

Illinois Ornithological Society



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

A few days before the 1991 spring bird count, a birder discovered a Pileated Woodpecker near the Des Plaines River backwaters at Ryerson Conservation Area in Deerfield. Pileated Woodpeckers rarely occur in northern Illinois. Dave Johnson and I were covering Ryerson for the spring bird count. Dare we hope that the bird would stay there long enough for us to count it?

The day of the count we walked the backwaters of the river, quietly listening, hoping, wondering. Nothing. We scouted the rest of the woods racking up warblers, tanagers, grosbeaks, and sparrows, all the while thinking of the Pileated Woodpecker.

About noontime, we returned to the river backwater area.

This time, we heard it - the unmistakably low, andante pecking. "Do you think?" we asked simultaneously. YES! We heard it. We saw it. We counted it.

Such vivid memories no doubt inspire us to call our county compilers each year to participate in the annual spring bird count. In this issue, we feature a report on the 1992 spring bird count by Michael J. Baum. We hope it will bring back memories from last year and inspire hope for what might be this year.

Sheryl DeVore