

far exceeds any other reported colony sizes in Illinois history. In addition, I found a lone Black Tern nest in the colony.

During 1990, I observed about 10 nests at the same site.

Several observers noted foraging Forster's Terns throughout Lake County carrying food for young during the 1991 summer breeding season, sometimes as far as four miles away from the colony.

-- Randy Heidorn, 110 James Road, Spring Grove, IL 60081

Western Meadowlark Sings All Summer In Lake County

While observing fledgling Eastern Kingbirds begging for food on a country road on 3 July 1991 near Round Lake, I heard the unmistakable song of the Western Meadowlark. The bird was singing in a fenced-in fallow field behind a home. Nearby was a pond, corn fields and overgrown hedges.

The bird preferred perching on a tree in the middle of the field where it sang. A birding companion as well as an area ornithologist confirmed the Western Meadowlark later that week. The woman who lived in a house north of the field said she had heard the bird singing for at least a month.

The Western Meadowlark seemed to have defined his own territory adjacent to a field where Eastern Meadowlarks were seen and heard.

I visited the site at least once a week and continued hearing the Western Meadowlark song through the beginning of August.

On 17 July, I observed 10 juvenile meadowlarks. Since separating juvenile easterns from westerns is extremely difficult, I can only guess that easterns successfully nested there and the western sang all summer without finding a mate. Roger Tory Peterson notes in his field guide that the Western Meadowlark is spreading eastward, but sparsely.

-- Sheryl De Vore, 967 Braeburn Road, Mundelein, IL 60060

Nest Building By Red Crossbills

While birding in the 80-year-old Austrian and Scotch pine plantations at the south end of Illinois Beach State Park on 7 April 1991, I heard a male Red Crossbill giving its recognizable "kip, kip, kip, kip" call. I soon located a female carrying a small stick into one of the pines.

The female then flew to a different pine and broke a small stick from a branch and returned to the original pine. She repeated the action several times. The male, which sported a brick red color and had distinctly crossed mandibles, escorted the female from tree to tree calling.

The female had placed the nest 25 feet high into the crotch of a pine tree. The pair communicated constantly as the male picked out dead branches twig by twig and delivered them to the female who placed the twig in the nest.

The female was greenish yellow with crossed mandibles. Neither bird had wing bars.

I did not return to this site and other observers were not able to locate any crossbills here after mid April.

Red Crossbills have nested here during 1973 when adults and immatures were noted in June and July.

-- Andrew Sigler, 1050 Columbia, Apt. 4C, Chicago, IL 60626

Editor's Note: Brief accounts of observations of interesting bird behavior, nestings and rare sightings may be sent to: Seasonal Highlights Editor, David B. Johnson, 504 Crown Point Drive, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089