

breeding resident along river and creek corridors in bottom and other woodlands in northern Illinois.

During the summer of 1995 (15 June - 1 August), Steve Apfelbaum and David Johnson recorded an estimated 24 territories (defined as a male singing at or near the same location for more than one week apart) of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers in north central Lake County between the town of Millburn and Interstate 94 along Millburn Creek and its tributaries. Birds were recorded along a transect route with 2-minute listening stops every 150 yards and a plot estimate of each singing male recorded on a transect map. Gnatcatchers during June were quite vocal and defended territories. Each territory was estimated from at least four early morning visits to each listening stop and two evening visits. Breeding was also confirmed when an adult gnatcatcher was seen feeding young on 19 July approximately one-fourth of a mile northeast of the town of Millburn.

While doing a similar breeding survey at Ryerson Conservation Area in Lake County only with 6-minute transect stops, Sheryl De Vore recorded at least seven territories within the preserve. Her report is on file with the Lake County Forest Preserves (De Vore 1995). Breeding was confirmed when De Vore discovered a pair at a nest site near the Exhibit Cabin. Observers in northern Illinois are urged to report all summer singing males and breeding evidence for gnatcatchers to *Meadowlark* and Vernon Kleen.

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## Literature Cited

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## Nesting Common Terns in Lake County

For the second year in a row, Common Terns (*Sterna hirundo*) nested on the spits of land which jut out into the water in a pond located on the Johns-Mansville property just south of Illinois Beach State Park in Lake County. There is no public access to this pond, but distant viewing is possible with a spotting scope.

By 29 May 1995, the first three Common Terns were seen at the pond. On 31 May, the number was up to 16. However, water levels were fairly high, thus only small areas of land were available above the waterline. No signs of nesting activity were present on this date and the Common Terns were spread out among more than 100 Ring-billed Gulls, Herring Gulls and a few Caspian Terns (*S. caspia*).

My next visit was on 25 June when I discovered 31 adult Common Terns. Between 12 to 14 appeared to be sitting on nests. I saw no young. The terns tolerated the two Caspian Terns and 100 gulls.

On 22 July, I found 37 adult Common Terns, together with 22 young which varied from recently hatched to some almost as large as their parents. Any gull, duck, goose or Great Blue Heron which came near the nest area was attacked by up to 10 adult Common Terns. At this time, the terns tolerated no bird larger than small shorebirds on this spit of land.

At my next visit, 19 August, I saw no sign of adult or young at the nesting colony, although I occasionally noticed one or two Common Terns flying along Lake Michigan's shoreline.

Unlike the summer of 1994 when I checked the nesting colony every Saturday and Sunday during June, July and early August, my 1995 visits were limited to 29 and 31 May, 25 June, 22 July, and 19 August. Still, a few comparisons can be made.

In 1994, the first Common Tern did not arrive at the nesting site until 5 June. In 1995, I found three on 29 May and 16 on 31 May. In 1994, by 25 June, I found 18 adults with two active nests. In contrast during 1995, I discovered 31 adults with 12 to 14 active nests. In 1994, the maximum number of adults seen at the nest colony at one time was 21. In 1995, the high adult count was 37. I found eight young in 1994 and 22 in 1995.

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