

nestling had died. We collected it and gave it to H. David Bohlen at the Illinois State Museum in Springfield.

The trapped bird was at the fledgling stage and when freed, bounded off into the thicket. Several fecal sacs had accumulated under the nest indicating it had been trapped there for a day or two. The severe thunderstorms Thursday night and Friday morning were likely the cause. For the time, the nest was fastened back into the tree. I continued to monitor the nest throughout the following week.

On Tuesday, 1 August, the male was still active at his singing post, and the female busily attended to the fledglings. On Wednesday, 2 August, the male behaved the same, but the female was making less frequent visits to the nest site.

On Friday, 4 August, it took several hours to locate the male. Luckily on Saturday, 5 August, the male was very cooperative and singing as many upstate birders got great looks. I last observed the male Sunday, 6 August and the female Monday, 7 August. I received a secondhand report that the female was observed on Friday, 11 August. After the sightings ceased, I collected the nest and gave it to Bohlen at the Illinois State Museum in Springfield.

Breeding Behavior

The breeding behavior of Painted Buntings has been well documented. An extensive 1957 study conducted in southern Oklahoma by David F. Parmalee provides the basis for my estimates concerning the possible dates for a nesting cycle in Illinois. As of 1957, the earliest known arrival date for Oklahoma was 17 April but apparently the species does not arrive there in force until the very last of April and the first of May (Parmalee 1959). Arrival dates for the three previous spring records for Illinois are adult male, Makanda, (southern Illinois) 20-22 April 1993 (Gelman 1994); adult male, Bloomington, (central Illinois) 19-22 May 1999, (Latham, Swartz-Soukap, Retter 2000) and an immature male, Wadsworth, (northern Illinois) 21-22 April 2000 (Mellen 2000.)

Most of the neotropical migrant species that breed in southern Illinois arrive by late April. The latest of the



Male Painted Bunting.

spring migrants in southern Illinois arrive by mid-May, but these species typically breed farther north. If Illinois should have a small breeding population of Painted Buntings, I suspect they would arrive by early May. Working conservatively with 20 May as the Illinois arrival date for an adult male Painted Bunting, it is still quite possible that a pair could produce two broods by the end of July.

Parmalee (1959) found that some phases of the breeding cycle continued even into July. He states: this repetition

was due in part to excessive predation...and in part to double-broodedness. If an Illinois pair had established a territory by 1 June 2000 in East St. Louis, nest building could easily be completed by 6 June. Parmalee recorded a nest in the early stages of construction on 19 June, by 21 June, it was complete and by 22 June, the first egg was laid. He also gives a precise incubation period of 11 days and six hours.

If this holds true for Illinois, our hatch date for the first brood would be 21 June. In the Oklahoma study, fledging occurred on the eighth or ninth day (Parmalee 1959). This sequence would give us a fledge date of 30 June.

I'm hopeful our discovery of recently fledged chicks on 30 July represented a second brood. Parmalee (1959) states, "Certain pairs continued to nest after they had a successful fledging and were in a true sense of the term double-brooded. In full charge of the brood, the female alone constructed a new nest near her old one. The male dramatically took over the brood just before egg-laying, and thereafter the female had nothing to do with the brood, so far as known." In four cases involving double-broods, Parmalee recorded three intervals of 29 days and a fourth interval of 30 days. "Thus the time interval between fledgings was not only surprisingly short but remarkably constant," he states.

If the East St. Louis pair fledged a first brood by 30 June, the female would have had seven days to attend to the fledglings and build a second nest. Egg laying could have begun on the 7th, with the male taking over the first brood. Incubation would have lasted until the 21st, and the second brood would have fledged by the 30th.

Possible Nesting Sequence for the East St. Louis Painted Buntings

Nest Building	Egg Laying	Incubation	Hatch Date	Fledge Date
June 3-6	June 7-10	June 10-21	June 21	June 30
July 3-6	July 7-10	July 10-21	July 21	July 30