

Final Report: Grant # 03-003W

Bird Census
Bird Conservation Network
Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund
Submitted August 15, 2003 by Bob Fisher

Support from the Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund Grant #03-003W allowed the BCN Census to accomplish our project objectives this year.

Objective 1: To recruit and train new monitors for the BCN Census; provide follow up training to existing monitors.

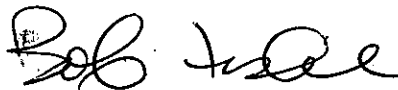
We conducted an extensive survey/review by mail, to identify the needs and activities of our existing monitors in gathering data on breeding bird populations in the Chicago area. Via this survey, we were able to encourage our pool of monitors to submit their data using various methods. The survey was also useful in getting some inactive monitors back out in the field.

Objective 2: Use volunteer monitors to gather and enter data an regional bird distribution

Some volunteers were not comfortable with their bird ID skills; this group was trained to enter data obtained by others onto our website. Revisions to the website/database being made by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology are also making the database more user friendly. This action has been widely publicized in the birding community in the expectation that many birders who have not monitored to date will be willing to become active monitors

Objective 3: Provide access to the database to land managers and scientists so they can answer questions about the habitat needs of the birds that breed or migrate through the region.

On an individual basis, monitors collaborate with land managers to exchange data and adjust management goals. Reports from the field indicate that this process is going smoothly in a number of locations. We are currently making regular transmissions of data aggregated by county to the various county land management agencies, and are consulting with these land managers about how best to organize and present this data. All previous BCN databases are being loaded into a single uniform format for this purpose. Both current and new monitors can enter data into this new format without needing to update their monitoring locations. Protocols and definitions are now on the website, and in early 2004, full data output via maps, tables and graphs will be available.



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