

River Forest Preserve just south of the Wisconsin border. Subsequent nests have been confirmed at the site, the last in 1991 when Lee Johnson observed recently fledged young during the final year of the Illinois Breeding Bird Atlas. Although nests have not been discovered every year in Winnebago County since the spring bird count find, calling males have been heard annually for the past ten years at the Sugar River Forest Preserve. From a high perch, the male calls a descending series of clear whistles ending with a rising, short double note.

Observers heard calling males in at least three other forest preserves in Winnebago County in 1992, although no nests were confirmed. The discoveries were made along the Kishwaukee River and Kilbuck Creek in southeastern Winnebago County. The species can also be found along the Sugar River in Rock County, Wisconsin (See Tesen, "Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts," Third Ed., 1989).

The male Yellow-throated Warbler is distinguished by his bright yellow throat, distinct black and white facial markings, gray back, and white belly with black streaking on the sides. His cap is dark black, fading to gray on the nape. The female is substantially similar, but the colors, particularly the yellow, are not as bright. The black cap is less distinct. The top of the head, nape, and back of this species are often not visible because the bird is frequently viewed high in the forest canopy.

Yellow-throated Warblers have two sub-species or races. Although no specimens have been taken from Winnebago County, the bird discovered is presumably the western race or sycamore warbler of the Mississippi Valley.

Winnebago County, situated in northern Illinois on the Wisconsin border is drained by the Rock River, which flows from central Wisconsin, and empties into the Mississippi River at the Quad City

area. The county is intersected by medium-sized rivers, the Pecatonica and Sugar, which flow from southwestern Wisconsin; the Kishwaukee River, which enters from northeastern Illinois and southern Wisconsin; and several creeks.

This extensive river system contains substantial stretches of high-

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grade river bottom forest frequently dotted by sycamores and introduced white pines in the higher areas. The area offers perfect habitat for nesting Yellow-throated Warblers, which typically live in bottomland woods with sycamores along streams or in pine plantations.

The Yellow-throated Warbler builds a nest ten to 120 feet above the ground in pine or deciduous branches, usually between fifteen to sixty feet. The bird constructs the nest of fine grasses, plant down, caterpillar silk, and occasionally feathers.

Birders may find it difficult to locate nests because of the height and particularly when the nest is placed in a pine. I located the 1982 nest about forty feet high in a pine tree and set below and inside the overhang of the next higher branches.

Bob Montgomery, senior staff biologist at Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation, said that only sixteen confirmed nests were reported in the ninety-seven records of Yellow-throated Warblers made during the Illinois Breeding Bird Atlas Project. Of these sixteen, only three records were confirmed north of Interstate 80 (LaSalle, Lee, and Winnebago counties). Of twenty-seven probable nesting occurrences, only three were north of I-80 (Lake, one, and Winnebago, two). Possible nesting or observed birds were recorded in Bureau, Cook, and Jo Daviess counties.



*River View shelter house at Sugar River Forest Preserve. Yellow-throated Warblers have nested near the shelter, and can frequently be heard singing here. Photo by Dan Williams.*