

nests in 1992, 17 active Great Egret nests in 1993). Common Moorhens are also most easily detected here. Moorhens are present from late April through early October, but numerous broods/family groups are most easily observed in August. Yellow-headed Blackbirds nest here annually (late April - early July), but most territories are in the far northern sections of the marsh which cannot be easily viewed from 122nd Street. In winter, thousands of blackbirds, predominantly Red-winged Blackbirds and European Starlings, roost in the various Calumet marshes. Birds flying in to roost can generally be viewed one-half hour before sunset from the 122nd St. roadside parking spot just east of the railroad tracks. Up to 18,000 birds have been estimated in mid-winter, and numbers often swell to well over 20,000 in late fall and early spring. High counts include 13,500 European Starlings in November 1992, and 30,000 Red-winged Blackbirds in March 1994.

Deadstick Pond. On east side of Stony Island Ave., immediately south of 122nd St. From Torrence Ave., go west on 122nd St. 0.9 mile to stop sign at Stony Island Ave., turn south on Stony Island Ave. and park on roadside. This is one of the best spots in the Calumet region for fall migrant shorebirds (at least 23 species have been noted here since the mid-1980s). Most of the commoner species, including Stilt Sandpiper, occur annually. Less common species which have shown up with some regularity in recent years include Wilson's Phalarope, Red Knot, and White-rumped and Baird's Sandpipers. Single Hudsonian Godwits were noted here in September 1992 and August 1988, but two were present in September 1986. Other recent rarities include Black-necked Stilt (June 1988), Curlew Sandpiper (August - September 1986), and Red-necked Phalarope (September 1992). The area is also visited by herons dispersing after the breeding season; a Snowy Egret and three Little Blue Herons

were seen here in July 1991. Nesting wetland birds have included Common Moorhen and Yellow-headed Blackbird in recent years. A most unusual record, a fall migrant Lark Bunting, was noted here in September 1992.

Big Marsh. Located on east side of Stony Island Ave. between 110th & 114th Streets. From Torrence Ave., go west on 122nd St. 0.9 mile to stop sign at Stony Island Avenue. Turn north on Stony Island Ave., proceed 1 mile and park on roadside. Marsh is to your right. Here you will find the "crown jewels" of the Calumet area wetlands. A large colony of Black-crowned Night-Herons nests annually in a stand of common reed (*Phragmites communis*) at the southeast corner of the marsh. Of 662 nests counted in a survey by the U.S. Envi-



Pied-billed Grebe, a state-endangered bird, nests at Lake Calumet.
Photo by Walter Marcisz.

ronmental Protection Agency in 1993, 472 contained eggs and/or chicks, 100 showed predation (broken shells) and 90 were empty (S. Elston, pers. comm.). State-endangered Least Bitterns also nested here in 1993 (B. Quinn, pers. comm.). Other unusual herons occur as spring migrants, non-breeding summering birds, or post-breeding wanderers. An immature Reddish Egret was noted here from August - September 1993 among the numerous post-breeding Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets (Meadow-lark 3:45). One to two Snowy Egrets

have been seen here most recent years during the period from mid-May to August. Little Blue Herons are occasional in late summer. One to two Tri-colored Herons summered here throughout the 1980s, but there have been no recent reports. The marsh can also be excellent for fall migrant shorebirds; at least 23 species have been noted here since the mid-1980s. Unusual shorebirds at this location have included American Avocet (July 1991, June 1988), Willet (August 1993), and Hudsonian Godwit (August - September 1991, August 1988). Other rarities include American White Pelican (summered, 1988), *Plegadis* ibis (May 1993), Eurasian Wigeon (April 1988), and Least Tern (July 1993). An immature White Ibis was seen in the Big Marsh/Deadstick Pond area in July 1990.

Lake Calumet. After exiting I-94 at 130th St. east exit, turn north onto frontage road immediately east of expressway. Follow frontage road north for 1.75 miles, park at Medusa Cement Company gate. Walk east to lake. From this vantage point, the Ring-billed/Herring Gull nesting colony at the southeast corner of the lake can be easily viewed (colony is generally active from mid-March - July). This is also a good spot to view wintering gulls, thousands of which often rest on the ice after feeding at local garbage dumps. Thayer's, Iceland, Lesser Black-backed, Glaucous, and Great Black-backed Gulls have all been seen here in recent years. Because of great distances involved, a good spotting scope is a must. Wintering waterfowl include good numbers of Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, which are often joined by large flocks of Lesser Scaup in spring. Increasing numbers of migrating state endangered Double-crested Cormorants are taking advantage of the vast food supply at Lake Calumet. Hundreds were present here during the fall of 1993. Lake Calumet proper has also seen its share of rarities, including Brown