the Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Dendroica pensylvanica*), that of a singing male at Joliet on 8 June 1992. I was, therefore, quite excited to find the species present at all four of the forest preserve holdings along Plum Creek in eastern Will County that I had been contracted by the Will County Forest Preserve District to survey during the 1995 breeding season. During the period 30 May to 11 July, I observed a minimum of nine Chestnut-sided Warblers (three females and six males) at these forest preserves.

Chestnut-sided Warblers do have some precedent in this area of Will County (Graber 1983). Most recently, as Breeding Bird Atlas Coordinator for Will County, I received data during 1986 through 1991 for the presence of this species during breeding season from two atlas blocks in eastern Will County. The data suggest that this warbler, a rare summer resident in northern Illinois (Bohlen 1989), may have some breeding season presence in eastern Will County.
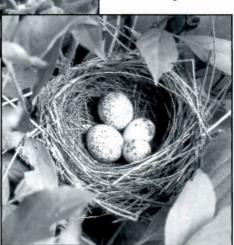

Male Chestnut-sided Warbler on territory in eastern Will County, 16 June 1995. Photo by Joe B. Milosevich.

The Chestnut-sided Warblers occupied two types of breeding habitats at the four preserves in eastern Will County. At two preserves, the warblers occupied brushy successional fields with hilly topography that sloped into more mature growth along either the Plum Creek floodplain or mesic uplands. These old fields were dominated by various brushy shrub species, including various hawthorns and multi-flora rose.

In these two field areas, I observed at least five different Chestnut-sided Warblers: one pair on ter-

Parasitized Chestnut-sided Warbler nest, Will Co., 28 June 1995. This represents the first nest record for Will County. This nest contained two warbler eggs and two cowbird eggs. The female built two additional nests after abandoning this one. Photo by Joe B. Milosevich

ritory, one anxious female, and two agitated males (one carrying food). In one field, at least two different males could be heard singing simultaneously.

The second breeding niche area for Chestnut-sided Warblers at the other two forest preserves was in forest clearings. At one preserve, a male was found singing on 30 May along oak-hickory edge created along a right-of-way clearcut for a pipeline through an upland mesic area.

The two singing males found 4 June at the other preserve were in a narrow clearing cut to accommodate survey markers for development and along a wider, brushy right-of-way cut. Once again, both areas were upland mesic habitat.

On 28 June, while observing the pipeline male, which by this date I was certain was unmated, I unintentionally flushed a female Chestnut-sided Warbler from her nest. The nest was built about 2 feet off the ground in gray dogwood and blackberry brambles near the edge of the oak-hickory woods. The somewhat loosely constructed nest contained four eggs, two of which were Brown-headed Cowbird eggs. The Chestnut-sided Warbler is a frequent cowbird host, but apparently does have the capacity to destroy eggs by building over them (Ehrlich, Dobkin, and Wheye 1988). The female warbler remained very near the nest even while I photographed it at close range.

In the past, I have removed cowbird eggs from songbird nests (e.g. Wood Thrush and Lark Sparrow) without interfering with the host species' nesting cycle. So I carefully removed the cowbird eggs with a twig, without touching the nest. I deposited the eggs far from the site.

When I moved away from the nest, the female quickly returned and even permitted me to photograph her on it. I observed the male feeding the female while she was incubating the eggs. This nest represents the first nest record and first definitive breeding evidence for this warbler in Will County.

When I returned to the pipeline right-of-way on 3 July, I heard the male Chestnut-sided Warbler still singing, but found the nest unattended and infested with ants. The two warbler eggs were undamaged and still in the nest. As I moved toward the male, I once again unintentionally flushed the