

Aug. then one juvenile there 28 Aug. (J. O'Brien, fide R. Biss, pers. comm.). Said to have probably bred at that location. Other multiple reports from Rogers Park and Chicago during June (fide R. Biss, pers. comm.)

1997 — published as a NBSO: singing male, Chicago, 22 July (E. Walters in Meadowlark [Kleen 1998])

2000 — published as NBSO: Chicago near Columbus Drive at the Gleacher Center along the Chicago River, 11 July (K. Wysocki in Meadowlark); singing male, Lyman Woods FP (DuPage Co). 5 July (S. Bailey) incorrectly published under White-crowned Sparrow in *Meadowlark* (Kleen 2001)

2001 — pair, copulating, 4 June, downtown Chicago, Wacker and Washington, still present 6 June but female found dead 9 June and male apparently departed thereafter (K. Wysocki, E. Walters, pers. comm. E. Walters). Fledglings were found by K. Wysocki and C. Williamson 1.5 miles east of this location later that summer on 31 July. Multiple birds were located in at least two other locations in downtown Chicago, including at least two birds at Olive Park (K. Wysocki, pers. comm.).

Eric Walters comments after the 1987 breeding season that “White-throated Sparrows probably nest every year in Chicago” were ahead of his time, and like many such predictions fell on deaf ears from those “more knowledgeable.” Walters spent countless hours in the late 1980s as well as more recently trying to confirm nesting on a species that, as he stated, “was almost certainly breeding most years within the city limits of Chicago.” Walters states that “whenever I put time into it, I’d always sooner or later find one (sparrow) in the small strip plantations of evergreen vegetation that can be found every 3-5 blocks in the downtown area.” Prior to the 2002 breeding season, he had found these sparrows in a 1-1.5 square mile area of downtown Chicago, in at least 7 different locations (E. Walters, pers. comm.).

Ken Wysocki, another avid Chicago birder who also was finding evidence of likely nesting in this species, and Walters went so far as to climb light poles in July 2001 to look in hanging flower planters, and crawling around under evergreen bushes to look for White-throated Sparrow nests, and Wysocki even went back in winter to look for the old nest, without success.

Nearest Known Breeding Sites

The White-throated Sparrow breeds regularly as close as central Wisconsin (approximately on a line from Jackson, Wood, Portage, and Waupaca Counties) and northward. However, the nearest two Wisconsin breeding sites are much closer, and are both in bogs, one in the Cedarburg Bog just southeast of Newburg and the slightly closer location in Jackson Bog (Washington County) near Lake Michigan. The species was considered “abundant” at this location during the summer of 1998 (Soulen 1999). A probable nesting occurred during the recently completed Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas in the northern edge of the border county of Walworth, north of McHenry County, IL, only 58 miles (plus or minus 3 miles) from the Chicago nesting site (WBBA). A bird observed on 30 June 1995 in Milwaukee County was assumed to be a migrant, although the date seems to be very late for a spring migrant and very early for a fall migrant. *The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Indiana* (Castrale et al 1998) placed the species in the “possible nesters; never confirmed nesting in the state” category.

Urban Nestings in New York

It is interesting to note that the aforementioned instances of White-throated Sparrows nesting or possibly nesting in the downtown section of a large metropolitan city (Chicago) are not the first to be documented. Walters knew this fact in the 1980s and Wysocki kindly informed me of these other urban nestings as well. At least two such nestings occurred in downtown

Buffalo, New York (population well over 500,000 at the time of nesting), in the summer of 1969 and 1973 (see Figures 1 and 2). The first Buffalo nesting site was described as being in a “small triangle of planted, dense shrubbery about 50m long by 35m wide, near the entrance to the library” (Andrle and Rew 1971). Birds were present at that first nesting in Buffalo from at least 19 June through 27 August. The 1973 nesting involved two adults foraging with three fledged young, and a nest with a second brood of four young ~ 2 days old, about 380 meters from the library where they nested in 1969, but in a small park adjoining a large church. These birds were seen to hunt food “on Erie Street about parked

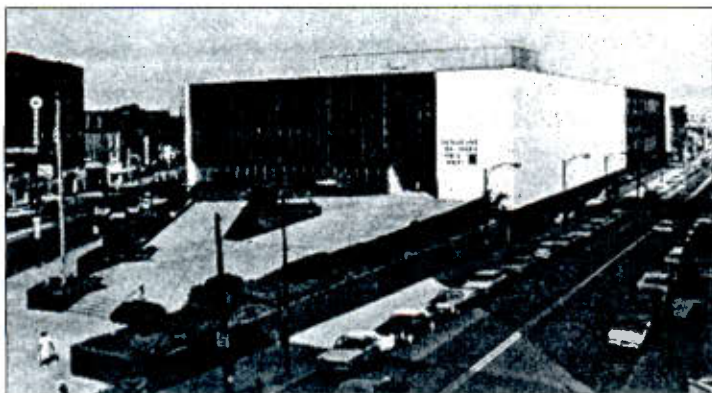


Figure 1. Library nesting site of White-throated Sparrow in downtown Buffalo, New York, summer 1969. Photo courtesy of the Auk (Volume 88, page 172)