

found one day earlier on 19 June 1999. Lester, David, and I converged on Gerard Road, 1.3 miles south off IL Route 148. In and over a flooded field east of Gerard Road were a total of six Black-necked Stilts. From the road through our spotting scopes we were able to observe that two of the stilts were tending a nest along the eastern side of the flooded area at the water's edge. One of these two birds settled onto the nest while we were watching. Three other stilts, closer to where we were set up on the road, were quite vocal and intermittently displayed distraction behavior leading us to believe that another nest was present somewhere nearer the road but not visible to us.

While there I video taped through my spotting scope securing footage of several stilts including the pair at the distant nest. A group of birders and I return to the Gerard Road stilt location on 10 July 1999 only to find that the water level in the area had risen and the shoreline nest visible on 20 June was now under water. Several adult stilts were still present. Using our scopes we intensely scanned all the visible shorelines. A second possible nest was spotted at an adjacent flooded area southwest of the first nest location.

A visit to the Gerard Road area on 17 July 1999 by Laraine Wright, Vicki Lang, and myself was more than worthwhile as we found not only four adult Black-necked Stilts, but also four young. The young were paired, with two adult stilts accompanying each pair. The two families were feeding within approximately seven meters of each other. The young were one-third the size of the adults. They displayed downy-like feathering and lacked the bold pink leg coloration of the adults. The young were light chocolate brown from the crown of their heads down to their rumps; their throat, breast, and abdomen appeared off-white. The four adults remained near the young, chasing off

any other birds that approached the leggy chicks. Video tape footage was obtained but the quality was poor as it was taken at a distance from the road.

Frank Bennett also visited the Gerard Road area on 17 July 1999. He video taped a total of 11 stilts that day, the maximum number seen at that location in 1999.

The first record of nesting success of Black-necked Stilt in Illinois occurred 4 June 1994 when Cynthia McKee found a Black-necked Stilt

sitting on a nest, also in Jackson County. (Bohlen 1996).

Literature Cited

Bohlen, H. David. 1996. Meadowlark 5: 24-25. First Successful and Third Confirmed Nesting of Black-necked Stilt in Illinois.

Fink, T. 1994. Meadowlark 3: 18. Breeding evidence for Black-necked Stilt in Jackson County.

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Western Kingbird Nests in Sangamon County, Illinois

by H. David Bohlen

Western Kingbirds (*Tyrannus verticalis*) nest rarely and sporadically in Illinois. So I was quite interested when Dennis Oehmke told me while he was playing golf, he had seen two or three birds at the Lincoln Greens Golf Course at Lake Springfield. I saw an adult female in the morning and probably a hatching year male in the evening at the same place on 3 August 1998. Further searches a couple of days later and in the rest of August proved fruitless. Apparently we had gotten in on the last of the nesting cycle and the birds had migrated. The adult bird had looked to be in very worn plumage and both adults and hatching year birds molt on the winter grounds. Thus they could have migrated anytime the young bird was ready.

In 1999 I first saw a Western Kingbird in the same area of the very busy golf course on 18 May. On 21 May 21 both male and female were present and carrying nesting material. On 24 May I found the nest high in a sycamore tree on the golf course. On 26 May, Beckie Dyer and I viewed

the nest again and saw not only a pair of Western Kingbirds, but also a third adult near the lake slightly to the west of the pair. I speculated this was the male produced last year at this site.

By 31 May, the female was sitting on the nest. The Western Kingbird nest was a loose construction of grass and twigs. It was too high to see the contents. Also noted was an Eastern Kingbird nest in another sycamore tree less than 50 yards to the southwest. The female Western Kingbird was on the nest 3, 11, and 18 June. On 30 June, the adults were feeding young in the nest. On 5 July, a rather well-feathered youngster sat on the edge of the nest while the female fed another young in the nest.

On 12 July, we could see three fledged young Western Kingbirds in the top of an adjoining tree. They were being fed by the pair of adults. The young were lighter in color and had somewhat shorter tails than the adults. The adults were in fairly worn plumage. When we walked out by the lake, three obviously young Eastern Kingbirds (with reddish orange gapes)

Meadowlark