LAKE CALUMET AREA IBA & ENDANGERED/THREATENED BIRD SPECIES BREEDING SEASON SUMMARY, 1993-2012

Submitted by Walter Marcisz and Judy Pollock
30 June 2013

funded by IDNR Coastal Program as a part of Millennium Reserve
Executive Summary

This report contains observations of 16 birds in the Calumet region compiled primarily by Walter Marcisz, Bird Conservation Network bird monitor, with assistance from Judy Pollock, Audubon Chicago Region, for the breeding seasons of 1993 through 2012. The 11 sources consulted are listed in the “Literature Cited” section, and constitute all the sources of information for this time period that we are aware of. The sites include all those in the IBA boundary; a list is in Appendix 1. The 16 birds selected include all the endangered and threatened species of Illinois that are or have been found in the area during breeding season, plus the three birds that secured the area’s designation as an Illinois Important Bird Area: Black-crowned Night-Heron, Common Gallinule and Willow Flycatcher. For these three, the Calumet region was one of the 3-7 sites in the state with the largest number of breeding pairs at the time the site was recognized (2004). Methods include regular routes through the preserves which are repeated every year by Walter, and casual observations by birders. Because almost every wetland in the area is well visited by birders and researchers, we have high confidence that the overall trends discussed here are representative of realities on the ground.

The observations may be summarized as follows:

**Increased:** none

**Decreased:** Least Bittern, **Common Gallinule, Yellow-headed Blackbird**

**Remained stable:** Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, **Willow Flycatcher**

**Returned as a breeding species**: Osprey, Peregrine Falcon

**Extirpated as a breeding species in the 15 years before the period of this report:** Wilson’s Phalarope, Black Tern

**Extirpated as a breeding species during the period of this report:** Little Blue Heron, **Black-crowned Night-Heron, King Rail**

**Rare breeder or irregular visitor during breeding season:** American Bittern, Snowy Egret, Northern Harrier, Black-billed Cuckoo

*Bald Eagle is removed from the State Endangered and Threatened list and was not included in this report but it has also returned as a breeding species.

The birds that had more than a handful of breeding pairs in any year during our report period are **bolded**. Of those, all the wetland species are extirpated or nearly so and only the Willow Flycatcher, a shrubland bird, is being reported in steady numbers.

**Conservation Planning Recommendations**

1. Share reports of bird observations with key Millennium Reserve Partners.
2. Include bird populations as conservation targets in all planning for wetland restoration and hydrologic restoration.
3. The long term plan should be to restore hemi-marsh conditions to Burnham Prairie, Hegewisch Marsh, Big Marsh, Indian Ridge Marsh, Eggers Woods, Powderhorn Lake, O’Brien Lock and Dam, Whitford Pond, and Lake Calumet (including Harborside). For all sites on this list that currently have restoration projects beginning or underway, hemi-marsh and wetland birds appropriate to each site should be major conservation targets.
Digest of Bird Sightings

1. **AMERICAN BITTERN** (E): Other than one sighting at Heron Pond on June 16, 2010, there is no indication of breeding.

2. **LEAST BITTERN** (T) Observed 16 of 20 years at from 1 to 4 locations each year; a total of 9 different locations overall. Confirmed breeding once. Numbers dwindle after 2005. Burnham Prairie has been an important site in recent years.

3. **SNOWY EGRET** (E) No confirmed breeding records, not observed since 2009.

4. **LITTLE BLUE HERON** (E) Found in some but not all years before 1996. Breeding suspected in 1996 and 1998. First confirmed breeding record in northeastern Illinois at Indian Ridge Marsh North in 1999. One to two active nests or nest building observed at that location or Heron Pond through 2009. No nests observed after 2009.

5. **BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (E, IBA) At the beginning of this report period (1993), the Black-crowned Night-Heron colony was thriving: 725 or more nests at Big Marsh and at two spots in Indian Ridge Marsh North. This situation continued until 1995, when no nests were observed in the phragmites at Indian Ridge Marsh, but a new colony was established at Heron Pond. Beginning in 1997, the number of birds began to dwindle. Big Marsh was abandoned in 1999, due to extremely high water levels. One or both of the remaining sites were used annually through 2008, although water level problems persisted at both sites and number of birds continued to dwindle. In 2009, a few birds attempted to nest at Lake Calumet in addition to the other two sites. By 2012 there were few of these birds and no nest activity to be found anywhere in the Lake Calumet area.

6. **YELLOW-CROWNED-NIGHT-HERON** (E) One to a few adults are observed during breeding season every year. Occasionally a juvenile or juveniles are also observed. Attempted breeding has been confirmed three times; twice this resulted in fledglings.

7. **OSPREY** (E) First observed in the breeding season in 2001, Osprey began to nest at the platform at Powderhorn in 2003, and nested every year since, sometimes fledging young and sometimes having nest failure. Another pair has nested on the Cargill property from 2009-2011. In 2012 the nest site was taken over by a hawk.

8. **NORTHERN HARRIER** (E) Occasional birds are sighted during the breeding season; behavior suggestive of nesting was observed in 1994 and 1997.

9. **KING RAIL** (E) Observed in some years during the breeding season; young juveniles (indicating local nesting) seen in 1994 at Big Marsh and 2003 in Deadstick Pond. Not observed since 2009.

10. **COMMON GALLINULE (formerly COMMON MOORHEN)** (E, IBA) Over a dozen broods and scores of birds were common observations until 1995. Hemi-marsh conditions have been diminished throughout the Calumet since then, as have the number of gallinule nests. In the
years between 1996 and 2002, between one and seven broods were observed annually. After
that, one to two broods or none was the rule, with the exception of 2009, when muskrats briefly
created the hemi-marsh conditions needed by these birds at Hegewisch Marsh.

11. **WILSON’S PHALAROPE** (E) Formerly nested at LCal, with the last documented nesting
    occurring in 1981.

12. **BLACK TERN** (E) Formerly nested at LCal, with the last documented nesting occurring in
    1986.

13. **BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO** (T) No more than one bird each year has been observed since
    1997. In 1993 and 1997 behaviors suggestive of breeding were observed, but breeding has never
    been confirmed.

14. **PEREGRINE FALCON** (T) One or two adults were observed most summers until 2001. From
    2002 to the present, one pair has been suspected or confirmed nesting on area bridges each year.
    In 2011, two nests were confirmed.

15. **WILLOW FLYCATCHER** (IBA) Fairly steady numbers have been reported over the years.
    The shrubland habitat that this bird prefers may not be as well sampled as the wetland habitat.
    The sums of maximum numbers reported for each location per year average 27 with greater
    numbers in later years; this may be due to more eBird use in those years. Burnham Prairie,
    Calumet Water Reclamation Plant, and Powderhorn Lake have reported the largest numbers,
    although numbers reported at Powderhorn have diminished after 2006.

16. **YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD** (E) At the beginning of this report period, these birds
    were observed in as many as 5 locations per year and a maximum of 19 territorial males, nests or
    pairs were observed in a season. The number has dwindled to one bird at one site. Loss of hemi-
    marsh habitat due to muskrats, beavers, industrial development of public land, drought and lack
    of hydrologic intervention to address the above situations has greatly impacted the population.
LAKE CALUMET AREA IBA & ENDANGERED/THREATENED BIRD SPECIES BREEDING SEASON SUMMARIES, 1993-2012

This report contains observations of 16 birds in the Calumet region compiled primarily by Walter Marcisz, BCN bird monitor, with assistance from Judy Pollock, Audubon Chicago Region, for the breeding seasons of 1993 through 2012. The 11 sources consulted are listed in the “Literature Cited” section at the end of the report, and constitute all the sources of information for this time period that we are aware of. The sites include all those in the IBA boundary; a list can be found in Appendix 1. The 16 birds selected for the report include all the endangered and threatened species of Illinois that are or have been found in the area during breeding season, plus the three birds that secured the area’s designation as an Illinois Important Bird Area: Black-crowned Night-Heron, Common Gallinule and Willow Flycatcher. For these three birds, the Calumet region was one of the 3-7 sites in the state with the largest number of breeding pairs at the time the site was recognized (2004).

Methods include regular routes through the preserves which are repeated every year by Walter, and casual observations by birders. Because almost every wetland in the area is well visited by birders and researchers, we have high confidence that the overall trends discussed here are representative of realities on the ground.

1. AMERICAN BITTERN (E)
   *Botaurus lentiginosus*

   *Other than one sighting at Heron Pond on June 16, 2010, there is no indication of breeding.*

   **Summary:**
   
   **1993-2009:** No breeding records.
   **2010:** One at LCal (Heron Pond) on 16 June (Samuel Burckhardt). (eBird)
   **2011-2012:** No breeding records.

2. LEAST BITTERN (T)
   *Ixobrychus exilis*

   *Observed 16 of 20 years at from 1 to 4 locations each year; a total of 9 different locations overall. Confirmed breeding once at Powderhorn Lake in 2004. Numbers dwindle after 2005. Burnham Prairie has been an important site in recent years.*

   **Summary:**
   
   **1993:** One (heard) at LCal (Big Marsh) on 4 July (Bowden Quinn), and one (seen) there on 10 July (Robert Hughes, et al.). Two (seen) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 11 July (Joe & Marlene Nowak). (WJM) Two (heard) at Chi (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 11 July (John O’Neal fide Alan Anderson). (MJIB 3: 27)
   **1994-1995:** No records.
   **1996:** One at LCal (Wolf Lake/William Powers Fish & Wildlife Area) on 6 June (unknown observer). (eBird)
1997: One to two (possibly a family group) at LCal (Big Marsh) on 20 July (Walter Marcisz). One to two at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 24 July (Judy Pollock). (WJM)

1998: Pair of adults at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.), June/July (Mike Ward); one at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 16 June (Douglas Stotz); one at LCal (Big Marsh) on 12 July (David Johnson); one at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 15 July (Walter Marcisz). (MJIB 8: 28)

1999: Two at LCal, June/July (Mike Ward). Two at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.), June/July. (Mike Ward)). (MJIB 9: 27) One at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 11 July. (WJM)

2000: Three adults at LCal (2 adults at Indian Ridge Marsh North; one adult at Deadstick Pond) on 18 June. (WJM)

Pair at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh), June/July (Mike Ward). (MJIB 10: 27)

2001: Two at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 22 June (Mike Ward), and one there on 26 June (Carolyn Marsh & Mike Ward). (MJIB 11: 28)

2002: No records.

2003: One at LCal (Big Marsh) on 13 July. (WJM)


Maximum Counts: Two at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 17 July (Craig Taylor) and 25 July (Karen Fisher, Robert Fisher, Richard Messenger). (WJM)

Others: One at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 13 June (Walter Marcisz). (WJM)

One at LCal (Big Marsh) on 4 July (Randy Shonkwiler) (eBird); and 25 July (Karen Fisher, Robert Fisher, Richard Messenger). (WJM)

2005: One at LCal (L.Calumet at Harborside International Golf Course) on 3 & 10 July. (WJM)

2006: One at LCal (L.Calumet at Harborside International Golf Course) on 16 July (Dan Williams. (MJIB 16: 21-22)

2007: One at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 5 July (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 17: 19)

2008: No records.

2009: One at Burnham Prairie on 30 May (Douglas Stotz). (eBird)

2010: Maximum counts: Two at Burnham Prairie (Cook Co.) on 9 June (Craig Taylor). (MJIB 20: 22)

Two at LCal (Heron Pond) on 6 July (Samuel Burckhardt). (eBird)

Others: One at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh South) on 16 June (Samuel Burckhardt). (MJIB 20: 22)

2011: One at Burnham Prairie on 24 June (Douglas Stotz) (eBird), 2 & 15 July. (WJM), 31 July (Matt Kalwaskinski) and 10 other observations by multiple observers. (eBird)

2012: One at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) 24 June (Douglas Stotz) One at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) 24 June (Douglas Stotz). (eBird)

3. SNOWY EGRET (E)

_Egretta thula_

No confirmed breeding records, not observed since 2009.

Summary:

Recent (historical) record of possible breeding: Pair in courtship dance at LCal (Big Marsh) on 31 May 1987 (Terry Schilling). (IB&B 4: 13)

1993: No records.

1994-2005: Numerous spring/summer records at LCal, but no breeding records.

2006-2009: Several summer records at LCal, but no breeding records.
2010-2012: No records.

4. LITTLE BLUE HERON (E)  
Egretta caerulea

Found in some but not all years before 1996. Breeding suspected in 1996 and 1998. First confirmed breeding record in northeastern Illinois at Indian Ridge Marsh North in 1999. One to two active nests observed at that location or Heron Pond through 2005 and again in 2009, with nest building noted 2006 through 2008. No nests observed after 2009.

Summary:  
1993: No records.  
1994: One (adult) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 7 June. Six (juveniles) at LCal (Big Marsh) on 30 July. (WJM)  
1995: No records.  
1996: (Possible) Breeding: On 20 June Walter Marcisz watched a breeding plumage adult Little Blue Heron fly out of the Black-crowned Night-Heron nesting colony in the reeds at LCal (Big Marsh). The bird flew to a smaller wetland immediately south of the marsh, where it picked up a large weed stalk. Carrying the weed stalk in its bill, the bird then flew back to the Big Marsh reeds (presumably to a nest). In addition, on 4 August Marcisz observed two adult Little Blue Herons at LCal (1 at Big Marsh, 1 at Deadstick Pond, suggesting that a pair of adults summered at LCal in 1996 (Little Blue Herons which are late summer post-breeding wanderers at LCal are almost invariably 1st-year birds). (WJM)  
1997: One adult at LCal (O’Brien Lock & Dam) on 10 & 17 May. (WJM) Two (immatures) at LCal on 20 July; three (1 adult, 2 immatures) at LCal on 27 July; one (immature) at LCal on 3 August (Alan Stokie). (MJIB 7: 30)  
1998: (Possible) Breeding: Believed to have nested at LCal in 1998. Details: Small numbers of adult Little Blue Herons were observed at various LCal wetlands throughout the summer of 1998. Walter Marcisz observed a pair of adults at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 6 & 27 June, and also a single adult at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 14 June. Three adults were observed at LCal (Burnham Prairie) by Douglas Stotz on 16 June. Marcisz also observed one adult at LCal (Big Marsh) on 13 June, and two adults at that location on 1 July. Flyovers were noted at wetlands adjacent to Big Marsh during the month of July by Marcisz (1 adult over Indian Ridge Marsh North on 4 July, 2 adults over Heron Pond on 8 July). On 11 July, Marcisz observed an adult Little Blue Heron accompanied by a fresh juvenile at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh). Within minutes of the initial sighting, the adult flew up and chased the juvenile around the marsh for a short while. As of the date of this observation, the first juvenile Black-crowned Night-Herons were only beginning to disperse from LCal nesting areas, and Marcisz believed it was far more likely that the juvenile Little Blue Heron observed on 11 July fledged from a LCal nest than from a nest at some downstate location. Marcisz also observed a juvenile Little Blue Heron (perhaps the same bird) at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 25 July. Based on observations during the summer of 1998, it seems virtually certain that Little Blue Herons nested at LCal. Big Marsh would seem to be the most likely nest location. (WJM)  
1999: Breeding. Nested at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North in Phragmites reeds near 116th Street). At least one of the two active nests was successful. Nest-building was noted by Douglas Stotz (FMNH) at two locations on 30 June, and a pair of adults defending a family group of two recently fledged young (with down on heads forming shaggy crests) was noted at one of the two nest sites by Walter Marcisz on 25 July. This is the first confirmed Little Blue Heron nesting record for northeastern Illinois during the

2000: Breeding: Two active nests at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) again this year. Both nests were believed to have successfully fledged young.

Details of the nests are as follows:
5-17-00: Douglas Stotz noted a pair of adult Little Blue Herons at Indian Ridge Marsh North (near 116th Street and the Norfolk & Southern RR tracks in Chicago). The birds were in reeds close to the RR tracks. One flew off and the other sat at the top of the reeds above a visible nest with eggs. The nest was in a small tree among the reeds, rather than at the water’s surface like the adjacent Black-crowned Night-Heron & Great Egret nests. When Stotz returned to his car, he saw one of the Little Blue Herons sitting either on or right next to the nest, but as Stotz started down the road it flew off.
6-17-00: Walter Marcisz flushed one adult Little Blue Heron from nest site described above by Douglas Stotz (hereafter referred to as “RR track site”). It later returned and perched above the nest site, then went back to the nest. On this date, Marcisz also observed another adult Little Blue Heron fly from another site at the far north end of the marsh (hereafter referred to as “north site”).
6-18-00: Walter Marcisz revisited the site. On this date, the pair of adult Little Blue herons flushed from the RR track site, engaging in “scolding” and territorial behavior as they did so. At this point, Marcisz was unable to see the nest. Marcisz returned to the site a second time that day with Tadas Birutis. At this time an adult Little Blue Heron flushed from the RR track site again, and both Marcisz & Birutis were able to see the nest through a narrow opening in the reeds. It contained at least two white young. On this date Marcisz also observed adult Little Blue Herons entering/leaving the north site several times before returning to the area with Birutis. At this time, Birutis followed an adult with his binoculars as it flew into the north site and he was actually able to see the bird settle into a nest before the nest became obscured again by reeds/cattails.
7-16-00: Walter Marcisz revisited the site and observed three tiny juvenile Little Blue Herons perched in a large willow at the north end of the marsh near the nest sites. Approximately four adult Little Blue Herons were also observed in the area. No juvenile Little Blue Herons were observed at any nearby wetlands on this date.
7-29-00: Walter Marcisz observed two adult and five young juvenile Little Blue Herons in the vicinity of the nest sites. One juvenile was observed begging food from an adult. Another juvenile was observed at nearby Deadstick Pond. The total number of birds observed on this date suggests that at least six young fledged from the nests.
7-30-00: Walter Marcisz observed one adult and three young juveniles (including one juvenile begging food from an adult) in the vicinity of the nest sites. Down feathers were observed on the crown of one or more of the juveniles. (WJM)

2001: Breeding: Two pairs nested at LCal (Heron Pond) in 2001. One of the nests probably failed, but the other nest fledged at least three young, based on the presence of three very young juveniles observed adjacent to the nest site on 14 July.

Details: From 26 April through early June, Walter Marcisz routinely observed adult Little Blue Herons flying to & from two distinct sites within the Phragmites reeds at Heron Pond, suggesting the presence of two nest sites. Two foraging adult Little Blue Herons were also routinely observed at nearby Burnham Prairie during the same time period. The Burnham Prairie birds were likely non-incubating members of the two Heron Pond pairs (Marcisz frequently observed adult Little Blue Herons flying back
& forth between Heron Pond and Burnham Prairie). As of 17 June all activity at one of the nest sites stopped. This nest probably failed and was subsequently abandoned. On 14 July, however, Marcisz found three young juveniles close to the second nest site. The three juveniles appeared to be awkward & inexperienced, and they mainly perched in shrubs and played with twigs. Close examination of two of the juveniles (60x scope) showed that both still had a considerable amount of down feathers on the tops of their heads. (WJM)

Others: Eleven (7 adults, 2 subadults, 2 immatures) at LCal on 16 July (Carolyn Marsh) (MJIB 11: 29)
Four at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 29 July (Randy Shonkwiler). (eBird)
One (“calico” immature) at LCal from 1 – 29 July (Al Stokie). (MJIB 11: 29)

Details: The first adult Little Blue Heron of the year was noted at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 26 April. Their numbers expanded after that date, with four adults observed at Indian Ridge Marsh North on 12 May and seven adults (including 2 pairs) at Heron Pond on 10 May. While observing a pair of adults at Indian Ridge Marsh North on 19 May, Walter Marcisz watched one of the pair members twice carrying nesting material to a nest site hidden in the reeds near the Norfolk & Southern RR tracks. This is a site where Little Blue Herons have nested in previous years. While conducting a Black-crowned Night-Heron nest check for an Illinois Natural History Survey study on 15 June, Margaret Kurcz (INHS) entered Indian Ridge Marsh near the Little Blue nest location. Two adult Little Blue Herons rose up from the nest site and “scolded” her repeatedly. On 21 July, Walter Marcisz noted four fledged juvenile Little Blue Herons perched in a dead willow at the north end of Indian Ridge Marsh adjacent to the RR track reeds nest site. Close examination of the birds with a spotting scope showed that all four still retained a considerable amount of down feathers on their heads. (WJM)

Others: The presence of six adult Little Blue Herons at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 21 July suggests that other Little Blue Herons may have nested or attempted nesting elsewhere at LCal in 2002. (WJM)

2003: Breeding: At least one pair of adults nested successfully at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) in 2003, fledging at least one young.
Details: Pair of adults observed near traditional nesting site at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) by Walter Marcisz & Allison Klement 26 April & 3 May. Four adults (2 pairs) observed at same location by Marcisz & Klement on 23 May. One adult carrying a stick (nesting material) into the traditional north nesting site in reeds at Indian Ridge Marsh North observed by Allison Klement on 10 July. At 8:30 AM on 8 August, one adult and one very young juvenile were observed at the LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) rookery by Allison Klement. At 7:30 PM on 8 August, three adult and one juvenile Little Blue Heron were observed flying northward toward the Indian Ridge North rookery (presumably to roost) by Walter Marcisz. The very young juvenile followed the adults very closely. At 8:00 AM on 10 August, one very young juvenile was observed foraging near the traditional Indian Ridge North nesting site by Walter Marcisz. (WJM)

Others: Numerous observations of single foraging Little Blue Herons were made at various LCal locations, including Powderhorn Lake F.P., Big Marsh, and Deadtick Pond throughout the 2003 breeding season. These observations likely involved the same birds that nested at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) in 2003. Also, three foraging adults were observed at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 15 June. (WJM)

2004: Breeding: Nested successfully at LCal for the sixth consecutive year. One or two pairs nested again in Phragmites reeds at Indian Ridge Marsh North, and a total of three just-fledged young were noted at that location on 3 July, indicating that at least one nest was successful.
Details: Four adults were noted at Indian Ridge Marsh North on 8 May, including one arranging nesting material at presumed nest site. Four adults again noted at the same location on 16 May. One adult and three just-fledged juveniles (with obvious down feathers still present on heads) noted adjacent to presumed nest site on 11 July. (WJM)

Others: Small numbers of adult Little Blue Herons were frequently noted at numerous LCal locations throughout June & July (areas include Burnham Prairie; Lake Calumet; Powderhorn Lake F.P.; Eggers Woods F.P.; and Deadstick Pond), suggesting that far more than two pairs summered (perhaps as many as 10 adults summered at LCal). (WJM)

2005: Breeding: Nested successfully at LCal for the seventh consecutive year. At least one pair nested in Phragmites reeds at Heron Pond, and a total of three just-fledged young were noted at that location on 23 July, indicating that at least one nest was successful. Details: Cherie LeBlanc (USDA Forest Service) observed an apparent nesting pair of Little Blue Herons at Heron Pond on 17 May while doing a Black-crowned Night-Heron survey, but she was unable to locate the nest. Walter Marcisz observed a pair of adult Little Blue Herons flying out of Heron Pond on 26 May, and one to two adult Little Blue Herons carrying nesting material to a presumed nest site at Heron Pond on 18 June. On 23 July, Marcisz observed three awkward juveniles (all with considerable down on their heads) perched together in a tree near the Heron Pond nest site. (WJM)

Other: Walter Marcisz & Jill Anderson observed seven adult Little Blue Herons at LCal on 10 July. (WJM)

2006: (Possible) Breeding: Walter Marcisz & Wesley Serafin observed one nest-building adult (carrying sticks into the reeds) at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 15 June. Marcisz also observed a pair of adults near the presumed nest site on 16 June & 2 July. Very little activity was noted later in July, and as of 30 July Marcisz had still not observed any fledged young. (WJM)

2007: Breeding: Jeffrey Skrentny reported he observed an adult flying back & forth, carrying nesting material to a nest location in the reeds at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 24 May. Maximum count: Nine (8 adults, 1 juv.) at LCal on 15 July. (WJM)

2008: Apparently attempted nesting at LCal, but nest may have been unsuccessful as no juveniles were observed at LCal during the the 2008 breeding season. On 15 May, Randy Shonkwiler saw an adult Little Blue Heron carrying sticks, flying to a presumed nest site in the general direction of Deadstick Pond (122nd & Stony Island Ave., Chicago). Walter Marcisz subsequently saw an adult Little Blue flying toward Deadstick Pond on 7 June. Maximum count: Four adults at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 26 July. (WJM)

2009: Breeding: Two adult Little Blue Herons were relatively easy to find during the spring of 2009, but during the summer months they were barely reported. Seemingly, they were difficult to find during the summer because of their secretive nesting habits. On 20 July, Walter Marcisz found an active Little Blue Heron nest in Phragmites reeds at the LCal (Heron Pond) night-heron colony. An adult Little Blue Heron and two large white young were in the nest. On 25 July, Marcisz returned to the nest site with Alan Stokie. On that date, an adult Little Blue Heron was standing on the nest, but no young were visible in the nest. No real way to confirm this hypothesis, but it is possible that the young had already fledged and were hidden in some obscure corner of the marsh. (WJM)

2010: One adult at LCal (MWRD SEPA Station 1 at south end of Indian Ridge Marsh South on 15 & 21 June, and 3 & 31 July. (WJM)

2011: Maximum counts: Two at LCal (1 adult at Hegewisch Marsh, & 1 first-summer “calico” at Heron Pond) on 21 June. First pointed out by Beau Schaefer. Two (adults.) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 23 June. (WJM)

Other: One (adult) at Hegewisch Marsh on 2 July. (WJM)
2012: Maximum counts: Three adults at LCal (126th St. Marsh) on 29, 30, & 31 May 2012. Two adults at LCal (126th St. Marsh) on 2 June. Two adults at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh South) on 4 August. (WJM)

5. BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (E, IBA)
Nycticorax nycticorax

At the beginning of this report period (1993), the Black-crowned Night-Heron colony was thriving: 725 or more nests at Big Marsh and at two spots in Indian Ridge Marsh North. This situation continued until 1995, when no nests were observed in the phragmites at Indian Ridge Marsh, but a new colony was established at Heron Pond. In 1996 the Indian Ridge site was abandoned, but numbers of birds in the other two sites remained high. Beginning in 1997, the number of birds began to dwindle. In that year, the Heron Pond site was abandoned. In 1999, after fifteen years of continuous use, the herons abandoned Big Marsh, due to extremely high water levels, and moved back to Indian Ridge Marsh North. Water levels at Indian Ridge Marsh North were also unsuitable, and in 2001 the colony moved to Heron Pond. One or both of these sites were used annually through 2008, although water level problems persisted and number of birds continued to dwindle. In 2009, a few birds attempted to nest at Lake Calumet in addition to the other two sites. There was activity at only one location in 2011, but it appears there was no successful nesting that year, and by 2012 there were few of these birds and no nest activity to be found anywhere in the Lake Calumet area.

Summary:
1993: Breeding: Nested at LCal in three locations as follows: 572 active nests counted by Sue Elston (USEPA survey) at Big Marsh on 27 May (Sue Elston, personal communication). 145 of these had dead chicks and/or broken shells. (Sue Elston memo USACE) 79 nests (adults on) noted by Walter Marcisz at Indian Ridge Marsh North colony in cottonwoods near 122nd & Torrence Ave. on 30 April. New nesting colony noted by Walter Marcisz at Indian Ridge Marsh North in Phragmites reeds near 116th &
Torrence Ave. on 19 June. Many young heard calling from nests hidden in reeds. Many fresh juveniles of the year were also noted in the area. On 20 June, 150+ adults were seen flying out of the reeds at this rookery. (WJM)

1994: Breeding: An estimated minimum of 400-500 pairs of BCNH nested at three LCal locations in 1994, based on the spring/summer observations that follow.

Details of the three colonies are as follows-

Colony #1: Indian Ridge Marsh North (in cottonwood trees near 122nd & Torrence Ave.)-
Walter Marcisz counted 229 nests (adults on) at Indian Ridge Marsh North in cottonwood trees near 122nd & Torrence Avenue on 1 May. One of the adult BCNH had an entirely black face & breast, and was believed to be melanistic. This colony was very successful this year despite significant disturbance from fishermen, photographers, et al. actually entering the colony.

Colony #2: Indian Ridge Marsh North (in Phragmites reeds near 116th Street)-
Walter Marcisz noted a great deal of BCNH activity at the Indian Ridge Marsh North colony in Phragmites reeds near 116th Street during April & May, including one active nest (incubating adult at reed edges on 7 May), but many other unseen nests (hidden in reeds) were undoubtedly present. The first juveniles began to emerge on 28 May, when Marcisz observed four young of the year at the reed edges. Young were also heard calling from nests on this date. Both Indian Ridge colonies were apparently very successful in 1994. On 3 July, Marcisz counted 140 fresh juveniles of the year at Indian Ridge. At least half of these birds were at the Phragmites colony near 116th & Torrence Avenue.

Colony #3: Big Marsh (in Phragmites reeds)-
Virtually no BCNH were noted at Big Marsh during April & early May, and it at first seemed likely that BCNH would not nest at this location in 1994. The fact that water levels had been lowered at this site during the previous year by the landowners (Waste Management, Inc.) may have contributed to the conspicuous absence of BCNH, but this is only speculation. Predation and disturbance may have also been contributing factors to the lack of activity. Nesting, however, was apparently well under way by early June. On 9 June, Walter Marcisz noted 100+ adult BCNH (including many carrying nesting material into the reeds) at Big Marsh. Nesting was apparently successful, as Marcisz noted 58 juveniles of the year (just out of the nest) at the Big Marsh reed edges on 30 July. Apparently, no USEPA survey of the Big Marsh BCNH colony was conducted in 1994.

1995: Breeding: A rough estimate of 650-900 pairs nested at three LCal locations in 1995. It is worth noting that the Indian Ridge Marsh North Phragmites colony near 116th & Torrence Avenue was deserted in 1995, presumably because of extremely low water levels. With the clearing of a blocked drainage culvert and the repair of broken water main early in 1995, water levels at Indian Ridge Marsh North dropped and the marsh was essentially drained. It is at least possible that some BCNH from that colony may have moved to the Heron Pond site, which is a new nesting location for LCal.

Details of the three colonies are as follows-

Colony #1: Indian Ridge Marsh North (in cottonwood trees near 122nd & Torrence Ave.)-
Walter Marcisz counted 227 nests (adults on) at Indian Ridge Marsh North in cottonwood trees near 122nd & Torrence Avenue on 16 May, but it is possible that more birds may have begun nesting at this location after the foliage became too thick to easily count nests. This colony was again very successful in 1995 (many fresh juveniles were noted in nests by Marcisz on 12 June & 2 July).

Colony #2: Heron Pond (in Phragmites reeds)-
A new LCal nesting site, with an estimated 50-100 pairs of BCNH nested at this location in 1995. On 23 April, Walter Marcisz noted a significant amount of BCNH activity at Heron Pond, located on the south side of 122nd Street, immediately west of Indian Ridge Marsh. Investigating further, he found that numerous BCNH were at this site, including two active nests with incubating adults visible at the reed
edges. Heavy activity continued throughout May & June, with many adult BCNH observed carrying nesting material to other nests hidden in the reeds. The exact number of birds present at this site was difficult to assess, as there appeared to be at least some movement of birds between the Heron Pond colony and the Indian Ridge Marsh North tree colony. The Heron Pond colony appeared to be successful, however, with just-fledged juveniles noted by Marcisz at the reed edges on 11 June. Marcisz also heard many young calling from nests hidden in the reeds on this date.

Colony #3: Big Marsh (in Phragmites reeds)
With the recent installation of a water-control weir at the entrance to Big Marsh, water levels at that location were under control again, and all indications suggest that BCNH had an excellent nesting season at Big Marsh. A rough estimate of 300-600 pairs of BCNH nested at Big Marsh in 1995. Walter Marcisz counted 630 BCNH at this location during a 29 April evening survey of BCNH dispersing from the colony en route to foraging areas. Activity at the colony remained high, and on 12 June Marcisz noted many adults carrying nesting material into the reeds and many juveniles at the edge of the marsh. Marcisz also noted many fresh juveniles at the Big Marsh reed edges on 12 & 16 July. Additionally, per James Landing (personal communication), Sue Elston (USEPA) did enter the Big Marsh colony in 1995, counting 100 active BCNH nests at the edge of the colony. Although many more nests were apparently present, Elston did not proceed further, in an effort to avoid disturbing the birds. (WJM)

1996: Breeding: A spring count of 1,558 BCNH at LCal (1,150 at Big Marsh counted by Walter Marcisz during evening dispersal on 4 May; and 408 at Heron Pond counted by Walter Marcisz during evening dispersal on 5 May) suggests that ~750 pairs of BCNH nested at LCal in 1996. Marcisz noted freshly-fledged juveniles of the year at the Heron Pond colony on 20 June, and Marcisz also heard many young of the year calling from nests at both the Big Marsh and Heron Pond colonies on 20 June. Note: BCNH did not nest at the Indian Ridge Marsh North colony in cottonwood trees near 122nd & Torrence Avenue in 1996. Based on observations by Marcisz, it appears that the BCNH were intimidated by a pair of Red-tailed Hawks already nesting in the cottonwood grove upon the night-herons’ arrival. Great Egrets nesting in the same cottonwood grove seemed to be relatively unaffected by the presence of the nesting Red-tailed Hawks, and the egrets had a successful nesting season at that location in 1996. (WJM)

1997: Breeding: Nested at only one LCal location in 1997 (Big Marsh in Phragmites reeds). Walter Marcisz counted 613 BCNH at Big Marsh during evening dispersal on 10 May. Based on this count, Marcisz estimates that perhaps 300 pairs nested at LCal in 1997. A significant decline from the previous year.

1998: Breeding: Nested at only one LCal location in 1998 (Big Marsh in Phragmites reeds). Walter Marcisz counted 712 BCNH at Big Marsh during evening dispersal on 9 May. Based on this count, perhaps 350 pairs nested at LCal in 1998. On 13 June, Marcisz observed many nests with incubating adults at the Big Marsh reed edges, along with a continuous stream of adults carrying nesting material into the colony. Numerous young BCNH were also heard calling from nests by Marcisz on this date. Based on the activity observed on 13 June, Marcisz believed that as many as 500 pairs of BCNH could be nesting at Big Marsh, but no nest count was taken. Marcisz observed at least 70 fresh juvenile BCNH at the Big Marsh reed edges on 1 July.

1999: Breeding: Nested in 1999 at only one LCal location (Indian Ridge Marsh North, in Phragmites reeds near 116th Street). An estimated 400 pairs of BCNH nested at that location, based on a total of 808 adults counted at the colony by Walter Marcisz during the spring of 1999. The traditional Big Marsh Phragmites reeds colony was flooded early in in the year, and the BCNH abandoned that site in 1999. Details of the colony are as follows-

Colony #1: Indian Ridge Marsh North (in Phragmites reeds near 116th Street)-
4-18-99: Hundreds of adults estimated to be present at the colony by Walter Marcisz, with many adults carrying nesting material into the reeds.
4-22-99: 808 adults counted at colony by Walter Marcisz during evening dispersal, with many adults carrying nesting material into the reeds.
5-8-99: 715 adults & one 1st-spring BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz during evening dispersal, with adults still seen carrying nesting material into the reeds.
5-22-99: Most of the nests apparently hidden in the reeds, but at least 15 active nests visible at the reed edges. One nestling seen in one nest, and many young heard calling from other nests. Adults still carrying nesting material into reeds.
5-29-99: Many active nests visible at reed edges, many young heard calling from nests, adults still carrying nesting material into reeds.
6-19-99: 32 fresh juveniles of the year counted at reed edges, many adults still on nests, many young heard calling from nests, adults still nest-building.
7-5-99, 7-7-99, & 7-25-99: Many fresh juveniles of the year still present, many young heard calling from nests. (WJM)
Discussion: After fifteen consecutive years of use, the traditional LCal (Big Marsh) BCNH nesting colony was abandoned in 1999 due to high water levels caused by a blocked drainage culvert. The high water almost completely covered the reeds that the BCNH had previously nested in. The blocked culvert was cleared later in the year by the City of Chicago in cooperation with the landowner (Waste Management, Inc.) and other agencies. Once drainage was restored, the Big Marsh water level returned to a depth more appropriate for BCNH nesting, but BCNH apparently never nested at Big Marsh again. As of 2012, there are no confirmed records of BCNH nesting at Big Marsh after 1998. (WJM)
2000: Breeding: Nested in 2000 at only one LCal location (Indian Ridge Marsh North, in Phragmites reeds near 116th Street). Believed to have had poor nesting success because of consistently high water levels. The high water levels drowned and killed off portions of the nesting substrate (cattails & reeds), and may actually have flooded out some of the nests. Number of active nests difficult to estimate, perhaps 200 nests at the very most.
Details of the colony are as follows-
Colony #1: Indian Ridge Marsh North (in Phragmites reeds near 116th Street)
4-8-00: 188+ adults present at colony.
4-22-00: 442 BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz during evening dispersal.
5-6-00: 559 BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz & Tadas Birutis during evening dispersal, with adults still seen carrying nesting material into the reeds.
6-17-00: Most of the nests apparently hidden in the reeds, but several active nests visible at the reed edges. Young seen in nests, and young also heard calling from other nests. Adults still carrying nesting material into reeds.
6-18-00: Many young of the year seen & heard. Adults on nests still visible.
7-16-00: Approximately 50 fresh juveniles of the year still present at colony.
7-30-00: Many fresh juveniles of the year still present at colony. (WJM)
2001: Breeding: An estimated 300-350 pairs nested in Phragmites reeds at the LCal (Heron Pond) colony, based on 706 BCNH counted at the colony by Walter Marcisz on 5 May. Note: In 2001, the LCal BCNH colony moved from the previous year’s location (Indian Ridge Marsh North) to an adjacent wetland (Heron Pond). Problematic water levels at Indian Ridge (first too high, then too low) created an unsuitable environment for BCNH nesting at the Indian Ridge site in 2001. In an effort to mediate the severely fluctuating water levels, a water level control structure was installed at Indian Ridge Marsh by the City of Chicago in 2001.
Details of the colony are as follows:

Colony #1: Heron Pond (in *Phragmites* reeds)-
4-26-01: 643 BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz during evening dispersal, including at least 3 adults carrying nesting material.
5-5-01: 706 BCNH counted by Walter Marcisz during evening dispersal.
6-2-01: Many incubating/brooding adults observed on nests at reed edges.
6-27-01: Many fresh juveniles of the year present at colony.
7-14-01: Many fresh juveniles of the year present at colony. (WJM)

**2002:** Breeding: An estimated 375 pairs nested at two LCal locations in 2002 (an estimated 304 pairs at the Indian Ridge Marsh North *Phragmites* colony; and an estimated 71 pairs in *Phragmites* at Heron Pond). Estimates were based on evening surveys of the colonies conducted by Walter Marcisz and Margaret Kurcz for Jeffrey Levengood’s Illinois Natural History Survey study of Black-crowned Night-Heron at Lake Calumet Wetlands. In addition to population surveys and contaminant assessments, the study tracked the progress of 48 marked nests at LCal.

Details of the two colonies are as follows:

Colony #1: Indian Ridge Marsh North (in *Phragmites* reeds near 116th Street)-
First arrivals (16 BCNH) noted at Indian Ridge Marsh North on 17 March. Multiple birds noted carrying sticks into the reeds by 6 April. A total of 608 BCNH counted at the colony by Walter Marcisz & Margaret Kurcz during evening dispersal on 12 May included 65 adults carrying nesting material into the reeds. A total of 58 fledged juveniles (at reed edges, perched in trees, and flying about) were counted at the colony on 7 July, and 48 fledged juveniles (at reed edges) were counted there on 21 July.

Colony #2: Heron Pond (in *Phragmites* reeds)-
At least 33 (adult) BCNH first noted at Heron Pond on 6 April, and 12 BCNH (including one carrying nesting material) noted there on 9 April. Nest-building was also observed on 26 April. A total of 142 BCNH were counted at the colony by Walter Marcisz & Margaret Kurcz during evening dispersal on 10 May. The first fledged juvenile of the year (out of the nest, in a tree) was noted on 16 June. (WJM)

**2003:** Breeding: An estimated 320 pairs nested at only one LCal location (Indian Ridge Marsh North, in *Phragmites* reeds near 116th Street) in 2003, based on a count of 641 adults counted at that site by Walter Marcisz & Allison Klement on 10 May for Jeffrey Levengood’s Illinois Natural History Survey study of Black-crowned Night-Heron at Lake Calumet Wetlands. A very serious spring wildfire at LCal (Heron Pond) apparently prevented BCNH from nesting at Heron Pond in 2003.

Note: Results of Levengood’s INHS study indicated that although gulls, crows, and other avian predators were present, predation did not have a demonstrable impact on productivity of the Lake Calumet Wetlands BCNH colony. In addition, gross deformities in embryos and nestlings were not observed, and reproductive parameters for BCNH nesting at Indian Ridge Marsh were within normal limits for this species. Thus, it would appear that environmental contaminants are not having observable impacts on the productivity of this population (Levengood, et al., 2005).

Details of the colony are as follows:

Colony #1: Indian Ridge Marsh North (in *Phragmites* reeds near 116th Street)-
4-26-03: 427 BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz & Allison Klement during evening dispersal, first nest-building observed (4 adults carrying sticks).
5-10-03: 641 BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz & Allison Klement during evening dispersal (including 12 adults carrying sticks).
6-22-03: First fledged juvenile of the year noted at LCal away from the nesting colony.
7-12-03: 54 fresh juveniles of the year counted at colony by Walter Marcisz.
7-18-03: 79 fresh juveniles of the year counted at colony by Allison Klement. (WJM)
2004: Breeding: An estimated 300 pairs nested at two LCal locations in 2004 (numbers difficult to estimate as birds arrived at Heron Pond very late in the season- but perhaps a total of 200 pairs nested at the Indian Ridge Marsh North Phragmites colony, with perhaps another 100 pairs nesting in Phragmites at Heron Pond).

Details of the two colonies are as follows-

Colony #1: Indian Ridge Marsh North (in Phragmites reeds near 116th Street)-
5-8-04: 431 BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz during evening dispersal. Several adult BCNH were noted on nests at reed edges on this date.
6-13-04: Walter Marcisz & Jill Anderson observed many adults carrying nesting material, and many young BCNH were heard calling from nests. Also, the first fresh fledged juvenile BCNH out of the nest was noted on this date.
7-11-04: 25 juveniles present at Indian Ridge Marsh North colony, also many unseen young BCNH heard calling from nests.

Colony #2: Heron Pond (in Phragmites reeds)-
5-29-04: 2 adult BCNH noted on nests at reed edges and 2 adult BCNH noted carrying nesting material.
6-5-04: 70 BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz at mid-day.
6-13-04: 93 BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz & Jill Anderson at mid-day, including at least 9 adults carrying sticks. (WJM)

2005: Breeding: 200+ pairs initiated nesting in Phragmites reeds at the LCal colony, but successful nesting was hampered by fluctuating water levels (high at Indian Ridge Marsh North early in the season, low at Heron Pond late in the season). Drought-induced low water levels at Heron Pond late in the season apparently provided land-based predators with easy access to nests. Many, perhaps most of the nests were unsuccessful due to heavy predation.

Details of the 2 colonies are as follows-

Colony #1: Indian Ridge Marsh North (in Phragmites reeds near 116th Street)-
4-17-05: 271 BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz during evening dispersal, including one adult carrying nesting material.
5-7-05: Marcisz could only locate 11 BCNH at Indian Ridge Marsh North on this date. After 4-17-05, essentially the entire BCNH colony moved from Indian Ridge Marsh North to Heron Pond, possibly because of high water levels at Indian Ridge.

Colony #2: Heron Pond (in Phragmites reeds)-
4-17-05: 66 BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz, including two adults carrying nesting material and 11 pairs on or at nests at the reed edges.
4-30-05: 295 BCNH counted by Walter Marcisz during evening dispersal at Heron Pond, including four adults carrying nesting material.
5-7-05: 447 BCNH counted by Walter Marcisz & Margaret Baker during evening dispersal at Heron Pond.
5-17-05: Cherie LeBlanc (USDA Forest Service) counted & tagged 75 BCNH nests while wading 2/3 the way around the northernmost pond at Heron Pond (there are at least four different ponds at Heron Pond). Most nests had eggs. A few had small young. Walter Marcisz also visited the colony on this date, and from the shore could see many adults on nests, and one nest with eggs.
6-15-05: On this date Cherie LeBlanc (USDA Forest Service) communicated to Marcisz that dozens of BCNH eggs & newborn chicks were lost at Heron Pond immediately prior to the Memorial Day weekend. She indicated there had been two more such events since then, and it was clear some sort of predation was occurring. All available evidence seemed to suggest that land-based predators were responsible.
6-18-05: Walter Marcisz visited the devastated Heron Pond colony on this date. No active BCNH nests were visible at the two northernmost ponds (both of these ponds had been full of visible active nests in mid-May). Marcisz however was able to locate seven active BCNH nests at the reed edges of the more southerly ponds (including 3 nests with incubating adults and 4 nests with young).

7-3-05: Marcisz observed the first two fledged juveniles (away from the colony) at LCal (L.Calumet at Harborside International Golf Course).

7-16-05: Marcisz counted 27 juveniles and two adults at the Heron Pond colony. The southernmost ponds (apparently with the deepest water) held the most birds. (WJM)

Details: First adults (6) noted at nesting colony on 1 April. One adult observed on nest by 29 April. 228 Black-crowned Night-Herons counted by Walter Marcisz during evening dispersal on 6 May (including 5 nest-building). First young heard calling from nests on 27 May. Forty nest-building adults observed during a brief visit to the colony on 29 May. 100+ BCNH present, and many young heard calling from nests on 16 June. First fresh juveniles (8) out of the nest observed on 2 July. Twenty-seven fresh juveniles observed at the colony on 23 July. (WJM)

2007: Breeding: Nested at two LCal locations this year, as follows-
Colony #1: Indian Ridge Marsh North (in Phragmites reeds near 116th Street)-
Number of nesting pairs not known, but many of the nesting birds were apparently successful. On visits to the Indian Ridge (Phragmites) colony on 17 & 30 June, Walter Marcisz observed many adults and also heard many unseen young calling from nests hidden in the thick reeds. On 15 July Marcisz observed 53 fresh, just-fledged juvenile Black-crowned Night-Herons at the Indian Ridge Marsh N. reed-edges, and again heard many young calling from nests hidden in the reeds.
Colony #2: Lake Calumet Gull Colony (in trees)-
Daniel Ludwig of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources reported that Black-crowned Night-Herons also nested this year at LCal in small trees located at the Lake Calumet gull colony. On 8 May, Daniel Ludwig and Aaron Spencer (of the USDA, Wildlife Services) visited the Ring-billed Gull colony located on the Clean Harbors property (between slips 4 and 6) at Lake Calumet. There, they observed a minimum of nine Black-crowned Night-Heron nests in small trees (primarily mulberry) along the center of the peninsula. Three of the nests were large, and had Black-crowned Night-Herons sitting on them. The remaining “nests” were smaller and may or may not have been completed. Nest building was not observed on this date. (WJM)

2008: Breeding: 100+ pairs nested again in Phragmites reeds at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) colony. Heavy rains/high water levels during the month of June may have flooded some nests and possibly impacted overall nesting success.
Details: First adults (4) observed at colony on 29 March. Nest-building first noted on 20 April. 234 Black-crowned Night-Herons counted during evening dispersal at colony on 27 April. Ten active nests with incubating adults observed at reed edges on 10 May, but many more nests were undoubtedly hidden from view. First freshly-fledged juvenile of the year (away from colony) noted on 21 July. (WJM)

2009: Breeding: 125+ pairs nested at three LCal locations. Based on ground counts by Walter Marcisz during the spring of 2009, at least 85 pairs nested in Phragmites reeds at Indian Ridge Marsh North; and approximately 40 pairs nested in Phragmites reeds at Heron Pond. Per Nicole Kamins of the Chicago Department of Environment, a small number of Black-crowned Night-Herons also at Lake Calumet near the gull colony. Details of the three colonies are as follows-
Colony #1: Indian Ridge Marsh North (in Phragmites reeds near 116th Street)-
5-2-09: 132 BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz during evening dispersal. At least four nests with incubating adults were visible at reed edges.
5-9-09: 170 BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz & Samuel Burckhardt during evening dispersal. At least four active nests were visible at the reed edges, but many more hidden nests were undoubtedly present. Good views of the colony were impeded by extremely thick reeds as well as severely limited access to the site.
Colony #2: Heron Pond (in Phragmites reeds)-
5-9-09: 73 adult BCNH counted at colony by Walter Marcisz, Margaret Baker, & Samuel Burckhardt at mid-day. Five active nests were visible at reed edges (including 1 nest w/2 eggs), and two adults were seen carrying nesting material.
5-12-09: 79 adults counted by Walter Marcisz at colony during evening dispersal, including one adult carrying nesting material.
6-9-09: 42 BCNH (38 adults, 3 1st-summer, 1 unknown age) counted by Walter Marcisz at colony. Eight active nests were visible at reed edges, and one adult was seen carrying nesting material. Young were heard calling from nests.
6-27-09: 13 adults & three fresh juveniles observed by Walter Marcisz & Fran Morel at edge of colony. Six active nests were visible at reed edges (including 1 nest w/1 egg; 1 nest w/2 eggs; 4 nests w/incubating or brooding adults). Young were heard calling from unseen nests.
7-20-09: 39 fresh juveniles visible at reed edges.
Colony #3: Lake Calumet Gull Colony (in trees)-
Per Nicole Kamins of the Chicago Department of Environment, a small number of Black-crowned Night-Herons also at Lake Calumet near the gull colony. (WJM)
2010: Breeding: Based on ground counts of individuals and evening dispersal counts conducted by Walter Marcisz during the spring, approximately 50 pairs of Black-crowned Night-Herons nested in Phragmites reeds at LCal (Heron Pond) during the 2010 breeding season. On 8 May, Walter Marcisz, Samuel Burckhardt, & Joan Norek observed 112 adults there (1 carrying nesting material), and at least 14 active nests were visible at the reed edges. Nestlings were present in nests on 3 July, and recently fledged juveniles were observed there by Marcisz on 26 July. Black-crowned Night-Herons apparently did not nest at the traditional Indian Ridge Marsh North rookery during 2010. Marcisz visited that site on 1 & 19 May, but observed no BCNH at the site on either date. (WJM)
2011: In 2011, there was apparently no successful Black-crowned Night-Heron nesting at the traditional LCal locations, for the first time in at least twenty-seven years. Early in the 2011 nesting season, only a very few Black-crowned Night-Herons were observed at their traditional LCal nesting areas (high count = 13 on 7 May), and it at first appeared that the BCNH would not attempt to nest at LCal. The season progressed, and as of 1 June it became clear that small numbers of Black-crowned Night-Herons were beginning to nest at LCal’s Indian Ridge Marsh North. On 1 June Carolyn Marsh & Walter Marcisz counted 24 Black-crowned-Night-Herons (22 adults, 2 first-summer) at LCal’s Indian Ridge Marsh North in Phragmites reeds near 116th Street. Although actual nests were difficult to see, one of the BCNH was carrying nesting material into the reeds, and it was clear that the BCNH were attempting to nest. Walter Marcisz returned to the location on 25 July, and despite the presence of nesting Great Egrets on that date, no Black-crowned Night-Herons or evidence of BCNH nesting was observed. Based on available evidence, it seems clear the nesting attempt by Black-crowned Night-Herons at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) failed in 2011. (WJM)
2012: Very scarce at LCal, with no nesting behavior noted at any of the traditional locations. If this species nested at LCal in 2012, in did so only in very small numbers.
LCal high count for this species during the spring of 2012 was ten individuals observed at Indian Ridge Marsh South by Samuel Burckhardt on 5 May. LCal high count for this species during the summer of 2012 was 11 (2 adults, 4 subadults, 5 juveniles) at LCal (Heron Pond) on 29 July. (WJM)

6. YELLOW-CROWNED-NIGHT-HERON (E)
Nyctanassa violacea

One to a few adults are present during breeding season every year. Occasionally a juvenile or juveniles are also observed. Attempted breeding has been confirmed three times; twice this resulted in fledglings.

Summary:
1993: Breeding: Two pairs nested at Powderhorn Lake F.P. (Cook Co.) (23 April – 11 July). Nest #1 fledged five young. Nest #2 had four eggs but was eventually abandoned before the eggs hatched. (WJM)
1994: Breeding: Walter Marcisz located three active nests (adults on) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake Forest Preserve) on 7 June. Unfortunately, all nests had been deserted by 12 June per Joe Nowak. Marcisz revisited the site on 19 June and confirmed that all nests had been abandoned (cause unknown). Others: One (adult) at LCal (Big Marsh) on 9 June, but two (adults) at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 3 July. (WJM)
1995: Yellow-crowned Night-Herons did not return to their traditional nesting site at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) in 1995, possibly because of disturbance from work crews repairing railroad tracks adjacent to the nesting area. It is interesting to note that fairly late in the breeding season, adult Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were noted nest-building at Wooded Isle in Jackson Park, Chicago. It is at least a possibility that this nesting involved individuals which had relocated from the Powderhorn site. Others: One fresh juvenile at LCal (Big Marsh) on 16 July is highly suggestive that nesting occurred somewhere in the Calumet region in 1995. (WJM)
1996: One (adult) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 28 April. One (adult) at LCal (Big Marsh) on 20 June. (WJM)
1997: One (adult) at LCal (Big Marsh) on 10 May. (WJM)
1998: Two (1 adult, 1 immature) at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 16 June (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 8: 29)
One (adult) at LCal (Big Marsh) on 11 July. Two flyovers at LCal (near Calumet Water Reclamation Plant) on 28 May. (WJM)
1999: One (adult) at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 19 June. (WJM) Two (adults) at LCal on 6 July (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 9: 28)
2000: Maximum counts: Four (adults) at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 13 June (Dan Kirk) & 18 June (Walter Marcisz); and one (adult) at same location on 30 July (Walter Marcisz). (MJIB 10: 28)
Others: One at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 6 June (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 10:28)
2001: Maximum count: Two (adults) at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh South) on 17 June. (WJM) Others: One (adult) at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 2 June, and one (juvenile) at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 5 August. (WJM)
2002: One at LCal (Wolf Lake/William Powers Fish & Wildlife Area) on 7 May (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 11: 146) One (adult) at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 26 May. (WJM)
2003: Pair of adults at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 22 June. One (adult) at the same location on 1 June. (WJM) One (adult) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 25 July (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 13: 27)
2004: No records.
2005: One (juvenile) at LCal (Deadstick Pond) from 21 July - 7 August. (WJM)
2006: One (adult) at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 16 June. (WJM)
Note: In August of 2006, rather large numbers of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons assembled at LCal (Heron Pond), including three (adults) on 6 August and six (4 adults, 1 1st-summer, 1 juvenile) on 20 & 26 August. It is not clear whether these birds nested at LCal or if they were simply post-breeding dispersals from some other location. (WJM)
2007: LCal (2; adult & juvenile), 28 July (Robert Fisher, Urs Geiser); one at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh) 22 July (Randy Shonkwiler); Beaubien Woods F.P. (Cook Co.) 12 June (Douglas Stotz. (MJIB 17: 21) Amar Ayyash & Jeff Dundek reported an adult at LCal (Heron Pond) on 15 July. (WJM)  
2008: One at LCal (Heron Pond) on 10 June. (WJM)  
2009: Breeding: Walter Marcisz & Alan Stokie observed one fledged young (fresh juvenal plumage with many down feathers still present on its head) at the LCal (Heron Pond) night-heron colony on 25 July. 
Details: The bird was roughly the size of a Black-crowned Night-Heron (several were nearby). It had a stout, thick, all-gray bill and a “lanky” body structure with a longish neck and very long legs. It had grayish-brown plumage with many tiny triangular white spots on its wings. (WJM)
2010: Four (adults) at LCal (Heron Pond) on 17 July (Randy Shonkwiler). (MJIB 20: 23) One at LCal (Indian Ridge Marshes) on 10 June (David Antieau). (eBird) One (adult) at LCal (MWRD SEPA Station 1 at south end of Indian Ridge Marsh South) on 15 June. (WJM)  
2011: One (adult) at LCal (Heron Pond) on 21 June & 15 July. (WJM)  
2012: Two (1 adult, 1 juvenile) at LCal (Heron Pond) on 21 July. Likely nested nearby. (WJM)

7. OSPREY (E)  
Pandion haliaetus

First observed in the breeding season in 2001, Osprey began to nest at the platform at Powderhorn in 2003, and nested every year since, sometimes fledging young and sometimes having nest failure. Another pair has nested on the Cargill property from 2009-2011. In 2012 the nest site was taken over by a hawk.

Summary:
1993-2000: No breeding records.  
2001: One at LCal (Wolf Lake/William Powers Fish & Wildlife Area) on 16 July (Carolyn Marsh). (MJIB 11: 30)
2002: One flyover at LCal (Village of Burnham) on 23 June (WJM)  
Note: While conducting surveys for the Calumet BioBlitz at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 23 & 24 August, Walter Marcisz discovered that an Osprey nest platform had been erected at Powderhorn Lake. The top of the nest platform contained a loose assemblage of sticks. Carolyn Marsh investigated further and found that the nest platform had been erected by the Wildlife Field Office of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County in 1998. (WJM)  
2003: (Attempted) Breeding: A pair of Ospreys attempted nesting at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) in 2003. By 1 June, the pair had built a fairly substantial nest on a cell tower at the edge of the preserve. The cell tower was located to the west of the nest platform that had been erected by the Wildlife Field Office of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. By 6 June, the Osprey pair had apparently abandoned the cell tower nest. Even after abandonment, however, the pair remained on territory near the nest throughout June and July. (WJM)
2004: Breeding: Nested at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P. cell tower nest site), successfully hatching one young.
Details: Incubating or brooding adult noted on nest throughout May & June. Carolyn Marsh first observed one newly-hatched young in the nest on 6 July. Walter Marcisz observed the single nestling in the nest with its parents on 10, 16, & 18 July (the nest was videotaped on 18 July). (WJM)
2005: Breeding: Nested at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P. cell tower nest site), successfully hatching three young. On 31 July, Walter Marcisz watched the nest for one-half hour and consistently saw only two large young (apparently ready to fledge) remaining in the nest.
Details: Incubating adult noted on nest on 6, 13, & 14 May. Carolyn Marsh observed two hatchlings in the nest on 26 June. She revisited the nest on 2 July and saw three Osprey chicks in the nest on that date. Walter Marcisz also observed three young in the nest on 4 July. On 10 July Walter Marcisz & Jill Anderson visited the site and saw one adult on the nest, one adult perched below the nest, and at least two young in the nest. On 31 July, both adult Ospreys were perched near the nest. Marcisz watched the nest for one-half hour and consistently saw only two large young (apparently ready to fledge) remaining in the nest. (WJM)
2006: Breeding: Nested again at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P. cell tower nest site), but nesting was apparently unsuccessful in 2006.
Details: Pair of Ospreys returned to Powderhorn Lake F.P. nest by 1 April. Pair observed copulating on nest on 8 April. Nest-building observed on 30 April. Adult on nest (apparently incubating) from at least 29 May – 12 June. By 25 June, incubating was terminated, and an adult was observed standing on nest (no young observed). Adults observed either standing on or off nest on 2, 4, 9, & 16 July. No young or indirect evidence of young was observed on any of these dates. (WJM)
2007: Breeding: Nested successfully at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.). Three young hatched, and at least two of the young successfully fledged. The Osprey pair nested on a different structure than in previous years (the top platform of the cell tower that the pair previously nested on was permanently removed in October, 2006).
Details: The Osprey pair returned to Powderhorn Lake F.P. as of 31 March. On a number of dates following 31 March, Carolyn Marsh discovered that the Ospreys were nesting on a wooden Osprey nest platform that had been erected by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County several years earlier. The new nest location was much lower and decidedly more exposed to potential disturbance than the old location. On 18 June Carolyn Marsh observed the nest for a lengthy period of time. She was able to see a total of three young in the nest. Both adults were also present. On 30 June, Walter Marcisz also observed all three young in the nest. One adult was standing on the nest, the other was in a nearby tree. On 29 July, Walter Marcisz observed the pair of adults perched at the top of a bare tree near the nest. One just-fledged juvenile Osprey was perched below them. A second fledged juvenile was still in the nest. He later watched both of the juveniles and the pair of adults fly off for occasional sallies over the lake. Clearly, at least two of the Osprey young successfully fledged. (WJM)
2008: Breeding: Nested successfully at LCal (nest platform at Powderhorn Lake F.P.). Four young hatched, and all four young fledged successfully.
Details: Walter Marcisz noted that at least one of the adult Osprey pair members had returned to the Powderhorn Lake F.P. nest by 30 March, and that both pair members were present on 13 April, with one of the adults busily arranging sticks in the nest. An adult was observed incubating by 26 April. Marcisz observed two newly-hatched young in the nest on 11 June. Later the same day, Carolyn Marsh reported there was a total of three hatchlings in the nest. On 6 July, Marcisz revisited the nest and was able to discern that there were actually four young in the nest. One of the young birds was much smaller than the other three, and it apparently hatched much later than the others. On 20 July, Walter Marcisz,
Carolyn Marsh, & Roger Shamley observed that the pair of adults and two fledged juveniles were perched in trees near the nest, and two large young (including the “runt”) were in the nest. Shamley photographed the birds on this date. On 27 July, Marcisz observed that at least one adult was present, three fledged juveniles were perched together in a tree on the east side of the lake, and the last-born “runt” (now in juvenal plumage) was still on the nest platform. On 3 August, Walter Marcisz & Carolyn Marsh observed the pair of adults and three fledged juveniles (including the last-born “runt”) at or near the nest platform. The last-born of the four young was on the nest platform during much of the 3 August visit, but after a while it took flight and went for a short flight over the lake. (WJM)

2009: Breeding: Two pairs nested at LCal in 2009: One pair at the traditional Powderhorn Lake F.P. nest; and a second pair at a newly discovered nest on Cargill property (117th & Torrence Ave., Chicago) adjacent to Indian Ridge Marsh North. A single young was assumed to have fledged from the Powderhorn nest, and two young apparently fledged from the Cargill/Indian Ridge nest. Details are as follows-

Nest #1: Powderhorn Lake F.P. (on wooden Osprey nest platform)-
Walter Marcisz observed a pair of adult Ospreys perched on the nest platform on 6 April, and one incubating adult on the nest on 26 April. On 16 June, Carolyn Marsh observed an adult female standing on the nest, with one newly-hatched chick in the nest. On 18 June, Walter Marcisz & Joel Greenberg saw a pair of adults standing on the nest, with two newly-hatched nestlings in the nest. On all dates after 27 June, Marcisz observed only one young in the nest (apparently one of the original two young did not survive). Marcisz observed the pair of adults perched in a bare tree near the nest and one juvenile in the nest on 23 July. A fisherman who had been watching the nest all day said the adults had been coaxing the juvenile all day, but it had not flown yet. Walter Marcisz & Alan Stokie revisited the nest on 25 July. On that date they observed one adult Osprey perched in a bare tree near the nest. The nest was empty.

Nest #2: Cargill property (on cell tower at 117th & Torrence Ave., Chicago- near Indian Ridge Marsh North)-
On 9 June, Walter Marcisz observed a pair of adult Ospreys on the cell tower nest, including one incubating female. When he revisited the nest with Joel Greenberg on 18 June, the pair of adults were on the cell tower nest, and two tiny young were in the nest. On 20 July, Marcisz observed one adult & two very large young in the nest (the other pair member was perched on a nearby cell tower). Marcisz revisited the nest on 23 July. On that date, the pair of adults was on the nest, and one fledged juvenile was flying around in the vicinity of the nest. A Cargill worker said he had been watching the nest all year, and that both young had fledged. He also said the nest had been active for five years. A very believable statement, as Ospreys have been frequently seen in this general area during previous years, including adults carrying nesting material. (WJM)

2010: Breeding: Two pairs nested at LCal in 2009: One pair at Powderhorn Lake F.P.; and one pair on Cargill property (117th & Torrence Ave., Chicago) adjacent to Indian Ridge Marsh North. The Powderhorn nest was successful, and the Cargill/Indian Ridge nest was also believed to be successful. Details are as follows-

Nest #1: Powderhorn Lake F.P. (on newly-built 90 foot nest platform which had been erected during the winter of 2009-2010)-
Walter Marcisz noted one adult female Osprey had arrived at the site on 30 March. On 2 April, Carolyn Marsh noted that the pair of adults was present at the site (including an adult female which was carrying nesting material and landed on the tower). Marcisz noted that one (apparently incubating) adult was on the nest on 14 June; and on a subsequent 19 June visit the adult female was standing on the nest which contained one tiny nestling. One 24 June, Carolyn Marsh noted three nestlings in the nest. On 31 July,
Marcisz observed one juvenile Osprey was still in the nest, and the adult female was perched in a nearby tree. A second fledged juvenile was perched on a cell tower near the nest.

Nest #2: Cargill property (on cell tower at 117th & Torrence Ave., Chicago- near Indian Ridge Marsh North)-

Walter Marcisz noted that a pair of adult Ospreys had arrived at the cell tower site by 30 March, and that incubation was in progress on 1, 8, & 19 May. Marcisz noted the adult female and one young in the nest on 14, 19, & 22 June. When Marcisz revisited the site on 26 July, the nest appeared to be empty (no Ospreys present). On 28 July, Brian Tang photographed a pair of adult Ospreys with one juvenile at the 126th St. Marsh, not far from the Cargill nest site. (WJM)

2011: Attempted to nest (unsuccessfully) at two LCal locations in 2011 as follows-

Nest #1: Attempted to nest again at LCal (90-foot nest platform at Powderhorn Lake F.P.), but nest was apparently unsuccessful, perhaps due to high winds/adverse weather. Pair of adults were at nest site as of 4 April, but nest site was deserted by 1 June.

Nest #2: Attempted to nest again at LCal (cell tower on Cargill property at 117th & Torrence Ave., Chicago - near Indian Ridge Marsh North), but nest was apparently unsuccessful, perhaps due to high winds/adverse weather. Pair of adults were at nest site as of 31 March, but nest site was deserted by 8 June. (WJM)

2012: One pair attempted to nest on a cell tower at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.), but the birds were ultimately unsuccessful. Pair arrived at site on 30 March, nest-building was noted on 9 April, and 1 incubating adult was observed on the nest on 29 April & 4 May. By 29 May, the nest was empty & abandoned. The other traditional LCal Osprey nest (on cell tower on Cargill property at 117th & Torrence Ave., Chicago – near Indian Ridge Marsh North) was taken over by a pair of Red-tailed Hawks as of 30 March. Ospreys did not attempt to nest at this site in 2012. (WJM)

8. NORTHERN HARRIER (E)

*Circus cyaneus*

Occasional birds are sighted during the breeding season; behavior suggestive of nesting was observed in 1994 and 1997.

**Summary:**

1993: No breeding records.

1994: (Possible) Breeding: Pair of adults at LCal (Railroad Prairie) on 14 May (Sherman Suter). (WJM) Others: One at LCal on 14 May (Steven Mlodinow). (MJIB 3: 147)

1995-1996: No breeding records.

1997: (Possible) Breeding: Two at LCal (Norfolk & Southern RR Prairie – located on east side of Stony Island Ave. just north of Big Marsh) during the second week of June, 1997 (Bill Peak). One (adult male) at LCal (Big Marsh – just south of Norfolk & Southern RR Prairie) on 20 July (Walter Marcisz). Suggestive of nesting, as this area appears to be suitable nesting habitat. (WJM)

1998: No breeding records.

1999: One at LCal on 16 May (Wes Serafin). (MJIB 8: 149)

2000: One (adult female) at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 18 June. (WJM)

2001-2009: No breeding records.

2010: One at LCal (Big Marsh) on 17 July (Randy Shonkwiler). (eBird)

2011-2012: No breeding records.
9. KING RAIL (E)
*Rallus elegans*

*Observed in some years during the breeding season; young juveniles (indicating local nesting) seen in 1994 at Big Marsh and 2003 in Deadstick Pond. Not observed since 2009.*

**Summary:**
1993: No records.
1994: Breeding: One very young juvenile was observed at LCal (Big Marsh) by Walter Marcisz, Wes Serafin, Barb Thayer, & Craig Thayer on 7 August. The bird was observed foraging in mud along reed edges at the southeast corner of Big Marsh. It was seen at very close range, perhaps fifteen feet. The bird was roughly the size of a Common Gallinule (several were present in the area). The overall body length was a few inches longer than a Lesser Yellowlegs (two were nearby). In overall shape and plumage coloration, it looked like a “several sizes too large” juvenile Virginia Rail. Its bill was long, decurved, and more massive than a Virginia Rail’s bill. Its breast and upperparts, including back & wings, were blackish gray. Its flanks were heavily barred with black, and its back & wings were heavily striped with black. Its wings had a chestnut patch, and there appeared to be at least a small amount of rufous on the bird’s sides. All observers present felt that the bird’s age suggested that nesting almost certainly occurred at Big Marsh. (WJM)
1995: No records.
1997: Two at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North at mud flat near 116th Street) on 18 May. (WJM)
2000: One at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 21 April (Douglas Stotz) (presumed migrant). (MJIB 9: 147)
2001-2002: No records.
2003: Breeding: One young at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 23 August (Randy Shonkwiler) (MJIB 13: 28). One young, presumably the same individual, was also observed at the same location on 31 August (Jill Anderson, Walter Marcisz, et al.). (WJM)
Others: One adult (ticking/courship call heard) at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 8 & 10 May. (WJM) One at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh South) on 2 June (Joe Lill). (eBird)
2004-2008: No records.
2009: One (heard) at LCal (Heron Pond) on 29 July (Joe Lill & Jeff Sundberg). (MJIB 19: 26)
2010-2012: No records.

10. COMMON GALLINULE (formerly COMMON MOORHEN) (E, IBA)
*Gallinula galeata* (formerly *Gallinula chloropus*)

*Over a dozen broods and scores of birds were common observations until 1995. Hemi-marsh conditions have been diminished throughout the Calumet since then, as have the number of gallinule nests. In the years between 1996 and 2002, between one and seven broods were observed annually. After that, one to two broods or none was the rule, with the exception of 2009, when muskrats briefly created the hemi-marsh conditions needed by these birds at Hegewisch Marsh.*
Summary:

1993: Breeding: At least 14 broods at LCal (8,5,3,3,3,3,3,3,3,3,3,3,2,1, & 1 young first noted at Indian Ridge Marsh North on 19 June and 18 & 31 July; 4 young at Indian Ridge Marsh South on 19 June; 1 young at north end of Lake Calumet on 5 July). One brood (1 young) at Powderhorn Lake F.P. on 27 June. One adult at Eggers Woods Forest Preserve on 9 & 19 June. (WJM)
Others: During Cook County Nesting Season Bird Census at Chi (Eggers Woods F.P.) (ad.); Riverdale (Bill Glass). (MJIB 1: 31)

1994: Breeding/Maximum count: 76 at LCal (76 adults & young, including at least 14 broods as follows: 8,6,5,3,3,1,1,1, & 1 young at Indian Ridge Marsh North; 4 & 2 young at Big Marsh; 4 & 3 young at Hegewisch Marsh; 7 young at Deadstick Pond) on 17 July.
Other: One (adult) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 7 June. (WJM)

1995: Breeding: Five broods at LCal (4 & 5 young at Hegewisch Marsh on 2 July; 7 young at Big Marsh on 2 July; 4 young at Deadstick Pond on 23 July; 1 young at Indian Ridge Marsh North on 30 July).
Note: Indian Ridge Marsh North has been the recent center of abundance for nesting Common Gallinules at LCal, however, with the clearing of a blocked drainage culvert and the repair of broken water main early in 1995, the unnaturally high water levels which had created wetland conditions at Indian Ridge have now disappeared. Indian Ridge Marsh now appears far too dry to provide significant nesting habitat for Common Gallinules in future years.
Others: Twenty-one (adults) at LCal (19 at Indian Ridge Marsh North; 2 at Hegewisch Marsh) on 6 May. Two (adults) at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 5 June & 3 July. One (adult) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 8 June & 2 July. (WJM)
1996: Breeding: At least one brood (5 young accompanied by 2 adults) at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 4 August. (WJM)
1997: Breeding: At least one brood (6 young) at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 20 July. (WJM) Others: Two (adults) at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 8 June. (WJM) Several pairs at LCal during June/July, but scarce compared to years past (James Landing). (MJIB 7: 33)
1998: Breeding: At least five broods and one other nest at LCal (pair of adults with 1 young and one other adult on nest at Heron Pond on 17 June; one brood of 4 young at Deadstick Pond on 8 July; three broods with 11, 4, & 4 young at Hegewisch Marsh on 11 July). Single adults or pairs also summered at Eggers Woods F.P., Big Marsh, and Indian Ridge Marsh North, suggesting possible nesting at those locations. (WJM)
Two broods (total of 5 young) at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 17 August (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 8: 32)
1999: Breeding: Three broods at LCal (1 young at Heron Pond on 19 June; 4 young at Deadstick Pond on 19 June; 7 young at Indian Ridge Marsh North on 5 July). (WJM)
Eight adults, three nests (plus broods) at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.), June/July (Mike Ward, many observers). One adult with three young at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 6 July (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 9: 31)
2000: Breeding: One nest (8 eggs) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 14 June (Dan Kirk); one brood (4 young) at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 17 June (Walter Marcisz); one adult with four young at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 6 June (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 10: 30) Maximum count: Eleven (adults) at LCal on 18 June. All were individual adults at widely spaced locations (7 at Indian Ridge Marsh North; 1 at Hegewisch Marsh; 3 at Deadstick Pond). (WJM)
Other: Two pairs at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.), June/July (Mike Ward). (MJIB 10:30)
2001: Breeding: One adult with large young at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 8 June, and pair with three large young, plus two broods of four at LCal (Deadstick Pond), on 13 July and 16 July, respectively (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 11: 31).
Others: Two at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 22 June (Mike Ward). (MJIB 11: 31).
Pair of adults at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 14 July. (WJM)
2002: Breeding: Four broods at LCal (5 young at Deadstick Pond on 14 July; 6 [different] young at Deadstick Pond on 21 July; 7 young at Hegewisch Marsh on 21 July; 3 young at Indian Ridge Marsh North on 21 July). (WJM)
2003: Breeding: One brood (1 young) at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 22 June.
Maximum count: Three calling adults at same location on 22 June. (WJM)
2004: Breeding: One brood (8 downy young) at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 3 July. (WJM)
Pair of adults at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) in June (Mike Ward fide Steve Bailey), and one juvenile there on 27 June (Carolyn Marsh). (MJIB 14: 29)
One juvenile at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 17 July (Douglas Stotz) (MJIB 14: 29)
Others: One adult at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 3 July, but two adults there on 11 July. Remains very scarce in LCal area. (WJM)
2005: Maximum count: Eight (adults) at LCal (2 at Indian Ridge Marsh North; 3 at Hegewisch Marsh; 3 at Deadstick Pond) on 18 June; 3 at Eggers Woods 16 July (Randy Shonkwiler). A remarkably high total of adult Common Gallinules for LCal based on recent years’ sightings, however, drought conditions later in the summer of 2005 may have precluded successful nesting. No Common Gallinule broods were observed at LCal in 2005. (WJM)
2006: Maximum count: Three at LCal (Indian Ridge Marshes) on 15 July (Randy Shonkwiler). (eBird)
Others: Pair of adults at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 10 July. One (adult) at LCal (Burnham Prairie) from 27 May – 2 July. One (adult) at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 4 July. (WJM)
2007: One (adult) at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 27 May & 17 June. (WJM)

2008: (Possible) Breeding: An observation of three juveniles at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) by Walter Marcisz on 28 September strongly suggests at least one successful nest was present at that location. Muskrats had begun to thin out the Hegewisch Marsh cattails in 2008, resulting in favorable nesting conditions for wetland birds (Marcisz counted at least seven muskrat lodges at Hegewisch Marsh on 28 September). Others: One (adult) at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 7 June & 26 July. One (adult) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 10 June. Three at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 31 May. One (adult) at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 17 June & 15 July. (WJM)

2009: Breeding: Five broods at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 20 July (1 brood of 5 large young; 1 brood of 3 large young; 1 adult w/brood of 2 downy young; pair of adults w/2 broods [1st brood of 1 large young, 2nd brood of 5 small downy young]). Regarding the pair w/two broods, first brood gallinules are frequently known to feed their 2nd brood siblings. This was the most productive Common Gallinule nesting season at LCal since 2002, undoubtedly due to the excellent hemi-marsh habitat at Hegewisch Marsh in 2009 (thinning of cattails by Muskrats continued throughout 2009 with over 40 muskrat lodges observed at that location by Marcisz on 11 November). Others: Four adults observed by Walter Marcisz & Fran Morel at LCal (2 at Eggers Woods F.P.; 1 at Hegewisch Marsh; 1 at Heron Pond) on 27 June. One adult observed by Walter Marcisz at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 10 July. (WJM)

2010: Breeding: At least two broods at LCal as follows-
By 2010, cattail thinning by muskrats at Hegewisch was completed, and Hegewisch Marsh had become an open water lake with virtually no emergent vegetation (the only remaining stands of cattails were concentrated along Torrence Avenue). Two adult Common Gallinules were seen by many observers along Torrence Avenue at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) throughout June & July. Matthew Cvetas finally located the gallinule’s nest while viewing from Torrence Avenue on 10 July. Matthew observed a total of six just-hatched downy young (1 adult & 5 of the young took to the water while Matthew watched, but the sixth young and the other parent remained at the nest). Walter Marcisz relocated the same pair of gallinules (and the empty nest) on 19 July. On that date, Marcisz observed a brood of nine medium-sized downy young with the adults, so evidently a few more eggs had hatched successfully. Walter Marcisz observed an adult Common Gallinule (seen & heard) at the north end of LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 14 June. Alan Stokie later reported he observed a brood of Common Gallinules (5 young) at the same location during the month of July. (WJM)

2011: One adult (seen) at LCal (Heron Pond) on 1 June. (WJM)

2012: Very scarce and extremely difficult to find at LCal. There are only two LCal records for the spring of 2012 – one individual observed at Indian Ridge Marsh South by Samuel Burckhardt on 5 May, and one individual observed at the same location by Joe Lill on 13 May. There is one breeding record for 2012 - Samuel Burckhardt located a pair of adult Common Gallinules with a brood of 5 downy young at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh South) on 4 August. Also observed by Walter Marcisz & Carolyn Marsh. (WJM)

11. WILSON’S PHALAROPE  (E)
Phalaropus tricolor

No breeding records during the reporting period.
Summary:
Recent (historical) breeding records: Formerly nested at LCal, with the last documented nesting occurring in 1981, as follows: “Breeding occurred at LCal for the first time since 1968. At Site 1: three females, 7 June; a male and female, 20 June; three adults and two flying fledglings, 25 July. Site 2: one adult and six flying fledglings, 26 July” (James Landing). (IAB #199: 29)

1993-2012: No breeding records.

12. BLACK TERN (E)
Chlidonias niger

No breeding records during the reporting period.

Summary:
Recent (historical) breeding records: Formerly nested at LCal, with the last documented nesting occurring in 1986, as follows: “Six adults summered at LCal (Big Marsh); birds seen on nest on 22 June; two adults with a juvenile on 4 July; four juveniles on 11 July and eight on 12 July; at least two successful nests likely.” (James Landing, personal communication)

1993-2012: No breeding records.

13. BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO (T)
Coccyzus erythropthalmus

No more than one bird each year has been observed since 1997. In 1993 and 1997 behaviors suggestive of breeding were observed, but breeding has never been confirmed.

Summary:
1993: One fairly agitated adult at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North at 116th St.) on 31 July (WJM), one recorded in June at Van Vlissingen Prairie on the Cook County Nesting Bird Census.
1997: Two at LCal on 22 July (James Landing). (MJIB 7: 34)
1998: One at LCal (Wolf Lake/William Powers Fish & Wildlife Area) on 16 June (Douglas Stotz); one at LCal on 28 July (James Landing). (MJIB 8: 33)
1999: One at LCal (Beaubien Woods F.P.) on 8 May. (WJM)
2004: One at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 19 July (Carolyn Marsh). (MJIB 14: 30)
2005: No records.
2006: One (adult) at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 13 June. (WJM)
2007: No records.
2008: One at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 14 June (Craig Taylor). (MJIB 18: 24-25)
2009: One at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 25 August (Samuel Burckhardt). (eBird)
2010: One at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 10 June, observed by Amar Ayyash (MJIB 20: 28), and David Antieau (eBird).
2011: No records.
2012: One at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh South) on 21 July. (WJM)
14. PEREGRINE FALCON (T)
Falco peregrinus

One or two adults were observed most summers until 2001. From 2002 to the present, one pair has been suspected or confirmed nesting on area bridges each year. In 2011, two nests were confirmed.

Summary:
1993: One at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 9 June. (WJM)
1994: Two at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 9 July. Probably a pair, at least one bird was an adult. (WJM)
1995: No breeding records.
1996: (Possible) Breeding: One (adult) noted at LCal (Lake Calumet) all spring, but a pair of adults was noted there on 14 April. Possibly nesting. (WJM)
1997: One (adult) at LCal (Calumet River at 100th Street) on 24 June. One (adult) at LCal (Lake Calumet) on 26-27 April and 10 May. (WJM)
1998: One (adult) at LCal (Big Marsh) on 1 July. (WJM)
1999-2000: No breeding records.
2001: One at LCal (Calumet Water Reclamation Plant) on 15 July. (WJM)
2002: Breeding: Per Chicago Peregrine Falcon Blog: Unidentified adult female, unidentified adult male, and one chick (“Simon”) (M, b/g 03/M) at Calumet-Skyway Bridge, Chicago, IL. (CPFB)
One at LCal (grain elevator at 117th & Torrence Ave., Chicago - near Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 2 May. Two (1 adult with 1 juvenile) at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh South) on 25 July. The juvenile was flying after the adult, chasing it and uttering begging calls. (WJM)
2003: Breeding: Per Chicago Peregrine Falcon Blog: Unidentified adult female, unidentified adult male, and three chicks hatched but disappeared at Calumet-Skyway Bridge, Chicago, IL. (CPFB)
Other: One (adult) at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 20 July. (WJM)
2004: Breeding: Per Chicago Peregrine Falcon Blog: Unidentified adult female, unidentified adult male, and three unbanded fledglings at Calumet-Skyway Bridge, Chicago, IL; no nest located. (CPFB)
Other: One (adult) at LCal (L.Calumet at Harborside International Golf Course) on 7 July. (WJM)
2005: (Possible) Breeding: One adult (being chased by a begging juvenile) observed by Walter Marcisz at Deadstick Pond on 7 August was strongly suggestive of breeding at a nearby location. (WJM)
2006: Per Chicago Peregrine Falcon Blog: Birds were observed at Lake Calumet-Skyway Bridge in 2006, including copulation. Two immature peregrines were observed near the Skyway Bridge. (CPFB)
One at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 30 July. (WJM)
2007: Breeding: Per Chicago Peregrine Falcon Blog: Unidentified adult female, unidentified adult male, and dead fledgling recovered near Calumet-Skyway Bridge, Chicago, IL; no nest located. Details: Calumet-Skyway Bridge, Chicago, IL: One unbanded immature was picked up by Animal Control on 6/19/07, but it died during the night. The bird was found in a neighborhood that we believe an adult pair frequents, though the eyrie has never been located. (CPFB)
Two (1 adult, 1 juvenile) at LCal (Calumet River) on 30 June. One at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh on 1 July (Randy Shonkwiler). One (juvenile) at LCal (L.Calumet at Harborside International Golf Course) on 15 July. (WJM)
2008: Breeding: A pair of Peregrine Falcons nested successfully at LCal (Henry Ford II Memorial Bridges over the Calumet River at Torrence Ave.), with at least one young fledging successfully in 2008. Peregrines have apparently held territories at LCal for many years.
Per Chicago Peregrine Falcon Blog: Unidentified adult female; unidentified adult male; eyrie found 6/17, with one chick visible. Immature fledged 6/23. (CPFB)
Details: Walter Marcisz observed two adult Peregrine Falcons perched together at the Ford Bridges on 11 March, and he observed a single adult Peregrine at or near the Ford Bridges on various dates from 13 April – 12 June. On 17 June, Marcisz & Mary Hennen (FMNH) located an active Peregrine nest (with 1 visible young) on the easternmost of the two Ford Bridges (the old train bridge). On 24 June, Marcisz observed one adult Peregrine perched on a beam near the Ford Bridges nest, with one fledged juvenile Peregrine (eagerly consuming a meal) perched on a nearby beam. (WJM)

**2009:** A pair of adults held a loose territory at LCal (Henry Ford II Memorial Bridges over the Calumet River at Torrence Ave.) where they had nested successfully in 2008. The pair apparently did not have a successful nesting in 2009.

Per Chicago Peregrine Falcon blog: Unidentified adult female; adult male (“Malty”) (b/g, 5/*1) born in 2008 at Froedtert Malt Building, Milwaukee, WI; nest located in beam of bridge but no young observed. Details: “This is a bridge site. Earlier in year, two peregrines were observed. Bird in flight appeared to be an adult, but other bird’s plumage not visible. The beam the pair used in 2008 appeared abandoned for another beam. On 6/16/09, two birds (both adult plumage) were observed entering/exiting beam at south end of bridge. There was no sign of chicks at that date or on later visits…This is the 6th year a pair has been in this area.” (CPFB)

**2010:** Breeding: Successfully nested at LCal (Henry Ford II Memorial Bridges over Calumet River at Torrence Ave.) At least one young fledged (photographed).

Per Chicago Peregrine Falcon Blog: Unidentified adult female (b/g); unidentified adult male (b/g); one unnamed (unbanded) young.

Details: “As it is fledging time here in Chicago, it seemed like a good idea to check back on the Calumet nest. Once the fledglings are out and about, they are much easier to see at this site. Chicks tucked into corners or holes in the steel beams are impossible to see from the ground. Mary [Hennen] and I [Stephanie Ware] made our way down the Calumet [on 25 June 2011] and stayed out for about 4 hours…About 15 minutes after we arrived, one of the adults landed on a bridge beam high overhead. We both had scopes and I had, of course, the camera gear, so I took a few shots of the far-away backlit bird with little hope the photo would show any useful data. I put the camera away, popped my scope out of the bag and set it up on my tripod, eager to get a look at what Mary had already determined to be a banded bird through the higher magnification…

…a second adult flew in. The second adult had food and there was the normal chatter between the mates as she (bigger bird, so we presume) made her way through the beams. She landed on a large horizontal beam and looked down and to her left, to an intersecting diagonal beam. My eyes followed and for one split second, I saw the flurry of brown, speckled wings. Juvenile! I yelled…On the diagonal beam.” (CPFB)

**2011:** Breeding: Two LCal nest sites in 2011, as follows-

Nest #1: Henry Ford II Memorial Bridges over Calumet River at Torrence Ave.-

Per Chicago Peregrine Falcon Blog: Adult female (“Mariott”), (b/g 8/#A), born in 2001 at City Center in Minneapolis, MN; unidentified adult male; two unnamed (unbanded) young.

Details: “Mary [Hennen] and I [Stephanie Ware] went down to Calumet yesterday [2 May 2011]. This is a bridge site with so many beams, crossbars and the like, it is horribly difficult to actually see the birds, much less get identification information. I am happy to report, however, that we not only saw a peregrine come out of one of the previous year’s nest holes during a probable nest exchange, but we got her leg bands!! Her name is Mariott (b/g 8/#A). She was born in 2001 at the City Center in Minneapolis, MN. Considering her age, she may very well have been the adult female in Calumet for some years, but we’ll never know for sure since this is the first time we’ve ever gotten her leg bands. In FACT, this is the first time any female adult has been identified at that site. Exciting!” (CPFB)
One at LCal (Henry Ford II Memorial Bridges over Calumet River at Torrence Ave.) on 2 July. (WJM)
Nest #2: Calumet-Skyway Bridge, Chicago, IL-
Per Chicago Peregrine Falcon Blog: Unidentified adult female; unidentified adult male; two unnamed (unbanded) young. (CPFB)

2012: On 15 & 16 March, Rob Sulski et al. installed a Peregrine nest box on the roof of the old grain elevator complex at the southwest corner of the Port District's Lake Calumet property. On 15 March, five Peregrines (3 adults and 2 second-year birds) circled and landed around the crew, and on 16 March an adult pair performing courtship flights were noted at the site. With the traditional Torrence Avenue RR bridge under construction in 2012, it appeared that the Peregrines were eager to transfer their nesting activities to the newly-installed hack box (Rob Sulski, personal communication).

15. WILLOW FLYCATCHER (IBA)
*Empidonax traillii*

*Fairly steady numbers have been reported over the years. The shrubland habitat that this bird prefers may not be as well sampled as the wetland habitat. The sums of maximum numbers reported for each location per year average 27 with greater numbers in later years; this may be due to more eBird use in those years. Burnham Prairie, Calumet Water Reclamation Plant, and Powderhorn Lake have reported the largest numbers, although numbers reported at Powderhorn have diminished after 2006.*

**Summary:**

1993: Maximum counts: Fourteen (9 singing) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 11 June. Twelve (11 singing) at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 6 June. (WJM) A total of 43 were reported from 10 locations on the Cook County Nesting Bird Census.

1994: Maximum counts: Sixteen (11 singing) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 7 June. Thirteen (6 singing) at LCal (various locations, but not including Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 9 June. (WJM) Three additional birds were reported from Riverdale Quarry on the Cook County Nesting Bird Census.

1995: Maximum counts: Seven (4 singing) at LCal (various locations, but not including Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 12 June. Six (adults) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 8 June. Overall, seemed scarce in Calumet region in 1995. (WJM) A total of 26 were reported from 5 locations on the Cook County Nesting Bird Census.

1996: Maximum counts: Twelve (11 singing) at LCal (various locations, but not including Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 20 June. Eight adults (6 singing) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 16 June. (WJM) A total of 27 were reported from 3 locations on the Cook County Nesting Bird Census.

1997: Maximum count: Seven adults (4 singing) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 8 June. (WJM) A total of 12 were reported from 3 locations on the Cook County Nesting Bird Census.

1998: Breeding: Pair of adults feeding two recent fledglings at LCal (Wolf Lake/William Powers Fish & Wildlife Area) on 5 August (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 8: 34)

Maximum counts: Eighteen (14 singing) at LCal (areas covered did not include Powderhorn Lake F.P., Burnham Prairie, or Wolf Lake) during June. Thirteen (all singing) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 6 June. Six (5 singing) at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 14 June. Six (5 singing) at LCal (Wolf Lake/William Powers Fish & Wildlife Area) on 20 June. (WJM)

1999: Maximum counts: Ten (6 singing) at LCal on 19 June. (WJM) Four at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.), June/July (Mike Ward). (MJIB 9: 34)

2000: Maximum count: Eighteen (15 singing) at LCal on 18 June. (WJM)

2001: Maximum count: Eleven (all singing) at LCal on 17 June. (WJM)
2002: Maximum counts: Nine (all singing) at LCal (various locations, but not including Burnham Prairie) on 23 June. Seven (6 singing) at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 16 June. (WJM) Total of maximum counts per location reported to eBird, including those mentioned, is 11.

2003: Breeding: One nest (1 egg) at LCal (Calumet Water Reclamation Plant) on 18 June. Maximum count: Fourteen (12 singing) at LCal on 22 June. (WJM)

2004: Maximum counts: Five (males) at Calumet Park (Cook Co.) on 9 June (Steve Bailey). (MJIB 14: 32) Five (singing males) at LCal on 13 June (Walter Marcisz). (eBird) Total of maximum counts per location reported to eBird, including those mentioned, is 12.

2005: Maximum counts: Eleven (including 8 singing) at LCal (areas covered did not include Powderhorn Lake F.P. or Burnham Prairie) on 18 June. Eight (including 6 singing) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 16 June. Eight (all singing) at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 22 June. (WJM) A total of 39 birds was reported to eBird from 11 locations, including those mentioned, which may reflect the growing number of birders using eBird rather than a population increase.

2006: Maximum counts: Twenty-one (including 11 singing males) at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 13 June. Seventeen (including 10 singing males, plus 1 adult carrying nesting material) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 11 June. Seventeen (including 13 singing males) at LCal (Beaubien Woods F.P. & adjacent areas) on 14 June. Seven (including 5 singing males) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 15 June. (WJM) Fifty-five birds in total, including those mentioned were reported from 9 sites on eBird.

2007: Maximum count: Five (males), Beaubien Woods F.P. (Cook Co.), 12 June (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 17: 27) On eBird, twenty-five birds were reported from 10 sites, including those mentioned.

2008: Maximum counts: Twelve (9 singing) at LCal (Calumet Water Reclamation Plant) on 7 June. Seven (5 singing) at LCal (Powderhorn Lake F.P.) on 11 June. (WJM) On eBird, 39 birds (including those mentioned) were reported from 11 sites.

2009: Maximum count: Nine (6 singing males) at LCal on 14 June. (WJM)
Two (males) at Calumet Park (Cook Co.) on 9 June (Steven Bailey). (MJIB 19: 31) Including eBird, 31 birds were reported from 11 locations.

2010: Maximum counts: Eleven (10 singing, 1 in an aggressive interaction with another male) at LCal (Calumet Water Reclamation Plant) on 28 May. Seven (5 singing) at LCal (Calumet Water Reclamation Plant) on 4 June. (WJM) Including eBird, a total of 32 birds were reported from 11 locations.

2011: Numerous June/July records from Indian Ridge Marshes, Powderhorn Lake F.P., Eggers Woods F.P., and O’Brien Lock & Dam. (WJM) On eBird, 24 birds were reported from 11 locations.

2012: Maximum count: Nineteen (13 singing males) at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 4 June. Breeding: Two fledglings being fed by pair of adults at LCal (O’Brien Lock & Dam) on 29 July. (WJM) Including eBird, a total of 34 birds were reported from 11 locations.

16. YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD (E)
Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus

At the beginning of this report period, these birds were observed in as many as 5 locations per year and a maximum of 19 territorial males, nests or pairs were observed in a season. The number has dwindled to one bird at one site. Loss of hemi-marsh habitat due to muskrats, beavers, industrial development of public land, drought and lack of hydrologic intervention to address the above situations has greatly impacted the population.
Summary:

1993: Maximum counts: Fourteen at LCal (9 adult males, 2 adult females, 3 juveniles) on 19 June as follows- 1 ad. male at Hegewisch Marsh; 6 ad. males, 1 ad.female, 2 juveniles at Indian Ridge Marsh North; 1 ad. male, 1 ad. female, 1 juvenile at Heron Pond; 1 ad. male at Deadstick Pond. Other: Eight adults (4 singing males and 4 females) at Eggers Woods Forest Preserve, Chi on 9 June (3 of the females were highly agitated- probably defending young). (WJM)

1994: Breeding: At least four fresh juveniles of the year at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 26 June, but five fresh juveniles (different brood) at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 2 July. (WJM) Maximum count: Ten at LCal (4 singing males & 5 adult females at Hegewisch Marsh; 1 singing male at Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 9 June. (WJM)

Others: Six (males) at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 20 May (Eric Walters); two (singing males) at same location on 19 June (Walter Marcisz). (MJIB 4: 38)

1995: Breeding: At least three nests successfully fledged young at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) in 1995 (brood of 2 juveniles noted there on 5 June; two other broods (1 & 2 young being fed by adult females) noted there on 3 July. Many young were heard calling from cattails at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 2 July. An adult male carrying food for young was also noted there on this date. Two juveniles noted at LCal (Deadstick Pond) on 22 June were probably dispersing from the Hegewisch Marsh nesting colony. (WJM)

Maximum count: Nineteen at LCal on 6 June (unknown observer). (eBird)

Others: Nine (5 adult males, 2 adult females, 2 juveniles) at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 5 June. Eight (adults) at LCal (4 males & 2 females at Hegewisch Marsh; 1 male & 1 female at Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 12 June. (WJM)

1996: Maximum counts: Eleven at LCal on 19 May (Eric Walters, Josh Engel). (MJIB 5: 157) Eight (adult males) at LCal (7 at Hegewisch Marsh; 1 at Indian Ridge Marsh North) on 4 May (Walter Marcisz, Bill Peak). Five (adult males) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 20 June. (WJM) Eight (males) at
1997: Breeding: Seven to eleven nesting pairs at LCal (down from the 35 pairs of recent years) (James Landing). (MJIB 7: 39) At least three family groups (1,2, & 1 young) at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 6 July. Young heard calling from cattails at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 21 June. (WJM) Others: Six (5 males, 1 female) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 10 May. Six (singing males) at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 8 June. Three (adult males) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 21 June. (WJM)

1998: Breeding: Walter Marcisz observed six adult males, two adult females, and numerous juveniles at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 7 June, and at least five juveniles at the same location on 1 July. Carolyn Marsh reported to Marcisz that Mike Ward’s banding operations located a total of fourteen Yellow-headed Blackbird nests at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) as of 15 June. Marcisz also observed four singing males, one adult female, and two juveniles at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 13 June. (WJM)

1999: Breeding: Fourteen adults and eight nests at LCal, June/July (Mike Ward); fifteen adults and eleven nests at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.), June/July (Mike Ward). (MJIB 9: 39). Five (singing males) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 1 May, but three (singing males) observed there on 19 June. One (juvenile) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 19 June, but at least three (juveniles) observed there on 11 July. (WJM)

2000: Breeding: Seventeen adults & ten nests at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh), June/July (Mike Ward). (MJIB 10: 39)

Others: Seven (males) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 30 April. Three (singing males) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 18 June. (WJM)

2001: Breeding: Seventeen adults & five nests at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) during June; and fifteen adults & one nest at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 22 June (Mike Ward). (MJIB 11: 39)

Others: Five (singing males) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 5 May, and one (juvenile) there on 2 June. (WJM) Six (4 adults & 2 immatures) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 26 June (Carolyn Marsh). (MJIB 11: 39)

2002: Breeding: Two singing males and three fledged juveniles at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 23 June (4 adult males were noted at the same location on 4 May). (WJM)

Maximum count: Eight (6 males, 2 females) at LCal on 16 May (Douglas Stotz). (MJIB 11: 157)

Others: Two at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 23 April (Carolyn Marsh) (MJIB 11: 157)

2003: (Possible) breeding: Probably nested at LCal (Indian Ridge Marsh North). One (singing male) was observed at that location on 10, 16, & 23 May. (WJM)

Probably nested at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) Three (males) were observed at that location on 3 May (Walter Marcisz, Carolyn Marsh). (WJM) One at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 30 May (Douglas Stotz). (eBird)

Note: During the spring and summer of 2003, Hegewisch Marsh hemi-marsh habitat was choked out by dense stands of smartweed and other emergent vegetation due to severe drought conditions beginning in the fall of 2002. No Yellow-headed Blackbirds were observed at the Hegewisch Marsh site in 2003. (WJM)

2004: Breeding: Pair of adults with two juveniles at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 26 June. Also, three adult males at that location on 29 & 31 May. (WJM)

Others: Seven (3 males, 4 females) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) in June (Mike Ward fide Steve Bailey). (MJIB 14: 39)

Note: In 2003, Hegewisch Marsh hemi-marsh habitat was choked out by dense stands of smartweed and other emergent vegetation due to severe drought conditions (Yellow-headed Blackbirds abandoned the
Hegewisch Marsh site in 2003). In 2004, heavy spring rains brought the hemi-marsh water level back up to normal, creating suitable nesting habitat for Yellow-headed Blackbirds once again. (WJM)

**2005:** Maximum counts: Four (singing males) at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 13 May. (WJM) Eight at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 14 May (Geoffrey Williamson) (MJIB 14: 159) and four there on 22 July (Carolyn Marsh) (MJIB 15: 37).

One (singing male) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 4 & 5 June. (WJM)

Others: One (male) at LCal (Burnham Prairie) on 21 April. (WJM)

One (adult male) at LCal (L.Calumet at Harborside International Golf Course) on 28 June. The bird was walking on the lawn adjacent to the Harborside peninsula. The left side of its face was featherless and extremely swollen. Perhaps a failed nester from elsewhere in the LCal area. (WJM)

**2006:** Breeding: One singing male & two fledglings at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 4 July. (WJM)

Others: One (singing male) at Burnham Prairie on 2 June (Cary Hillegonds) and 11 June (Walter Marcisz). One (singing male) at LCal (Hegewisch Marsh) on 15 June. By 2006, Hegewisch Marsh had become a monoculture of dense cattails with little or no open water. (WJM)

**2007:** Two at Eggers Woods F.P. on 27 May (Randy Shonkwiler). (eBird)

None observed at Hegewisch Marsh in 2007 (Hegewisch Marsh population apparently extirpated). (WJM)

**2008:** Maximum count: Three singing males at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 17 June. (WJM)

**2009:** Maximum count: Walter Marcisz & Fran Morel observed three Yellow-headed Blackbirds (1 singing male & 2 adult females) at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 27 June. The birds were very active and probably busy feeding young, but no fledglings were actually observed on this date. (WJM)

**2010:** One at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 10 June (Amar Ayyash). (MJIB 20: 39)

**2011:** Breeding: One adult male carrying food for young at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) on 8 June. The same bird was also seen & heard singing at the same location on on 29 & 30 April, 21 May, and 14 June. (WJM)

**2012:** Only one individual (singing male) observed at LCal (Eggers Woods F.P.) in 2012. The bird was first observed on 18 April (Walter Marcisz), and last observed on 29 April (Susan Zelek) (eBird). No evidence of nesting at any LCal locations in 2012. (WJM)

**ABBREVIATIONS:**
- BCNH = Black-crowned Night-Heron
- CPFB = Chicago Peregrine Falcon Blog  http://peregrines.erinyes.org/
- E = Illinois Endangered Species
- FMNH = Field Museum of Natural History
- F.P. = Forest Preserve
- IAB = Illinois Audubon Bulletin
- IBA = Important Bird Area Species
- IB&B = Illinois Birds and Birding
- INHS = Illinois Natural History Survey
- LCal = Lake Calumet Area
- MJIB = Meadowlark: A Journal of Illinois Birds
- T = Illinois Threatened Species
- WJM = Walter J. Marcisz (personal records)
LITERATURE CITED


Chicago Peregrine Falcon Blog  http://peregrines.erinyes.org/


eBird  http://ebird.org/content/ebird/


### Appendix 1

#### Names of EBird Sites Included in Compilation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Description</th>
<th>Location/Additional Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>103rd east of Bishop Ford Freeway</td>
<td>Hyde Lake/126th St. Marsh (Chicago)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117th Street Osprey nest area</td>
<td>Indian Ridge Marsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122nd &amp; Torrence marsh</td>
<td>Indian Ridge Marsh 116th St. access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126th St. Marsh, Chicago</td>
<td>Indian Ridge Marshes, Lake Calumet (Cook Co.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126th Street Marsh</td>
<td>Indian Ridge N&amp;S plus Heron Pond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126th Street Marsh, Chicago (Cook)</td>
<td>Lake Calumet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130th Street Water Treatment Plant</td>
<td>Lake Calumet Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaubien Woods Forest Preserve (Cook Co.)</td>
<td>Lake Calumet area (Cook Co.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bend of Little Calumet River (Cook Co.)</td>
<td>Lake Calumet Miscellaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Marsh, Lake Calumet (Cook Co.)</td>
<td>Lake Calumet/Harborside Golf Course (Cook Co.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnham</td>
<td>MWRD SEPA Station, Torrence Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnham Park Marsh</td>
<td>O’Brien Lock and Dam area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnham Park--lake</td>
<td>O’Brien Lock &amp; Dam (Cook)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnham Prairie (Cook Co.)</td>
<td>Powderhorn Lake Forest Preserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnham Prairie Marsh</td>
<td>Powderhorn Lake Forest Preserve (Cook Co.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnham Prairie Marsh, Chicago (Cook)</td>
<td>Powderhorn Lake FP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>calumet area</td>
<td>Powderhorn, Cook 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calumet Park</td>
<td>Riverdale Quarry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calumet Park (Chicago)</td>
<td>Riverdale Quarry (Cook Co.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calumet Water Reclamation Plant (Chicago)</td>
<td>Sand Ridge Nature Center (Cook Co.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cargill</td>
<td>SEPA Station, Calumet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook County FP</td>
<td>South Suburban College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadstick Pond</td>
<td>State Line Road (Cook County)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadstick Pond, Lake Calumet (Cook Co.)</td>
<td>Stoney Island from 122nd to S. Doty Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggers Woods Forest Preserve</td>
<td>Torrence and 117th, Calumet, Cook County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggers Woods Forest Preserve (Cook Co.)</td>
<td>VAN VLISSINGEN PRAIRIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harborside Golf/Lake Calumet</td>
<td>william powers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEGEWISCH MARSH</td>
<td>Wolf Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hegewisch Marsh, Lake Calumet (Cook Co.)</td>
<td>Wolf Lake Conservation Area (Cook Co.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heron Pond near Indian Ridge Marsh</td>
<td>Wolf Lake-Illinois side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heron Pond, Lake Calumet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heron Pond, Lake Calumet (Cook Co.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ADDITIONAL RECORDS AVAILABLE

- The eBird database contains millions of records from individual birders in the region including Charlie Clark’s records from the 30’s through the 60’s, plus a considerable amount of data from individual users in the 70’s and Cook County Nesting Bird Census results for the 80’s and 90’s. These data are from 65 sites within the Illinois Calumet wetlands area and hundreds of other sites throughout the Millennium Reserve core.

- Sue Elston’s surveys for the Army Corps of Engineers 1984-89, ‘91, and ’93 at Big Marsh and in ‘85 at O’Brien Lock and Dam have been secured as part of this process.

Potential future subjects for reports using the above data:

Wading birds (heron, egrets etc.)
Shorebirds
Other important breeding wetland species such as pied-billed grebe and blue-winged teal
Wetland birds before 1993
Bird observations for sites in Millennium Reserve outside the IBA boundaries