

1999

BIRDATHON

**AMOS W. BUTLER
MEN'S TEAM**

ANNUAL REPORT

**BY
STEVE PANCOL**

Copyright 2003 Steve Pancol: This document is the property of Steve Pancol. It is intended for personal use only. The publication of this document in any electronic or print media is strictly prohibited.

Introduction

The spring of 1998 was perhaps the most disasterous spring for Indiana birders in many years. Two weeks of real hot weather in May and with no significant fronts moving through, birders were hard pressed to find passerines at any time during the month. Because of the hot weather, ducks left the state early and rains left our favorite shorebird sites too flooded for ideal habitat. After last year's lackluster Birdathon, I decided the Birdathon of 1999 was going to be our best ever. I just had to figure out how to do it.

To have a successful Big Day, or Birdathon, you must focus on two areas:

1. Scouting- at least 3 or 4 days of scouting were needed to find mudflats with shorebirds on them. Lakes and ponds needed to be scouted for lingering waterfowl. Nesting species, already on territory, needed to be staked out along the Big Day route.

2. Weather / Timing - A flexible week was set up so that the Birdathon could be held on any one of seven days. If a southern front moved through the area, we could take advantage of the migratory fallout produced by this front by doing the Birdathon on the following day. This flex week also eliminates the possibility of doing the Birdathon on a day with high winds, or being rained out.

I started working on the Birdathon in February. Working with Jeff McCoy and Ken Brock of the "Starling Team", we began to coordinate a scout week, a joint effort between the two teams. Ken Brock would be responsible for scouting the lakefront region. Jeff McCoy and Steve Pancol would cover Porter, Lake, Newton and Benton counties.

Mother Nature must have felt guilty about punishing Indiana birders in the spring of 1998 because she really rewarded us in 1999. The spring of 1999 will go down as one of the best spring migrations in 20 years. This was evident early on as Dr. Jim Hengeveld's Big Day Team from Bloomington checked off 176 species in early May, tying the state record held by Ken Brock's Starling Team. The Bloomington Team started in Evansville and worked their way north to Lake Michigan. This strategy was appropriate for early May, as most migrating passerines are still in the southern part of the state. The early May date also means there is a greater probability of finding lingering waterfowl in the northern part of the state.

Jeff McCoy and I started scouting on Thursday, May 13. It was a good scouting day and many hard to get birds were pinned down. I also logged a lifer that day, a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. That night we called Ken Brock from the motel room to give him a scouting report. The weather had taken a turn for the worse, as both Sunday and Monday had rain in the forecast. Saturday, however, was suppose to be sunny, windless and in the mid 70's. A perfect day!!! Emergency phone calls were made and all members of the Starling Team agreed to do their "Big Day" on Saturday, May 15, 1999, instead of Sunday or Monday.

Our scouting effort, cut short by 2 days, had to be sacrificed for the one day opportunity that birders dream about. The most perfect Big Day of the century.

We scouted till 4:00 P.M. Friday and then headed to Ken Brock's home to prepare for Saturday's Big Day. I would go along as an observer, following them in my GMC Sonoma pickup. It was a wild ride!!! Following Ken Brock through the urban and commercial sprawl of the Chicago region was a difficult task. By the end of the day, the Starling Team had made Indiana history by logging 188 species, a new state record not likely to ever be broken.

The Amos W. Butler Men's Team was unable to do their Birdathon on Saturday, so we elected to do it on Monday. Monday was a big risk as rain was in the forecast. If it rained all day, there would be an extremely low species count. On the other hand, if the thunderstorm was brief and with winds powerful enough to force birds down, we could benefit from a migratory fallout. We were lucky. The storm was brief and the winds severe, giving us our most valuable bird, the Marbled Godwit. In addition, most all of the species that were pinned down the previous week, still remained.

The Amos W. Butler Men's Team would also have a record breaking "Big Day" in one of the best migratory springs in Indiana history. The 170 species they were able to find is still an Amos W. Butler Birdathon record high total (as of 9/10/03). Why? Why did such a wonderful spring migration occur? Certainly the numbers of each individual species is down from ten years ago. I don't see how anybody can argue that. The destruction of habitat both here and on the wintering grounds of migrating passerines, will continue to take it's toll. This spring did not necessarily bring significant numbers of each species, but, they were there to be counted.

First of all, rains in late April and early May created perfect water levels at known, strategic shorebird sites. Conditions in our state were not at flood level, nor were they too dry to deny shorebirds a place to rest and feed. Remember the spring of 1998, when Pine Creek Gamebird Habitat Area was completely under water the whole month of May? Secondly, May of 1999 was cooler than May of 1998. This probably slowed the migration of waterfowl to allow us to list lingering species.

Thirdly, the cooler May slowed passerine migration to a more normal pace. My theory about the May of 1998 is that the hot, windless weather accelerated migration, causing migrants to bypass Indiana, flying directly to their nesting grounds.

THE STARLING TEAM

- 1. Ken Brock**
- 2. Jim Haw**
- 3. John Cassady**
- 4. Scott Jackson**
- 5. Ed Hopkins**
- 6. Jeff McCoy**

AMOS W. BUTLER MEN'S TEAM

- 1. Alfred (Bud) Starling**
- 2. Carl Weber**
- 3. Bob Buskirk**
- 4. Steve Pancol**

BIRDATHON ITINERARY

MAY 17, 1999

1. COWLES BOG: PORTER COUNTY

2:45 A.M. – 4:00 A.M. 1 Hour, 15 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Take S.R. 49 north to S.R. 20 and turn left (west). Take S.R. 20 west to Mineral Springs Road. Turn right (north) on Mineral Springs Road. Stop 50 yards south of the Dune Acres guard shack. Listen here for marsh birds and owls, playing tapes.

2. TO MOUNT BALDY: PORTER COUNTY

4:10 A.M. – 4:45 A.M. 35 minutes

DIRECTIONS: From Cowles Bog, take Mineral Springs Road south to S.R. 12. Turn left (east) on S.R. 12. Follow S.R. 12 east to the brown Mount Baldy sign. Park just outside the locked gates at Mount Baldy. Play a Chuck-wills-Widow tape and listen for marsh birds and owls.

3. TO MICHIGAN CITY HARBOR: LAPORTE COUNTY

4:55 A.M. – 5:40 A.M. 45 minutes

DIRECTIONS: From Mount Baldy, take S.R. 12 east to Michigan City. Turn left (north) on Pine Street. Turn right on Lakeshore Drive. Turn left into Washington Park. Scan the harbor for shorebirds, ducks and passerines coming off the lake. Walk west to the harbor light catwalk. Scan the breakwall and lake.

4. TO BEVERLY SHORES: PORTER COUNTY

5:45 A.M. – 6:10 A.M. 25 minutes

DIRECTIONS: From Washington Park at Michigan City Harbor, drive south to Michigan Boulevard. Turn right (west) on Michigan Boulevard (S.R. 12). Veer right onto Beverly Drive. Drive slowly and listen for marsh birds and passerines. Turn left on Carolina Avenue. Stop at an old abandon house and look for Eastern Phoebe and other migrating passerines. Make a U-turn and return north on Carolina. Turn left (west) on Beverly Drive. Turn right (north) on St. Clair Avenue. Turn left on Idler Avenue. Turn left on Constance Avenue. Turn right on Beverly Drive. Turn right on Broadway. Turn left on Lakeshore Drive (heading west). Turn right into the 2nd lakefront viewing area parking lot. Scan the lake for

waterfowl, terns and loons. Continue west on Lakeshore Drive. Veer left on State Park / Kemil Road. Stop at the first house on the left and listen for Prairie Warbler. Continue south on State Park Road. Turn left at Beverly Drive. Drive east about 100 yards and park where a house has been leveled (unsettled earth). Scan the marsh to the north for Moorhen and Pied-billed Grebe. Listen for any missed marsh birds and ducks.

5. TO FURNESSVILLE: PORTER COUNTY

6:22 A.M. – 6:30 A.M. 8 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Make a U-turn and continue west on Beverly Drive. Turn left (south) at State Park Road. Go across S.R. 12. Turn right at Furnessville Road, or where the School House Shop sign is. Furnessville Road is not marked here. Turn left on C.R. 200 E.. Park at the brown walking trail signs about 50 yards south. Work the trails on both sides of the road for Hooded and Blue-winged Warbler.

6. TO DUNES STATE PARK: PORTER COUNTY

7:00 A.M. – 7:45 A.M. 45 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Make a U-turn and head back north on C.R. 200 E.. Turn left on Furnessville Road. Turn left on S.R. 12 (going west). Turn left onto the S.R. 49 exit. Turn left (north) on S.R. 49. Once inside the Indiana Dunes State Park, turn right at the second road, which leads to the campground. Turn left at Wilson's Shelter and park in the northwest corner near the trail head. Walk north on the trail and bird the Marsh Boardwalk. Listen for Prothonotary Warbler. Then, walk to the end of the main park road. The end of trail 2 is here. Walk Trail 2 for a 100 yards and listen for nesting Red-shouldered Hawk and Louisiana Waterthrush.

7. TO PORT OF INDIANA / HERON ROOKERY: PORTER COUNTY

7:50 A.M. – 7:55 A.M. 5 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Leaving the state park, drive south on S.R. 49. Turn right onto the S.R. 12 exit. Turn left (west) on S.R. 12. Turn left onto exit # 249 / Port of Indiana. At the end of the exit ramp, view the Heron Rookery directly south on the left side of S.R. 249. Look for Great Egrets.

8. TO MILLER BEACH: LAKE COUNTY

8:10 A.M. – 8:20 A.M. 10 minutes

DIRECTIONS: From the Port of Indiana, turn left (west) on S.R. 12. Turn left at the DAV-CON sign you will see on the left hand side of the road (you will also see

an AMERICAN BRIDGE sign). Turn right at the Miller Dunes Legion Post. Turn right at Grand Boulevard, going through Marquette Park. Veer right at the park statue. Turn left at Montgomery Street. Turn left at Oak Avenue. Stop at Marquette Shelter and scan the lake and beach.

9. TO CLAY STREET WETLANDS: LAKE COUNTY

8:30 A.M. – 9:10 A.M. 40 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Turn right (west) on Oak Avenue from the Marquette Beach Concession Stand and Shelter. Turn south on Grand Avenue. Veer left at the T-section (Hobart Road). Turn right (west) on S.R. 20. Turn left (north) on South Lake Street. Turn right at the dead end (15th Avenue). Turn left on Clay Street. You will go past the Illiana Disposal and Recycling Plant on your left hand side of the road. Park and scan the wetlands. When you are finished, do a U-turn and head back north on Clay Street. Turn right at the Recycling Center. Follow the dirt road east until it veers right (south). Go south about 75 yards and view the same wetlands from the opposite side.

10. TO JEORSE PARK: LAKE COUNTY

9:15 A.M. – 9:30 A.M. 15 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Leaving the Clay Street Wetlands, turn right (north) on Clay Street. Turn left on 15th Avenue. Do a U-turn by the I-65 Ramp sign and take the I-90 Entrance Ramp. Take exit # 262 – Toll Road 90 Ill. / Ohio. Veer right at Exit # 262. Veer right and take I-90 west to Chicago. Turn right at Exit # 10 / Cline Avenue. Turn right on S.R. 912 North. Veer left and take S.R. 912 North / Cline Avenue Exit. Turn right on Exit # 5 C / Jeorse Park / Pastrick Marina. Turn right at Harrah's Casino and go around the casino building. Scan the lake and beach for shorebirds and waterfowl.

11. TO LAKE GEORGE WOODLOT: LAKE COUNTY

9:55 A.M. – 10:45 A.M. 40 minutes

DIRECTIONS: From the Harrah's Casino, turn left at the 4-way stop in front of the casino. Veer right and take S.R. 912 north to Chicago. Exit right on S.R. 41 / Calumet Avenue. Turn right (north) on S.R. 41. Turn right on 125th Avenue (Lake George). Turn right (south) on Merlini Drive. Park at 126th and Merlini Drive. Bird the Lake George Woodlot.

12. TO WHITING PARK: LAKE COUNTY

10:55 A.M. – 11:35 A.M. 40 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Make a U-turn and head back north on Merlini Drive. Turn left on 125th Street. Turn right on Calumet Avenue. Turn left on 119th Street. Bird Forsythe Park and Wolf Lake as you drive through. Take the park road around the baseball diamonds and continue driving along the canal. Turn right at the Lever Brothers Plant (dead end). Go to the stop sign and turn north, toward the Lever Brothers smoke stack (a big red building called Vogel's is here). At Indianapolis Boulevard, turn right. Continue straight and do not turn right at Calumet Avenue. Turn left at Roberts Avenue. Take the next immediate right, which is 117th Street. 117th Street takes you north into Whiting Park. Veer left after the R.R. Tracks and into Whiting Park. Turn left into the parking lot. Bird the wall and check the trees and flower beds.

13. TO GRANT STREET WETLANDS: LAKE COUNTY

11:45 A.M. – 12:01 P.M. 15 minutes

DIRECTIONS: From Whiting Park, drive south on 117th Street. Turn left on Robert's Avenue (the dead end at the red building). Take the next immediate right on Indianapolis Boulevard. You are now going north on S.R. 41, passing the Levers Borthers Plant. Veer left at the exit 290 East sign (in front of the Skyway Shell). Turn left at the Skyway Shell. Turn right on State Line Road (a 4-way stop). Turn right at the KFC sign. Take exit # 80 / 90 / 94 Toll Road, turning right. Immediately after the toll plaza, pull over to the right and scan the marsh to the west for Yellow-headed Blackbird. Wait for the birds to fly over to the Indiana side. Continue south on I – 90. Take exit # 3, East Cline Avenue. Take I – 80 / 94 East (Gary Exit-Motel 6). Now going east on I – 94. Take Grant Street / Exit # 9A. At 32nd Avenue, pull off into the gravel parking lot. Bird the wetlands to the west of 32nd Street.

14. TO CHASE STREET WETLANDS: LAKE COUNTY

12:05 P.M. – 12:25 P.M. 20 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Continue going south on Grant Street. Turn right at 35th Avenue. At the T-section of 35th Avenue and Chase Street, continue west across this T-section and take the dirt road into the flooded fields. Bird the wetlands at 35th Avenue and Chase Street.

15. To ENOS – PRAIRIE CHICKEN REFUGE: NEWTON COUNTY **1:25 P.M. – 1:40 P.M.** **15 minutes**

DIRECTIONS: From the Chase Street Wetlands, go east on 35th Avenue. Go across Broadway. Turn right at Martin Luther King (MLK) Drive (Gary Career Center Sign). Turn left at Ridge Road. Take I – 65 south (Indianapolis exit). Veer right at the S.R. 10 Exit. Turn right (west) on S.R. 10. Turn left on Meridian Road (a few miles past S.R. 55). Turn right on C.R. 800 N. Turn left on C.R. 200 W. (T-section). Pull over at the State Refuge sign and listen for Bell's Vireo, Blue Grosbeak, Dickcissel and Grasshopper Sparrow (C.R. 200 W. / C.R. 600 N.). Continue south on C.R. 200 W. Turn left on C.R. 250 N. (T-section). Pass the high school and bird the woods 75 yards past the high school. Look for Upland Sandpiper on the north side of the road. Turn around and head back west on C.R. 250 N. Turn left at C.R. 200 W. Turn right at C.R. 225 N. (elbow to the right). Turn left at C.R. 250 W. Look for Bobolinks in the pasture on the left. Turn around and head back north on C.R. 250 W. Turn left at C.R. 225 N. Turn right on S.R. 41. Turn left on C.R. 400 N. Stop at the grassy hill on the left side of the road and search for Upland Sandpiper. Continue west on C.R. 400 N. and turn right on C.R. 400 W. Stop at the grassy hill on the left and search for Upland Sandpiper.

16. TO WILLOW SLOUGH F.W.A.: NEWTON COUNTY **1:55 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.** **2 hours 5 minutes**

DIRECTIONS: Turn around and head back south on C.R. 400 W. Turn left on C.R. 400 N. (going east). Turn right (south) on S.R. 41. Turn right on C.R. 100 N. (at the S.R. 14 sign). Go 1 mile and pull over at the sandy dunes and look for Lark Sparrow. Continue west on C.R. 100 N. and pull over 50 yards past Old Orchard Road. Listen for Turkey at the woodland edge. Continue west on C.R. 100 N. and turn right into Parking Area 9. Listen for Turkeys and sparrows. Continue west on C.R. 100 N. and turn right on C.R. 600 W. (T-section). Turn right into Parking Area 5D. Look for Lark Sparrow. Leaving Parking Area 5D, go south on C.R. 600 W. Turn right on C.R. 100 N. (T-section). Turn left at Patrol Road. Pull into Parking Area 3A. Go to the dike west of the parking lot and listen for Henslow's Sparrow. Turn around and head back north on Patrol Road. Turn left on C.R. 100 (going west). Turn left at C.R. 700 W. (T-section). Turn left into the Willow Slough Headquarters. Pull into the parking lot next to the campgrounds and scan Murphy Lake with scopes. Walk west past the Headquarters and boat launch to the dam, at the far west side of the lake. Walk past the catwalk and veer left onto the widely mowed trail. Search the woods for passerines.

17. TO BIG PINE CREEK: WARREN COUNTY

5:00 P.M. – 5:40 P.M. 40 minutes

DIRECTIONS: From the Willow Slough Headquarters, go south on C.R. 700 W. (also C.R. 3200 E.). Turn left on C.R. 2950 N., going east on S.R. 114. Turn right (south) on S.R. 14. Turn left (east) at C.R. 600 S. Stop at the farm pond and search for American Golden Plovers. Turn around and head back west on C.R. 600 S. Turn left and go south on S.R. 41. Take exit # 52 / East Lafayette. Turn right on C.R. 200 W. Stop at Watland Gamebird Habitat Area and listen for Western Meadowlark. Turn right on C.R. 100 S. Turn left at S.R. 41 (south). Take S.R. 41 south past S.R. 26. Take exit 41 / South Attica. Turn left at Twin Bridges Road. Turn left at Pot Holes Road. Stop on the bridge and listen for passerines. Cross the bridge going north and turn right on Hogback Hill Road. Pull over at the small creek on the right hand side of the road and listen. Turn right at Hunter Hill Road (T-section). Pull over at Hunter Hill Road and Kramer Road and listen.

18. TO PINE CREEK GAMEBIRD HABITAT AREA: BENTON COUNTY 6:20 P.M. – 6:40 P.M. 20 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Continue east on Kramer Road. Stay on Kramer Road until it dead ends and turn left on C.R. 225 E. (T-section). Turn right on C.R. 250 N. Turn left at S.R. 55, heading north. Follow S.R. 55 through Pine Village. Turn right on C.R. 300 S. (at Benton Central Schools). Turn left on C.R. 600 E. Turn right on C.R. 100 N. Turn left on C.R. 850 E. Turn right on C.R. 200 N. Bird the Pine Creek Gamebird Habitat Area.

19. BACK TO WILLOW SLOUGH FWA: NEWTON COUNTY 7:30 P.M. – 10:00 P.M. 2 hours 30 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Turn around and head back west on C.R. 200 N. Turn right on C.R. 850 E. Turn left on C.R. 225 N. Turn left on C.R. 700 E. Turn right on C.R. 200 N. Turn right at Meridian Street (T-section). Turn left at C.R. 3500 N. Turn right on S.R. 52, which turns into S.R. 41. Turn left on S.R. 114. Turn right on West Street. Turn left on C.R. 275 S. Turn right on C.R. 400 W. Turn left on Pogue Road. Park at Parking Area 3A (Patrol Road at Pogue Road). Walk down to the marsh and look for Bitterns and Rails. Play the appropriate tapes. Walk back to your vehicle. Listen once more at the dike west of Parking Area 3A. Leaving Parking Area 3A, continue east on Pogue Road, stopping and playing owl tapes.

END OF BIG DAY

BIRDATHON DIARY

We awoke at 3:00 A.M. to start our Birdathon at the SUPER 8 MOTEL in Michigan City. Ken Brock would talk about Murphy's Law when discussing "Big Days", or Birdathons. Murphy's Law dictates that everything that can go wrong, will go wrong. This was the only time in the day that we actually fell victim to Murphy's Law. At 11:30 P.M., Bud Starling and Carl Weber got a wake up call. The motel clerk had mistakenly set their wake up call for 11:30 P.M., instead of 3:00 A.M. Both men took showers and prepared for the Birdathon without looking at their watches. When they realized what time it was, they quickly returned to their queen sized beds. It was too late. They couldn't get back to sleep, tossing and turning the rest of the night.

The first bird we heard as we were loading the Ford Explorer was a Common Nighthawk. Bud would say in hindsight later that this was an omen to a good day. It certainly was. Common Nighthawks have been declining in central Indiana in recent years and have been difficult to locate in past Birdathons. The Robin, typically our first bird to sing, came in third, followed by a Killdeer. We raced toward Cowles Bog as we were running a little late. We had never started at Cowles Bog before so I was a little apprehensive. The Dune Acres Guard was fast asleep in his locked guard shack, so we proceeded to bird the marsh without his knowledge of us being there.

COWLES BOG was very productive yielding 7 species. Marsh Wren, Red-winged Blackbird and Willow Flycatcher responded with song after hearing our Screech Owl tape. MOUNT BALDY, our next stop, would produce only a Yellow Warbler and Gray Catbird. The Chuck-will's-Widow eluded us once again, as we received no response from our Chuck tape. This did not surprise me as the Starling Team did not log this bird on their "Big Day", two days previous to our Birdathon. This was their first miss of the Chuck-will's-Widow in 4 or 5 years. It was a disappointment. We arrived at MICHIGAN CITY HARBOR at 5:00 A.M. The harbor, unproductive in previous Birdathons, provided us with a surprising 16 species. Our first bird here was a Barn Swallow, dive bombing us as we walked toward the Lighthouse Catwalk. We could hear a Black-bellied Plover singing on the beach as a Great Egret flew directly over our heads. Once at the catwalk, we scanned the Outer Breakwall. On the wall we found two bonus birds, Franklin's and Bonaparte's Gull.

With 29 birds under our belt at 5:30 A.M., we proudly drove toward Beverly Shores where we knew we would, "kick some butt"!!! BEVERLY SHORES has traditionally been our most productive area. This Birdathon was no exception. We logged 57 birds here. It went by so fast that I couldn't even begin to give you a "play by play". Tough to get birds here were Canada Warbler, Hairy Woodpecker, Cedar Waxwing, Mourning Warbler, White-crowned Sparrow, Red-headed Woodpecker, Wilson's Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Green Heron, Common Moorhen and Pied-billed Grebe. The highlight of Beverly Shores was probably the Prairie Warbler, which angrily perched in a tree directly over our heads. It did not appreciate the intrusion into its territory.

A new sight for us, FURNESSVILLE ROAD / C.R. 200 E., was added to the schedule by Ken Brock. Going down the trails on both sides of the road gave us the staked out Hooded Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Acadian Flycatcher. At 6:56 A.M., we had 89 species. INDIANA DUNES STATE PARK, our next stop, would also prove to be highly productive. Winding our way through the park, we could hear a Veery singing as we approached Wilson's Shelter. Prothonotary Warbler, a bird we missed here last year, could be heard from the parking lot before reaching the marsh boardwalk. The Marsh Boardwalk did not, however, produce the Kingfisher that I had hoped for. We walked a short distance on Trail 2 and nailed down the staked out Louisiana Waterthrush and a bonus bird, Gray-cheeked Thrush.

Our second disappointment (our first was the Chuck-will's Widow) of the day was upon us, as I could not locate the staked-out Red-shouldered Hawk's nest. We searched in vain but to no avail. With heads hung low, we proceeded to walk back to the Ford Explorer. Then came the distant cry of the Red-shouldered Hawk, proclaiming as we left, "get the hell out of my territory"!!! We searched in vain for the Winter Wren which was staked out at the beginning of Trail 2. It was gone. White-throated Sparrow was found by Bud on a brush pile. Another bonus bird sang out to us as we piled into the car, PINE WARBLER!! MILLER BEACH did not give us the Great-black-backed Gull or Common Loon we had hoped for, but did provide 3 species including a Forster's Tern and Bank Swallow. Forster's Tern was a welcome surprise, as all terns were absent during the scout week, with only Caspian as the exception.

CLAY STREET WETLANDS, a staked out, newly developed wetlands, made us feel like we were kids at Disneyworld. From Clay Street we logged; Dunlin, Blue-winged Teal, Pectoral Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, American Coot, Northern Shoveler, Lesser Yellowlegs, Least Sandpiper and American Pipit in an adjacent muddy field. Blackpoll Warbler was singing in a tree as we scanned the wetlands. On the east side of the wetlands we spotted Short-billed Dowitcher, Stilt Sandpiper and heard Wilson's Snipe. Many Savannah Sparrows were flushed. Bob Buskirk and I searched the wet grasses at the water's edge in vain for Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. The Sharp-tailed Sparrow was here last Thursday, providing me with Lifer # 466.

Another disappointment, but we knew it was probably a long shot. Once again, we climbed back into the Explorer with heads hung low, grieving over the missed Sharp-tailed Sparrow. While driving in reverse to leave Clay Street Wetlands, every bird in the marsh catapulted into the sky in tight formations. Across the wetlands streaked a very large, dark raptor with pointed wings. I screamed, PEREGRINE!!! We watched as the Peregrine Falcon flew to the south side of the marsh and after only one pass, landed at the top of a naked tree. He had chosen his throne!!! While the bird scanned the marsh to pick out his next meal, we watched and admired the fastest bird known to man.

Being the team referee and villain, I had to cut short my team member's observation of this most noble falcon. I was only scolded briefly. They knew that time is the most valuable asset a Birdathon Team has. It cannot be wasted!!!

At 9:08 A.M. we had 118 species. 18 species ahead of schedule. We knew it was going to be a special day. LAKE GEORGE WOODLOT was our next stop. On the way we logged a Rock Pigeon on Cline Avenue. There was nothing on Lake George, so we headed to the woodlot. A Magnolia Warbler was our first bird here, followed by a bonus bird, WORM-EATING WARBLER!!! It was seen by Bud Starling and heard by all, as it sang at least half a dozen times. Bob Buskirk found a female Black-throated Blue Warbler, our only one of the day. Bay-breasted Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Blue-headed Vireo gave us a total of 6 birds at this location.

The highlight of Lake George Woodlot was a bird we had already logged earlier in the day, Wilson's Warbler. There must have been 30 or more Wilson's Warblers at this location. Everyone agreed that it was the largest concentration of Wilson's Warbler they had ever seen. WOLF LAKE was uneventful as only two new birds, Rough-winged Swallow and the always present Mute Swans, were ticked off here. WHITING PARK, an excellent migrant trap, produced only a Lincoln's Sparrow and Yellow-billed Cuckoo. There was good reason for this. The winds had increased to about 25 miles per hour, making birding impossible.

The storm that had been forecasted finally caught up with us. Murphy's Law was rearing it's ugly head and lurking in our shadows. Was this the end to what could have been a record breaking Birdathon??? Severe winds and rain hit as we were leaving Whiting Park. Branches were falling in the streets as we were working our way back to Cline Avenue. Then a loud bang startled us when a branch struck the top of our Ford Explorer. Lucky for us, the thunderstorm was brief. By the time we got to the Grant Street Wetlands the storm had subsided. Dark clouds and brisk winds were still threatening, but we were still able to bird.

Our Birdathon would now take an ironic twist. This brief, but powerful storm had become our friend, sprinkling avian gems across our path. These birds shall be called storm birds. The definition of storm birds shall be: any bird forced to the ground by rain and high winds. Our first storm bird was found at the GRANT STREET WETLANDS. Bob Buskirk raced back to the Explorer and said, "get the scopes, I think there is a Snowy Egret out there". We set the scopes up and there it was, a yellow slippers Egret. The Snowy Egret was very obliging as it would lift each leg completely out of the water as it waded, so we could see it's yellow feet. I think it was showing off. With our first storm bird under our belt, we then headed to the CHASE STREET WETLANDS. The Chase Street Wetlands consists of two large, muddy fields.

We decided to bird the far west field first. I scanned the field with my binoculars first and didn't find anything. My instincts told me to set up my scope and take a closer look at the far side of the field. This is where spending \$1,600.00 on a Swarovski 80 HD paid off. On the other side of the field I found a Ruddy Duck at 60 power. After everyone got to view the Ruddy Duck, I continued to scan to the left. My scope then came across a large shorebird with a long upturned bill. I was grinning from ear to ear. It was a dream come true for any mid-western Birdathoner. To find a Godwit on your Birdathon. I yelled, "come here, Bud, I've got a Marbled Godwit!!! Bud raced over to the scope. He looked through the scope for the longest time. Bud was experiencing the best Birdathon of his life. But that

wasn't enough, because he was now looking at the very bird that sparked his interest in birding over 50 years ago.

It was truly a magical moment. He will probably never see this bird again in his lifetime. He reluctantly stepped away from the scope so other team members could view the Marbled Godwit. When all got satisfactory looks, I started to take down the scope. Bud said he wanted another look, so he stepped back up to the scope. I was going to tell him we were running late and there wasn't time, after all, it was a Birdathon. I decided not to risk my life and let him look for as long as he wished. Another long look as Bud was savoring the moment. We then proceeded to the next field, which was next to the road. We scanned the field with our scopes and came across a duck sitting just at the water's edge. It had two white spots on the side of its head.

We all looked at each other and were thinking the same thing. No way!! It can't be!!! I wasn't going to touch this one. Bud finally spoke up and said, "it's a Surf Scoter". As if the Marbled Godwit wasn't enough, we now had a Surf Scoter in a muddy field, totally out of its habitat. Up to now, our Birdathon had taken on a magical quality, with everything going right. But now we were in the Twilight Zone. Other bonus birds at this location were American Wigeon, Gadwall and Greater Yellowlegs. With 3 storm birds under our belt and 138 species in total, we headed south and away from the lakefront. It was 12:45 P.M.

In Newton County, PRAIRIE CHICKEN REFUGE was our next stop. The weather would no longer be our friend, as strong winds kept grassland species from singing and flying. We would have to work twice as hard for our birds here. Ken Brock warned me on Saturday that this is where the winds would hurt us. At the refuge, we logged Eastern Meadowlark, Dickcissel, Horned Lark, Vesper Sparrow and Bobolink. The winds denied us the Blue Grosbeak, Grasshopper Sparrow and Bell's Vireo that should have been easy to get here. The winds continued to punish us as we missed Upland Sandpiper at both of our staked out locations.

Lark Sparrows apparently don't like high winds either, as we could not locate one at the sandy riparian habitat that was staked out on C.R. 100. Was our luck running out at species # 144??? I had a strong desire to beat the old Amos W. Butler Men's Team record of 155 species. I was worried now that we would not break it. WILLOW SLOUGH was our next location. The high winds followed us there. Parking Area 9 failed to produce the turkey that had been singing there while scouting last Thursday. The momentum changed at Parking Area 5D, where we logged Orchard Oriole and Bobwhite. The dike at the intersection of Patrol and Pogue Road yielded a singing Henslow's Sparrow.

The next stop was MURPHY LAKE AT WILLOW SLOUGH, where we were eager to list the ducks we had staked out from last week's scouting. Wing dancing above the diamond studded surface of Murphy Lake were three different species of terns. The Forster's Tern we already had, but we exuberantly added Common and Black Tern to lengthen our list to 151. The Redhead, Ruddy Duck and Black Scoter that were on Murphy Lake Saturday, had disappeared. We did, however, see our second Surf Scoter of the day. After scanning Murphy Lake, we then birded the dam and woods bordering the west edge of the lake.

A Belted Kingfisher is the only bird we found here, as the winds kept passerines

grounded and quiet.

We left Willow Slough at 4:00 P.M. with 152 species under our belt. I was sure now that we would beat the record set by the original Men's Team of Bud Starling, Ted Test, Carl Weber and Scott Gremel. Thank You Murphy Lake!!!!

Our next stop was C.R. 600 S. in Newton County, where we had American Golden Plover staked out. Although the numbers had dwindled, the 30 or 40 Golden Plovers in breeding plumage now had an audience to show off their 24 carat gold plumes. Bud and Carl made me stop the car to get longer looks at these golden brown gems, clearly another one of Bud's favorite birds.

On the opposite side of the road, Bob Buskirk and I saw a Pheasant's tail protruding above the tall grasses. It was the only part of the pheasant we saw and was quite comical. We all felt better about the I.D. when the pheasant called out. With 154 species logged and only 2 more birds to break the old record, we headed for BIG PINE CREEK in Warren County to seek out southern specialties. A Northern Parula Warbler was heard by all on the bridge above Big Pine Creek. This tied the Amos W. Butler Men's Team record 155 species.

What glorious bird would we use to break the Men's Team record??? How about a Carolina Chickadee? I rarely get excited about a Carolina Chickadee, but I was glad to see this one. Other southern specialties found at this location were Kentucky Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, White-breasted Nuthatch, Summer Tanager and Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Entering the final phase of the Birdathon, we raced toward PINE CREEK GAMEBIRD HABITAT AREA, in an effort to locate more grassland species and shorebirds. On the mudflats north of County Road 200, we found a Western Sandpiper feeding with Least Sandpipers. Finding nothing more here, we pulled into the parking area. We scanned the distant flats south of the road. On Saturday, we had a White-rumped Sandpiper staked out here. The evening light and threatening rain clouds made an identification of these distant shorebirds impossible, even for the powerful Swarovski 80 HD's, that we were sporting so proudly.

Should we take the gamble and waste time walking a ¼ mile down to these mudflats??? The answer was yes, as there wasn't too many more birds we could get this late in the evening. As we scurried down the hillside, thistles pricked us along the way. We heard a Sedge Wren singing in a tall grassy hedge on the way down. The gamble had already paid off. As we continued down the hill we actually flushed the Wren, watching it butterfly to the next hedge of grasses. At the edge of the marsh, we scanned the mudflats and easily found the White-rumped Sandpiper. Bob Buskirk and I jubilantly gave each other high five's. The euphoria quickly wore off when we realized we had to run, not walk, up the hill we so effortlessly descended. We had to get back to the car as quickly as possible.

We ran up the hill as fast as we could, pain coming from muscle fatigue and the thistles penetrating our blue jeans. We clearly did not meet the age requirement for such an arduous task. I will never do that again, unless we do another Big Day. As we climbed into the Explorer, we heard a Western Meadowlark. We were on a roll. Back to WILLOW SLOUGH to clean up on night birds and end the Birdathon. The Willow Slough Marsh gave us no additional species as the rain clouds finally made good on their threats. The rain subsided after Bob and I made

the one mile trek back to Pogue Road. Standing on the dike at Patrol and Pogue Road, we could hear the neptual song of the American Woodcock. Sandhill Cranes were crooning from a distant location as the sky finally fell black. We all piled back into the Explorer, thinking the Birdathon was over. Still missing all three owls, we decided to play tapes as we worked our way east on Pogue Road.

A ¼ mile away from Patrol Road, we stopped and played Screech Owl. I used my larger tape machine to get more volume. It worked!!! The Eastern Screech Owl finally answered the tape. Driving 50 yards farther east, we played the Barred Owl tape. A distant Barred Owl, perhaps a half mile away, called out to us. It kept singing over and over again as I rewound the tape. We started to get back into the Explorer. Then Bud said, "wait a minute". We all stood motionless, cupping our ears. A Great Horned Owl was hooting softly. It was responding to the Barred Owl. What an encore to a truly magical and spectacular Birdathon. Four road weary birders piled back into the Explorer, stunned and grateful for the luck that had been bestowed upon us. Everything seemed to have gone perfectly. It was finally over. We stopped keeping track of how many birds we had after we broke the previous Men's Team record of 155 species.

Starting the long journey home, Bob began tallying our list. "Steve", Bob called out. He pointed his flashlight at a number he had scribbled on the page. The number was 170.

SPECIES LOG

1. 3:30 A.M. Common Nighthawk	Super 8 Motel, Michigan City (song)
2. 3:30 A.M. Chipping Sparrow	Super 8 Motel, Michigan City (song)
3. 3:30 A.M. American Robin	Super 8 Motel, Michigan City (song)
4. 3:30 A.M. Killdeer	Super 8 Motel, Michigan City (song)
5. 4:15 A.M. Swamp Sparrow	Cowles Bog (song)
6. 4:15 A.M. Sora	Cowles Bog (song)
7. 4:15 A.M. Virginia Rail	Cowles Bog (song)
8. 4:16 A.M. Whip-poor-Will	Cowles Bog (song)
9. 4:19 A.M. Marsh Wren	Cowles Bog (song)
10. 4:22 A.M. Red-winged Blackbird	Cowles Bog (song)
11. 4:23 A.M. Willow Flycatcher	Cowles Bog (song)
12. 4:50 A.M. Yellow Warbler	Mount Baldy (song)
13. 4:52 A.M. Gray Catbird	Mount Baldy (song)
14. 5:05 A.M. Barn Swallow	Michigan City Harbor (sight)
15. 5:05 A.M. House Finch	Michigan City Harbor (song)
16. 5:05 A.M. Spotted Sandpiper	Michigan City Harbor (song)
17. 5:06 A.M. Mallard	Michigan City Harbor (sight)
18. 5:10 A.M. Great Egret	Michigan City Harbor (sight)
19. 5:10 A.M. Black-bellied Plover	Michigan City Harbor (song)
20. 5:14 A.M. Ring-billed Gull	Michigan City Harbor (sight)

21. 5:14 A.M. Caspian Tern	Michigan City Harbor (sight)
22. 5:15 A.M. Herring Gull	Michigan City Harbor (sight)
23. 5:15 A.M. Franklin's Gull	Michigan City Harbor (sight)
24. 5:18 A.M. Purple Martin	Michigan City Harbor (song/sight)
25. 5:18 A.M. Red-breasted Merganser	Michigan City Harbor (sight)
26. 5:19 A.M. Bonaparte's Gull	Michigan City Harbor (sight)
27. 5:21 A.M. Great Blue Heron	Michigan City Harbor (sight)
28. 5:28 A.M. Common Grackle	Michigan City Harbor (sight)
29. 5:28 A.M. House Sparrow	Michigan City Harbor (sight)
30. 5:36 A.M. Song Sparrow	Beverly Shores (song)
31. 5:36 A.M. American Crow	Beverly Shores (sight)
32. 5:36 A.M. Starling	Beverly Shores (sight)
33. 5:37 A.M. Northern Cardinal	Beverly Shores (song)
34. 5:38 A.M. Red-eyed Vireo	Beverly Shores (song)
35. 5:39 A.M. Indigo Bunting	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
36. 5:39 A.M. Canada Warbler	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
37. 5:39 A.M. Least Flycatcher	Beverly Shores (song)
38. 5:40 A.M. Tufted Titmouse	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
39. 5:40 A.M. Chestnut-sided Warbler	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
40. 5:40 A.M. American Goldfinch	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
41. 5:41 A.M. Scarlet Tanager	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
42. 5:41 A.M. Brown-headed Cowbird	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
43. 5:42 A.M. Northern Waterthrush	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
44. 5:42 A.M. Tennessee Warbler	Beverly Shores (song)
45. 5:43 A.M. Common Yellowthroat	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
46. 5:43 A.M. Black-capped Chickadee	Beverly Shores (song)
47. 5:43 A.M. Eastern Towhee	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
48. 5:45 A.M. White-eyed Vireo	Beverly Shores (song)
49. 5:45 A.M. Wood Thrush	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
50. 5:45 A.M. Red-bellied Woodpecker	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
51. 5:46 A.M. Hairy Woodpecker	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
52. 5:48 A.M. Cedar Waxwing	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
53. 5:49 A.M. American Redstart	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
54. 5:49 A.M. Ovenbird	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
55. 5:49 A.M. Black and White Warbler	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
56. 5:50 A.M. Great-crested Flycatcher	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
57. 5:50 A.M. Eastern Kingbird	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
58. 5:51 A.M. Eastern Phoebe	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
59. 5:52 A.M. Mourning Warbler	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
60. 5:53 A.M. Yellow-throated Vireo	Beverly Shores (song)
61. 5:54 A.M. Warbling Vireo	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
62. 5:54 A.M. House Wren	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
63. 5:57 A.M. Eastern Wood Pewee	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
64. 5:57 A.M. Swainson's Thrush	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
65. 6:01 A.M. Blue Jay	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
66. 6:01 A.M. White-crowned Sparrow	Beverly Shores (song/sight)

67.	6:05 A.M.	Red-headed Woodpecker	Beverly Shores (song)
68.	6:05 A.M.	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
69.	6:07 A.M.	Northern Flicker	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
70.	6:09 A.M.	Carolina Wren	Beverly Shores (song)
71.	6:09 A.M.	Brown Thrasher	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
72.	6:12 A.M.	Wilson's Warbler	Beverly Shores (sight)
73.	6:19 A.M.	Mourning Dove	Beverly Shores (sight)
74.	6:20 A.M.	Black-throated Green Warbler	Beverly Shores (song)
75.	6:28 A.M.	Field Sparrow	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
76.	6:28 A.M.	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
77.	6:31 A.M.	Prairie Warbler	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
78.	6:34 A.M.	Cerulean Warbler	Beverly Shores (song)
79.	6:35 A.M.	Green Heron	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
80.	6:35 A.M.	Baltimore Oriole	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
81.	6:36 A.M.	Common Moorhen	Beverly Shores (song)
82.	6:36 A.M.	Wood Duck	Beverly Shores (sight)
83.	6:36 A.M.	Pied-billed Grebe	Beverly Shores (song)
84.	6:36 A.M.	Canada Goose	Beverly Shores (sight)
85.	6:37 A.M.	Tree Sparrow	Beverly Shores (sight)
86.	6:45 A.M.	Downy Woodpecker	Beverly Shores (song/sight)
87.	6:48 A.M.	Acadian Flycatcher	Furnessville Rd. (song)
88.	6:50 A.M.	Hooded Warbler	Furnessville Rd. (song/sight)
89.	6:56 A.M.	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	Furnessville Rd. (song)
90.	7:07 A.M.	Veery	Dunes State Park (song)
91.	7:10 A.M.	Prothonotary Warbler	Dunes State Park (song/sight)
92.	7:15 A.M.	Blackburnian Warbler	Dunes State Park (song)
93.	7:16 A.M.	Gray-cheeked Thrush	Dunes State Park (sight)
94.	7:22 A.M.	Louisiana Waterthrush	Dunes State Park (song)
95.	7:31 A.M.	Red-shouldered Hawk	Dunes State Park (song)
96.	7:36 A.M.	White-throated Sparrow	Dunes State Park (sight)
97.	7:36 A.M.	Pine Warbler	Dunes State Park (song)
98.	7:46 A.M.	Red-tailed Hawk	S.R. 12 (sight)
99.	8:02 A.M.	Forster's Tern	Miller Beach (sight)
100.	8:03 A.M.	Bank Swallow	Miller Beach (sight)
101.	8:07 A.M.	Chimney Swift	Miller Beach (sight)
102.	8:18 A.M.	Dunlin	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
103.	8:19 A.M.	Blue-winged Teal	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
104.	8:19 A.M.	Pectoral Sandpiper	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
105.	8:19 A.M.	Semipalmated Plover	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
106.	8:20 A.M.	Solitary Sandpiper	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
107.	8:22 A.M.	Semipalmated Sandpiper	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
108.	8:22 A.M.	American Coot	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
109.	8:22 A.M.	Northern Shoveler	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
110.	8:29 A.M.	Lesser Yellowlegs	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
111.	8:30 A.M.	Least Sandpiper	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
112.	8:38 A.M.	American Pipit	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)

113. 8:39 A.M. Blackpoll Warbler	Clay Street Wetlands (song/sight)
114. 8:42 A.M. Short-billed Dowitcher	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
115. 8:44 A.M. Wilson's Snipe	Clay Street Wetlands (song)
116. 8:48 A.M. Savannah Sparrow	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
117. 8:55 A.M. Stilt Sandpiper	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
118. 9:08 A.M. Peregrine Falcon	Clay Street Wetlands (sight)
119. 9:17 A.M. Rock Pigeon	Cline Avenue (S.R.912) (sight)
120. 9:45 A.M. Magnolia Warbler	Lake George Woodlot (sight)
121. 9:47 A.M. Worm-eating Warbler	Lake George Woodlot (song/sight)
122. 10:12 A.M. Black-throated Blue Warbler	Lake George Woodlot (sight)
123. 10:14 A.M. Bay-breasted Warbler	Lake George Woodlot (sight)
124. 10:24 A.M. Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Lake George Woodlot (sight)
125. 10:24 A.M. Blue-headed Vireo	Lake George Woodlot (sight)
126. 10:27 A.M. Rough-winged Swallow	Wolf Lake (sight)
127. 10:31 A.M. Mute Swan	Wolf Lake (sight)
128. 10:48 A.M. Lincoln's Sparrow	Whiting Park (sight)
129. 10:49 A.M. Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Whiting Park (sight)
130. 11:16 A.M. American Kestrel	Cline Avenue (sight)
131. 11:58 A.M. Snowy Egret	Grant Street Wetlands (sight)
132. 12:29 P.M. Ruddy Duck	Chase Street Wetlands (sight)
133. 12:31 P.M. Marbled Godwit	Chase Street Wetlands (sight)
134. 12:45 P.M. Surf Scoter	Chase Street Wetlands (sight)
135. 12:45 P.M. American Wigeon	Chase Street Wetlands (sight)
136. 12:45 P.M. Gadwall	Chase Street Wetlands (sight)
137. 12:45 P.M. Greater Yellowlegs	Chase Street Wetlands (sight)
138. 1:00 P.M. Sharp-shinned Hawk	I – 65 (sight)
139. 1:20 P.M. Turkey Vulture	Prairie Chicken Refuge (sight)
140. 1:23 P.M. Eastern Meadowlark	Prairie Chicken Refuge (song)
141. 1:38 P.M. Dickcissel	Prairie Chicken Refuge (song)
142. 1:39 P.M. Horned Lark	Prairie Chicken Refuge (song)
143. 1:40 P.M. Vesper Sparrow	Prairie Chicken Refuge (song)
144. 1:58 P.M. Bobolink	Prairie Chicken Refuge (sight)
145. 2:11 P.M. Orchard Oriole	Willow Slough (song/sight)
146. 2:15 P.M. Northern Bobwhite	Willow Slough (song)
147. 2:30 P.M. Henslow's Sparrow	Willow Slough (song)
148. 3:00 P.M. Lesser Scaup	Willow Slough (sight)
149. 3:05 P.M. Common Loon	Willow Slough (sight)
150. 3:12 P.M. Black Tern	Willow Slough (sight)
151. 3:14 P.M. Common Tern	Willow Slough (sight)
152. 3:50 P.M. Belted Kingfisher	Willow Slough (sight)
153. 4:25 P.M. American Golden Plover	Newton County (sight)
154. 4:45 P.M. Ring-necked Pheasant	Newton County (sight)
155. 5:00 P.M. Northern Parula Warbler	Big Pine Creek (song)
156. 5:00 P.M. Carolina Chickadee	Big Pine Creek (song)
157. 5:08 P.M. Kentucky Warbler	Big Pine Creek (sight)
158. 5:20 P.M. Yellow-throated Warbler	Big Pine Creek (sight)

159. 5:20 P.M. White-breasted Nuthatch	Big Pine Creek (sight)
160. 5:40 P.M. Summer Tanager	Big Pine Creek (sight)
161. 5:45 P.M. Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Big Pine Creek (sight)
162. 6:20 P.M. Western Sandpiper	Pine Creek GHA (sight)
163. 6:35 P.M. Sedge Wren	Pine Creek GHA (song)
164. 6:45 P.M. White-rumped Sandpiper	Pine Creek GHA (sight)
165. 6:50 P.M. Western Meadowlark	Pine Creek GHA (song)
166. 8:17 P.M. American Woodcock	Willow Slough (song)
167. 8:45 P.M. Sandhill Crane	Willow Slough (song)
168. 9:36 P.M. Eastern Screech Owl	Willow Slough (song)
169. 9:42 P.M. Barred Owl	Willow Slough (song)
170. 9:49 P.M. Great Horned Owl	Willow Slough (song)

Analysis

Most Valuable Bird: Marbled Godwit

Top Ten:	1. Marbled Godwit	6. Worm-eating Warbler
	2. Franklin's Gull	7. Snowy Egret
	3. Western Sandpiper	8. Surf Scoter
	4. Stilt Sandpiper	9. Black Tern
	5. White-rumped Sandpiper	10. American Golden Plover

Honorable Mention:	1. Bonaparte's Gull
	2. Common Moorhen
	3. Gray-cheeked Thrush
	4. American Pipit
	5. Peregrine Falcon
	6. Sandhill Crane
	7. Western Meadowlark
	8. Common Tern
	9. Hooded Warbler
	10. Black-throated Blue Warbler
	11. Lincoln's Sparrow
	12. Pine Warbler

Sites - in most productive order:

1. Beverly Shores	57 species	33.52% of total
2. Clay Street Wetlands	17 species	10.00% of total
3. Michigan City Harbor	16 species	9.41% of total
4. Indiana Dunes State Park	8 species	4.70% of total
5. Willow Slough (afternoon)	8 species	4.70% of total
6. Cowles Bog	7 species	4.11% of total
7. Chase Street Wetlands	7 species	4.11% of total
8. Big Pine Creek	7 species	4.11% of total
9. Lake George Woodlot	6 species	3.52% of total
10. Prairie Creek Refuge	6 species	3.52% of total
11. Willow Slough (evening)	5 species	2.94% of total
12. Super 8 Motel	4 species	2.35% of total
13. Pine Creek Gamebird Habitat Area	4 species	2.35% of total
14. Furnessville Road/C.R. 200 E.	3 species	1.76% of total
15. Miller Beach	3 species	1.76% of total
16. Mount Baldy	2 species	1.17% of total
17. Wolf Lake	2 species	1.17% of total
18. Whiting Park	2 species	1.17% of total
19. Newton County farm fields / Pond	2 species	1.17% of total
20. Grant Street Wetlands	1 species	.05% of total

Species staked out during scout week that were missed:

1. Green-winged Teal	Where: Chase Street Wetlands	Reason: Gone
2. Black Duck	Where: Beverly Shores	Reason: Gone
3. Redhead	Where: Willow Slough	Reason: Gone
4. Ring-necked Duck	Where: Farm Pond-Benton Co.	Reason: Gone
5. Black Scoter	Where: Willow Slough	Reason: Gone
6. Bufflehead	Where: Michigan City Harbor	Reason: Gone
7. American Bittern	Where: Willow Slough	Reason: Rain out
8. Northern Harrier	Where: Prairie Chicken Refuge	Reason: Winds
9. Wild Turkey	Where: Willow Slough	Reason: Winds
10. Upland Sandpiper	Where: Willow Slough	Reason: Winds
11. Willet	Where: Michigan City Harbor	Reason: Gone
12. Ruddy Turnstone	Where: Jeorse Park/Pastrick M.	Reason: Gone
13. Chuck-will's-Widow	Where: Mount Baldy	Reason: Gone
14. Olive-sided Flycatcher	Where: Lake George Woodlot	Reason: Gone
15. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Where: Dunes State Park	Reason: Gone
16. Bell's Vireo	Where: Prairie Chicken Refuge	Reason: Winds
17. Philadelphia Vireo	Where: Willow Slough Dam	Reason: Winds
18. Northern Mockingbird	Where: Whiting Park	Reason: Winds
19. Winter Wren	Where: Dunes State Park	Reason: Gone
20. Blue-winged Warbler	Where: Beverly Shores	Reason: Not heard
21. Nashville Warbler	Where: Beverly Shores	Reason: Gone
22. Cape May Warbler	Where: Willow Slough Dam	Reason: Winds

23. Palm Warbler	Where: Lake George Woodlot	Reason: Gone
24. Yellow-breasted Chat	Where: Willow Slough	Reason: Winds
25. Sharp-tailed Sparrow	Where: Chase Street Wetlands	Reason: Gone
26. Lark Sparrow	Where: Willow Slough	Reason: Winds
27. Blue Grosbeak	Where: Willow Slough	Reason: Winds
28. Yellow-headed Blackbird	Where: I-90 at the State line	Reason: Winds

Wind birds missed = 10

Gone birds missed = 12

The 28 species of birds missed were present at some time between 5/13 and 5/17. Add the 28 missed species to the 170 species we logged on 5/17, yields a total of 198 species. Who said 200 was impossible!!! The ironic twist to all of this is that while severe storms brought us many quality storm birds, the winds that remained prevented us from breaking 180. The winds kept grassland species silent and grounded at Willow Slough and the Prairie Chicken Refuge.

Many of the birds that were listed as gone may have been affected by the approaching storms. A drop in barometric pressure may have triggered "gone" birds to leave the area a day or two ahead of the storm. This would explain why so many staked out birds were not present during our Birdathon.

EASY BIRDS MISSED – NOT STAKED OUT

1. Eastern Bluebird
2. Cliff Swallow
3. Clay-colored Sparrow
4. Brown Creeper
5. Pileated Woodpecker
6. Double-crested Cormorant
7. Black-crowned Night Heron
8. Cooper's Hawk

1999 BIRDATHON RESULTS BY BIRD GROUPS

1. Waterfowl	16 species	9.41% of total
2. Wading birds	5 species	2.94% of total
3. Raptors / Owls	9 species	5.29% of total
4. Pheasants / Quail	2 species	1.17% of total
5. Shorebirds	21 species	12.35% of total
6. Gulls / Terns	8 species	4.70% of total
7. Woodpeckers	5 species	2.94% of total
8. Flycatchers	7 species	4.11% of total
9. Vireos	5 species	2.94% of total
10. Thrushes	5 species	2.94% of total
11. Wrens	4 species	2.35% of total
12. Swallows	5 species	2.94% of total

13. Warblers	28 species	16.47% of total
14. Sparrows, Buntings, Tanagers	17 species	10.00% of total
15. Blackbirds, Orioles, Grackles	8 species	4.70% of total
16. Miscellaneous Groups	<u>25 species</u>	14.70% of total
	170 species	

Miscellaneous Group = Pigeons, Doves, Cuckoos, Nightjars, Swifts, Hummingbirds, Kingfishers, Crows, Jays, Waxwings, Mockingbirds, Thrashers, Starlings, Nuthatches, Gnatcatchers, Kinglets, Chickadees, Titmouses, Larks, Old World Sparrows, Pipits and Finches.

Copyright 2003 Steve Pancol All rights reserved: This document is the property of Steve Pancol. It is intended for personal use only. The publication of this document in any electronic or print media is strictly prohibited.