their migration and wintering grounds. Clearly, the viability of grassland bird populations is a function of both breeding productivity *and* survival during the rest of the year. For most grassland bird species in the U.S., however, we know relatively little about their habitat use, survival, and movements outside of the breeding season. The quality of habitat and food availability on the wintering and migration grounds likely affects the reproductive success of birds in subsequent years. There-



Grasshopper Sparrow. Photo by Vija Kelly.

fore, to effectively manage grassland bird populations in North America, it is imperative that we investigate their complete life cycle.

Our ability to investigate the full life cycle of bird species has been limited by our capacity to monitor and follow individuals once they have left the breeding grounds. The continued miniaturization and technological improvements of tracking devices is beginning to change this deficiency. Geographic positioning system (GPS) tags can provide year-round locations for an individual bird. These tags communicate with the GPS satellite system to acquire a bird's location and then transmit these locations to us via the ARGOS satellite systems. These GPS tags require a powerful battery and are currently best-suited for larger

continued on next page

bodied bird species such as Upland Sandpiper. Light-level geolocators, however, are now small enough to safely attach to small passerines like Grasshopper Sparrows. Light-level geolocators contain a light sensor that estimates a bird's location based on the duration and timing of solar features (e.g., day length and sunrise). These light-level geolocators store the daily locations of a bird within the device — they do not have the capability of transmitting these locations over a satellite system. To obtain these location data, therefore, one must recapture a bird and download the data.

Over the next couple of years we will be deploying GPS tags on Upland Sandpipers and light-level geolocators on male Grasshopper Sparrows at six DOD installations across the country, including Camp Ripley. We may deploy geolocators on Eastern Meadowlarks starting in 2016. By tagging birds across the country we hope to gain insight into regional population connectedness. For example, do the Upland Sandpipers that breed in Minnesota and Massachusetts have similar migration routes through Central America and over-wintering areas in South America?

In addition to deploying geolocators, we will be marking their legs with a unique color band combination. These color band combinations allow us researchers to identify individual birds without having to recapture them, but in our study they will also alert us to the presence of a geocator on that bird. We must recapture these tagged individuals in subsequent years to obtain the location data stored within the geocator that sits on their lower back. While some Grasshopper Sparrows return to the same breeding territory each year, others may shift their territories by several kilometers. Recapturing the Grasshopper Sparrows that return to Camp Ripley in subsequent years will require diligent searching of our research plots and the surrounding grassland areas. Beginning in 2016, we will be commencing a large-scale outreach to citizen scientists and birders to help us locate and recapture color-banded male Grasshopper Sparrows, so stay tuned for more information. If you are interested more in this project, feel free to contact me, Jason Hill, at jhill@vtcostudies.org. Hopefully we will run into some of you out there this May in the Camp Ripley area. You can read more about our grassland research projects at <http://vtcostudies.org/projects/grasslands/grassland-bird-conservation/>.

Jason Hill, Ph.D, is a Quantitative Ecologist at the Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE) in Norwich, Vermont, an independent research group that promotes wildlife conservation across the Americas using the combined strength of scientific research and citizen engagement. From Canada to South America, from mountains to grasslands, VCE biologists study and protect birds, insects, amphibians, and other wildlife.

Birds Flying High over the Great Lakes Have a New Strategic Plan

by Allison Mills

Every year many bird researchers catch warblers, finches, thrushes, and more feathered travelers to better understand their routes and migration patterns. A number of conservation initiatives seek to secure land to help species make their trek thousands of miles southward. But without a collective vision, these efforts may not be enough to help birds in the Great Lakes region.

Amber Roth, a research assistant professor in the School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science at Michigan Technological University, is working on that vision. Along with partners around the Great Lakes, Roth oversees the Midwest Landbird Migration Monitoring Network and has helped develop a strategic plan to dovetail research and conservation.

“Our goal is to work on coordination, to focus on big picture questions that we have regionally and try to bring people together,” Roth says.

“There are win-win opportunities with recovering sites that are degraded,” she says of the many old industrial and commercial sites along Great Lakes shores. But smaller, backyard restoration is also important for making better migration corridors and habitat for birds. “Even if you think, ‘Oh, I have hardly any yard,’ it’s amazing the difference one little yard can make. This is something everyone can participate in.”

Identifying conservation project areas is something Roth hopes to develop through the strategic plan’s network. Additional questions could include looking into airspace heavily used in migration, quantifying the impacts of land-use on forest birds, and establishing research protocols. Roth admits that the list is long, so “we want to key into a few questions that we want to answer as a region.”

So far the network is working with 18 partners and hopes to expand over the next several years. Anyone interested in joining the network can view the strategic plan on the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership here: <http://midwestbirdmonitoring.ning.com/group/mwlandbirdmigration/page/mlmmn-strategic-action-plan>.

Savaloja Grants

by Steve Wilson

At their March 16 meeting, the MOU Board awarded \$12,800 in Savaloja grants, a record amount thanks to the generosity of MOU members and supporters who responded to last year's Savaloja challenge match. The grants are named for Terry Savaloja, a respected Minnesota birder and T.S. Roberts Award recipient who died in 1992. Savaloja grants support projects that increase our understanding of birds, promote preservation of birds and their natural habitats, or increase public interest in birds. This year's grant recipients include eight diverse projects:

Audubon MN (St. Paul) received \$1960 to provide scholarships to Flying Wild workshops for educators working in urban low-income and minority areas. The intent is to encourage the integration of bird education and conservation activities into the school curriculum in an engaging, successful, and academically purposeful manner.

Carpenter Nature Center (Hastings) received \$575 to support a Northern Saw-whet and Long-eared owl banding program.

Harambee Elementary School (Maplewood) received \$2580 for a program that uses birds as an integrating theme in teaching disparate disciplines. The grant will allow students to remain in the program for two consecutive grades (2nd and 3rd), rather than just the second grade, which was funded by a Savaloja grant last year.

Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory (Duluth) was granted \$625 to cover part of the stipend needed to hire a count trainee for this fall's migration.

Interfaith Outreach and Community Partners (Plymouth) received \$2690 for a pilot program that will encourage seniors in a low-income neighborhood to become involved in birding activities. The program, which will provide binoculars and develop bird habitat near feeders and observation benches, is expected to reach up to 50 adults. If successful, they'll look to expand it to six additional neighborhoods.

Sarah Knutie (Hubbard and Clearwater counties) was awarded \$1600 to start long-term research on Tree Swallow and Eastern Bluebird behavioral and immune system defenses against nest parasites. It's an elegantly designed study and promises to answer both basic and sophisticated questions in host-parasite co-evolution and ecology and, more specifically, host defenses. She will also create a bird-parasite education toolbox for use with local schools.

Three Rivers Park District (Minneapolis) received \$2100 to purchase 28 pairs of binoculars to facilitate birding ac-

tivities for children and adults at two education centers: Kroening Interpretive Center in North Mississippi Regional Park in North Minneapolis and West Coon Rapids Dam Visitor Center in Brooklyn Park.

Wood Lake Nature Center (Richfield) received \$400 to support their second annual Friends of Wood Lake Big Day Birdathon. As part of this fun and educational family event, the grant will pay for a Raptor Center demonstration.

Savaloja Committee members Ann Kessen, Steve and Jo Blanich, Pam Perry, Mike North, and Chuck Neil worked diligently, sifting through the dozen proposals received, to craft the above recommendations for the board. But it's you, MOU members, who allow MOU to support these wonderful projects by stepping forward and donating. It's not too early to build on, or join in, that tradition by sending a contribution for Savaloja grants to MOU now, or going to the MOU web page and donating online.

Savaloja Grants, 2016 Individuals or organizations who are undertaking projects in Minnesota like those mentioned above may submit grant applications to the MOU for the 2016 grant cycle. Application information may be obtained by emailing grants@moumn.org or visiting the MOU web page at <http://moumn.org/grants.html>. The deadline for receipt of grant applications is January 31, 2016.

New Book Highlights Minnesota State Parks

by Harland Hiemstra (DNR)

The Minnesota DNR, in partnership with noted ornithologist and avid birder Bob Janssen, has recently published a new book highlighting state parks as a great place to observe the wide variety of birds that occur in Minnesota.

"Birds of Minnesota State Parks" divides the state into four ecological sections or biomes, providing detailed information on the parks in each one, including what kinds of birds are likely to be seen there and recommendations on where one can find them. It includes park maps, photos, and insights from the author. The book, which retails for \$19.95, can be ordered from Minnesota's state bookstore, <http://www.comm.media.state.mn.us/bookstore/mnbookstore.asp>. It also will be available at Minnesota state parks that have a nature store. A list of those parks can be found at http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/nature_stores.html.

More than 400 different species of birds have been spotted at one time or another in Minnesota and about 300 of the 315 regularly occurring bird species in the state have been recorded in state parks. Most Minnesotans live within half an hour of a state park.

MOU Calendar



MRVAC BIRDWATCHING TREKS

May 2: 8:00 a.m., Bloomington Visitor Center, MVNWR. Craig Mandel, leader.

May 4: 8:00 a.m., Rapids Lake Unit, MVNWR. Craig Mandel, leader.

May 7–8: SE Minnesota Birding Days, meet in Caledonia, 6 a.m., May 7th. Craig Mandel, leader. Cost: \$25/\$35

May 9: Hok-Si-La Park, 7:30 a.m. Part of the MRVAC Warbler Weekend. Steve Weston, leader.

May 11: 7:00 a.m., Carver Park Reserve. Craig Mandel, leader.

May 16: 8:30 a.m., Ritter Farm Park, Lakeville. Jay Miller, leader.

May 30: 8:30 a.m., Louisville Swamp, MVNWR. George Skinner, leader.

June 1: 7:00 a.m., Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve. Craig Mandel, leader.

June 6: 8:30 a.m., Rapid Lake Unit, MVNWR Education Center. George Skinner, leader.

June 7: 7:00 a.m., Dakota County Prairie Birds, Schaar's Bluff. Steve Weston, Leader.

June 14: 7:00 a.m., Cannon River Bottoms. Steve Weston, Leader.

June 25–26: Maplewood State Park, meet at 6 a.m. in Pelican Rapids. Craig Mandel, leader. Cost: \$25/\$35.

THREE RIVERS PARKS TRIPS

Information: www.threeriversparks.org

May 2: Spring Birding Along the Mississippi, 9:00–11:00 a.m., Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park

May 6, 13: Spring Bird Hikes, 6:00–7:30 p.m., Silverwood Park.

May 9: Adult Bird Hike, 7:00–10:00 a.m., Eastman Nature Center. Reservations required. Cost: \$5.

May 16, June 20: Bird Banding Programs, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m., Lowry Nature Center

May 16: Bird Banding at Eastman, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m., Eastman Nature Center.

May 17, June 14: Raptors in the Yard, 2:00–4:00 p.m., Lowry Nature Center.

AUDUBON CHAPTER OF MINNEAPOLIS TRIPS

May 5: Bird Habitat and the Mississippi River

Details: Tim Schlagenhaft, Red Wing Community Conservation Coordinator, Audubon Minnesota. Audubon Minnesota's work on bird habitat on the Mississippi River. 7:00 p.m., Beth El Synagogue, St. Louis Park. Information: <http://audubonchapterofminneapolis.org/programs/>.

OTHER BIRDING EVENTS

May 2: Bird Banding Day, Maplewood Nature Center

Details: Drop-in program for adults and families, 9:30 a.m.–12:00 noon. Information: www.maplewoodnaturecenter.com or call 651-249-2170.

May 13, 20, 27: Warbler Wednesdays, Sax-Zim Bog

Organization: Friends of the Sax-Zim Bog

Details: Meet at the Welcome Center on Owl Avenue at 5:45 a.m. Register by emailing info@saxzim.org; include your cell phone number.

May 14–17, 2015: Detroit Lakes Festival of Birds

Details: Featuring authors with spring book releases — Carrol Henderson and Bob Janssen, *Birds of the Minnesota State Parks*, and Paul Baicich and Carrol Henderson, *Bird Feeding in America*. Keynote presenter is professional photographer Melissa Groo from Ithaca, NY. Also Sparrow Workshop by Doug Buri and overnight field trip to Manitoba. New headquarters — Detroit Mountain Recreation Area. www.visitdetroitlakes.com/events/festival-of-birds.

May 16: Year of the Bird — Big Day

Organization: Anoka County Parks

Details: Morning bird walks: 6:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m., meet at Wargo Nature Center and bird Carlos Avery and Coon Lake; 7:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m., Mississippi West; 7:00–10:00 a.m., Rum River Central; and 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m., Coon Rapids Dam East. Afternoon activities at Coon Rapids Dam East, 12:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m. Evening bird walk at Bunker Hills, 7:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m. Information: 651-429-8007.

May 22–24: Bird Bonanza

Organization: MN DNR, St. Croix State Park

Details: Guests include Audubon Center of the North Woods (“Endangered Raptors”), Larry Weber (warblers), and Stan Tekiela (woodpeckers). Also bird banding, birding tech, the bird marathon count, photography contest, art contest, and bird house building. All programs, except bird house building, are free of charge. A Minnesota State Park vehicle permit is required for entrance. Fri, all day; Sat, 8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.; Sun, 7:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. Information & registration: 320-384-6615 or megan.johnsen@state.mn.us.

May 29–31: Northern Landscapes Festival

Organizations: North House Folk School, USFS Superior National Forest

Details: Boreal Field ID Workshop, all day May 29; Bird and Wildlife Photography in the Field, all day May 29; Birding By Ear, all day May 30. Featured presentation: *Birds of Minnesota State Parks*, by Bob Janssen, May 30, 7:30 p.m. Information: www.northhouse.org/programs/events/birdingfestival.htm, 218-387-9762, or 888-387-9762.

June 5–7: Birding Bonanza Weekend

Organization: Audubon Center, Sandstone

Details: Field trips led by seasoned guides, on-site workshops, bird banding sessions, a live raptor presentation. Friday keynote speaker is Dave Benson, “The World of Woodpeckers.” Saturday keynote speaker is Jackie Fallon, “The Midwest Peregrine Restoration Effort.” 4:00 p.m. Friday thru 1:00 p.m. Sunday. All-Inclusive Package — \$365/adult, double occupancy; \$295/adult, increased occupancy (3+); \$200/child with accompanying adult(s), ages 5–12 years. Commuter Package (no lodging — \$200/person. Information and registration: www.audubon-center.org, 888-404-7743 or 320-245-2648

June 27: Bog BioBlitz III, Sax-Zim Bog

Organization: Friends of the Sax-Zim Bog

Details: Go in the field with experts in birds, spiders, dragonflies, butterflies, wildflowers, orchids, and more. Bird trips will be at dawn (meet at Welcome Center at 5 a.m.) and other trips will depart at 8:00 a.m. An all-day event. Register with your preferred trip by emailing info@saxzim.org; include your cell phone number.

New MOU Members

J. Braun, *New Brighton, MN*
Joan Furlong, *St. Paul, MN*
Keith and Cathy Hanson, *Rochester, MN*
Timothy Lee, *Duluth, MN*
Linda Slagter, *Moorhead, MN*

Warren Nelson Memorial Bog on Blue Spruce Road

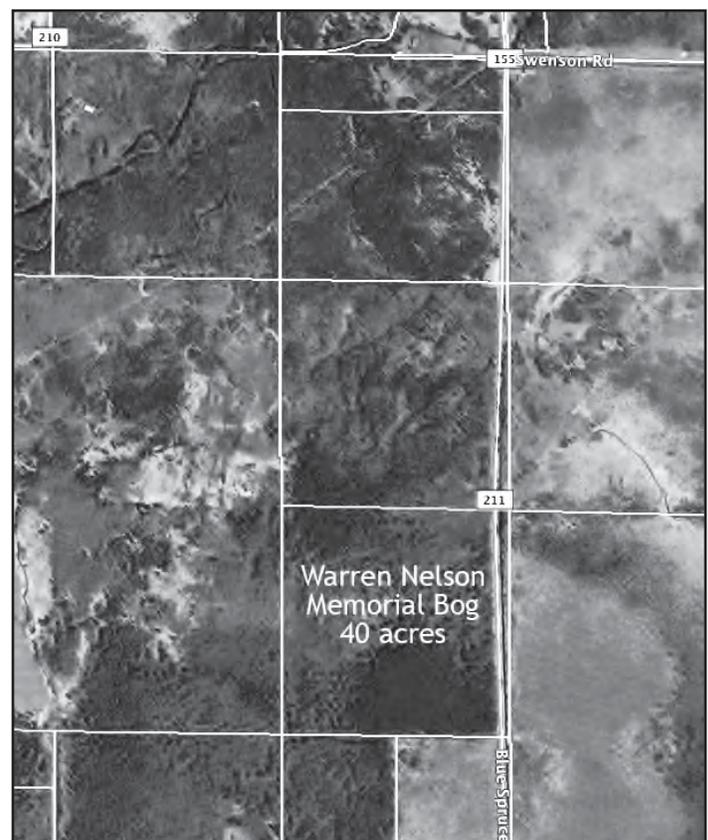
by Sparky Stensaas

The Warren Nelson Memorial Bog will be on Blue Spruce Road about a half mile north of county road 133. This is on a popular birding route and near the Morse’s winter feeders. Plans include a parking pad, natural history kiosk, memorial to Warren, and bird feeders. The entire property will be open and accessible to birders and other nature lovers to explore on foot or snowshoe.

With the generous \$5,000 MATCHING GIFT from one of Warren’s friends, Judd Brink of mnbackyardbirds.com, we hope to wrap up fundraising by mid-May. JUDD WILL MATCH EVERY DOLLAR YOU GIVE (up to \$5,000). With the financial support of the wonderful birding community and friends, the Warren Nelson Memorial Bog will be a reality before summer.

To donate, designate “Warren Nelson Land Fund” on checks made out to “Friends of Sax-Zim Bog” (mail to FO-SZB, PO Box 3585, Duluth, MN 55803) or online at www.givemn.org/organization/Foszb (look for the tab that says Warren Nelson Land Fund). Friends of Sax-Zim Bog is a 501c3 non profit organization and all donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

To date \$27,000 has been raised. Thank you to all who have generously contributed in Warren’s memory.



Minnesota Birder Bio: Linda Whyte

Born: Jackson Heights, Long Island, NY; raised mostly in rural SW CT (Redding, in Fairfield County)

Currently living: St. Paul, MN (over 35 years)

Occupation: retired St. Paul elementary school teacher; currently volunteer at the Raptor Center and Carpenter Nature Center

Serious about birding since: Around 2000. We've always been campers and hikers who enjoyed wildlife-watching. I think birds became a focus because they're so dependably observable, even in urban settings. Backyard bird-feeding probably would have hooked me into birding, even if camping and canoeing had not. As it was, raptors tipped the scale of interest. We began going on bird walks with St. Paul and Minnesota River Valley Audubon, became Audubon members, and eventually joined MOU as well.

Favorite bird or bird family: No single favorite, but I especially enjoy both raptors and warblers, and — I can't believe I'm saying this — I'm getting to enjoy sparrows and shorebirds more!

Favorite places to bird in Minnesota: Too many! I gravitate toward North Shore's boreal forest and Boundary Waters and also SE Bluff country, but I do enjoy Sax-Zim Bog and the Big Woods remnants and I'm beginning to appreciate open grasslands too. In general, I love to be around water bodies of any kind, especially rivers. I use park systems, Wildlife Management Areas, Scientific and Natural Areas, and nature center holdings frequently around the Metro area.

Favorite place to bird outside of Minnesota: There's something outside of Minnesota?! I'm kidding. I haven't traveled all that much, but hopefully in the near future I'll start traveling more. I've enjoyed the northern Rockies, the San Diego area, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan immensely.

Birding style (i.e. by yourself, with others, etc.): I do both. Going solo helps to focus on better observation and hone listening skills. I rely heavily on my ears to find birds and help identify them. But going with others gives the benefit



Linda Whyte. Photo by Rob Whyte

of extra eyes and ears, not to mention knowledge and skills. As long as the group isn't so large as to be disruptive, company can add a fun dimension. Hiking is definitely preferred over car-birding, though, with or without company.

Best advice on how to be a better birder: Hang out with accomplished birders, ask questions, seek advice — and then get out often to practice. I owe TONS to many wonderful birding mentors and buddies, starting with leaders of various Audubon walks. I also think that taking time to simply observe, long and hard, is important. After all, accomplished birders who came before our time didn't have access

to all the amazing technology we have today and still managed to learn a lot. Good binoculars and a decent field guide give you all you need to start; adding some audio training and a scope will advance you, too, especially if you use them to fine-tune observation.

The main attraction or joy of birding for you: Immersing myself in any piece of nature gets me out of myself and the stresses of daily living, sparks curiosity, gives me motivation for healthy exercise, offers aesthetic pleasures of sight and sound. Sharing it with others is fun, too. I especially like introducing kids and brand-new birders to birding and to places I've enjoyed; they often help me look at things with new eyes, so to speak.

Interests/hobbies when you're not birding: Volunteering: Raptor Center (Tuesday AM clinic and Transport and Rescue crews), raptor and critter care at Carpenter Nature Center, bird-banding at Carpenter and elsewhere, leading occasional bird walks or doing surveys, camping, writing poetry. Some birders list, others do photography; I often memorialize birding experiences, or birds themselves, in poems.

What new bird you would like to see the most: No specific goal at the moment, though I still have a slightly obsessive interest in birds that are blue, any shade of blue. (I still get delighted by Indigo Buntings and Eastern Bluebirds, for example). I hope to travel to New Zealand — where our daughter now lives — and see some of the penguins she has helped monitor and band. But any species can be a source of amazement and pleasure.

Phenology Corner: Marsh Music

by Bob Dunlap

May is no doubt the most magical month for birders. In Minnesota it is the month in which we see the peak of spring songbird migration, highlighted by those gems of neotropical migrants we know as wood-warblers. If the habitat is just right, shorebirds can rival warbler fall-outs in terms of attracting the binocular-equipped masses and a Western Tanager coming to an orange feeder in a suburban backyard will likewise draw eager crowds. But if you're one of those birders who tires of warbler neck, squinting through spotting scopes, or waiting in someone's backyard (sometimes for hours) for one lousy bird to show itself, then have I got just the advice you need: sit back, relax, and listen to the music.

Marsh music, that is. While many of the marsh birds sought after by birders are rather skulky and difficult to see, most of these birds are quite vocal, which means we know they're present when they sing or call. And this is a key difference between marsh birds and other groups like warblers and shorebirds; patience is required to actually see them. So on a nice, warm evening in May, find a nearby wetland with a thick edge of cattails, set up a folding chair, and chill out.

While the majority of these marsh birds return in April, by May the marshes really come alive with the sound of [bird] music. Soras and Virginia Rails, in particular, aggressively whinny and grunt, respectively, as they stake out their territories in the cattails. Birders skilled in the art of imitating bird calls can actually entice these two species to approach their sitting spots, as the birds will readily challenge the source of the sound and come within feet of the observer. (A recording works equally well, but don't over-stress the birds since they should be focusing on competing with each other and not you.) The song of Marsh Wrens — sometimes likened to the mechanical rhythm of a sewing machine — can be a ubiquitous sound in some marshes and "pishing" will often draw the little birds within sight if you're having trouble spotting them. The same can be said for Swamp Sparrows, whose slow trills add a sweet temperament to a myriad of wetlands throughout the state, as well as Common Yellowthroats whose "witchity-witchity-witchity" songs become increasingly abundant as the month progresses.

Yellow-headed Blackbirds — marsh breeders mostly in southern and western Minnesota — add a bit of their own raucous, grinding notes amongst the more familiar

"konk-a-ree" calls of Red-winged Blackbirds. Thankfully the males like to perch near the tops of vegetation and frequently make display flights, showcasing their bright yellow heads and white wing patches. Hidden from view unless open water is present, Pied-billed Grebes emphatically give their loud, drawn-out series of high notes followed by low gulps. High above, visible only as dots against the evening sky, male Wilson's Snipes can be heard winnowing as they perform their aerial courtship flights.



Yellow-headed Blackbird.
Photo by Bob Dunlap

Near sundown, the low, pumping sounds made by American Bitterns resonate through marshes. While the birds breed mostly in the northern half of the state, a lucky observer in southern Minnesota might get the chance to play audience to this cryptic marsh dweller as it passes through during the first half of the month. During the second half of May, its smaller cousin, the Least Bittern, can be heard in the same marsh, giving its low, cuckoo-

like call. Brief glimpses of these birds can eventually be obtained as they fly short distances over the marsh grasses.

And if you're one of the hard-to-please birders, the marsh may even include some surprise performances, albeit likely without offering looks at its unexpected songsters.

Especially in southern Minnesota, listen for the descending laugh of a Common Gallinule; this rare but regular Minnesota breeder is often found in the same marshes as Least Bitterns. After sundown in northern Minnesota, and very rarely in southern Minnesota during the first half of May, listen for the distinctive calls of Yellow Rails, particularly if the marsh has a sedgy quality to it. The call of this most secretive marsh dweller is often likened to the sound made when repeatedly tapping two pebbles together. Finally, if you've been gifted with a keen ear, try to see if you can pick out the extremely high-pitched hiss of a Nelson's Sparrow. While these birds breed very locally in north-central and northwest Minnesota, they can occur statewide in marshes during migration in May.

In addition to encore performances occurring throughout the month of June, perhaps the best thing about listening to marsh music is that you won't be disappointed. Because even if you don't end up seeing any of the marsh birds, you're guaranteed to hear at least some of them. That is something you can't say about waiting for that silent Western Tanager that may or may not still be present (but you'll give it just another hour anyway in case it shows up).



Minnesota Ornithologists' Union

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The Mission of the M.O.U.

We foster the study and conservation of birds by amateurs and professionals. We promote the conservation of birds and their natural habitats. We support these aims primarily by publishing and sharing information, by serving as a repository for records, by conducting field trips, by awarding grants for research, and by supporting programs that educate members and the public about birds.

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Please make a contribution to the Savaloja Grants

The Savaloja Grants supports research and other projects selected by the MOU for special attention. Your contributions help fund a better future for birds in Minnesota. You can add a contribution to your membership check.

Amount: \$ _____