

Black-crowned Night-Heron in Chicago Region 2004-2006 (Meadowlark)

March 10 - Earliest arrival within 10 year period 1993-2001

April 1-7 - Earliest indications of nesting and courtship

April 8-15 - Earliest pairs and pre-copulatory displays

April 16 to June 12 - Egg laying

Mid-May to July 2 - Hatching

Mid-July to August 30 - Juvenile Dispersal

– *Memorandum of Understanding,
Lincoln Park Zoo and Illinois
Department of Natural Resources*

not a good thing for the birds either. Another post from Dawn Smith stated: “Several live BCNH nestlings have been picked up this season and transferred to Flint Creek Wildlife Rehabilitation.... So many dogs off leashes in their current area, the nestlings hardly have a chance if they do end up grounded.”

After reading the disturbing posts, I visited South Pond on 28 June with Joan Norek who lives near Lincoln Park. We were upset that the promenade wasn't closed to the public yet. Later I called Steve Thompson, senior vice president, conservation and science programs. He knew the herons had moved off the island to the promenade and that only two or three heron nests remained on the island.

Many days passed and eventually

the promenade was fenced-off some time in July.

2011

The following year the herons didn't return to nest on the island either; Christine Williamson and Norek separately saw only one nest on the South Pond island. The removal of too much vegetation, including willow and mulberry trees on the island, probably contributed to their return to the dense ash and linden tree canopy over the promenade. At the end of April, Steve Huggins and Norek observed the herons were back again nesting on the promenade.

Though the zoo had data that the herons could possibly be in the egg-laying stage, they still considered the herons as migrants passing through

and not necessarily nesters. Birders, not wanting to witness the repeated disturbance of the nests as in the previous year's nesting cycle, persisted and convinced zoo officials to fence-off the area as soon as possible. By 4 May the Chicago Park District, in cooperation with Lincoln Park Zoo, erected protective fencing with educational signage along the promenade.

Consequently the rookery succeeded. Zoo numbers indicated a high count of 211 active nests on 14 July 2011. Dozens of fledglings were seen at park benches inside the protective fencing, and juveniles were found roosting at South Pond.

Acknowledgement and Author's Note:

Thanks to all the birders who successfully lobbied on behalf of the Black-crowned Night-Heron. The heron rookery has become a main attraction in Lincoln Park with a dedicated following of park users. Herons began to return to the nesting site 19 March 2012, providing viewers with an unforgettable natural world experience.

— *Carolyn A. Marsh
1804 Oliver St.
Whiting, Indiana 46394
cmarshbird@prodigy.net*

Letter from the Editor, continued from page 121

Rockford? I saw it (via a photo and an article). First state record of Scott's Oriole? I saw that too (via a photo and article). I never did see that Ivory Gull that was in Chicago 20 years ago, except on the cover of *Meadowlark* in one of our first issues. (See pages 133 and 134.)

This is really important to me and to the birds of Illinois – we now have 20-years of excellent data on the birds of Illinois – their comings and goings, rise and fall in population – all on record. This issue shows three examples of how 20 years of *Meadowlark* data and stories can help us understand what's happening to the birds (see page 129). All the past issues of *Meadowlark* can be found in libraries and other venues including the Natural History Museum of New York. This entity has been a

subscriber since Day 1. Jon Dunn, a national expert on birds and author of Peterson's Field Guide on Warblers, is also a subscriber. He serves on the AOU and ABA checklist committee. The Wilson Ornithological Society, one of the country's oldest ornithological societies, has also been a subscriber since Day 1. All of us as at IOS should be bursting with pride that we have produced 80 issues that people want to see, and we've done all that with volunteers and not a lot of money.

I also must mention the big “C” word – over the years we have battled about what to do with promoting conservation, based on our status as a nonprofit organization. I am proud to say that we have included more and more conservation-based articles in recent years,

partially because of the pieces we've received from winners of our grant program. You'll see one of those articles in this issue as well – they're doing bird studies to help manage and conserve the land at Lowell Park. I am first and foremost a supporter of conservation and lover of seeing birds – any birds, if you know me at all, and secondarily a lister. I have come to learn that not all of you think the way I do – and that sometimes that can cause problems. My fervent wish for the next 20 years of IOS and *Meadowlark* is that we come closer together not farther apart.

Sheryl DeVore