

But if realistically, the next Atlas probably could not be pulled together until the spring of 2006, that would be 20 years since the start of the first Atlas period," she said.

Kleen agreed. The IBBA will be useful to all kinds of municipal and state agencies which can use distribution maps to steer projects clear of areas with sensitive nesting birds, Kleen said. But he also noted that new data is needed as soon as possible since land use around the state has changed so dramatically since the survey was completed in 1991.

Neither Kleen nor Cordle said they plan to be the chief instigators for planning the next IBBA. Kleen said he would be honored to be involved in the next project, perhaps as a consultant, but noted that it might require pressure from the birding community on state administrators to dedicate staff and funding for such a big undertaking. That said, Kleen clearly hopes leaders will emerge from within Illinois' birding community who will pick up the torch for the next round of breeding bird Olympics in the state.

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Editor's Note: *This and the next page represent one of the accounts found in the new Illinois Breeding Bird Atlas, courtesy of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, plus information on how to order the book.*

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The Illinois Breeding Bird Atlas

The Illinois Breeding Bird Atlas project is a comprehensive statewide survey of the birds that breed in Illinois. Among the goals of the atlas project were the determination of the distributions of breeding birds and their status in the state, documentation of a baseline for future analysis, and education of the public about this natural resource.

Over a six-year period from 1986 to 1991, hundreds of volunteers spent thousands of hours locating birds and collecting data using standardized protocol in precisely located areas throughout the state. Of the 197 bird species reported with some evidence of breeding in Illinois during the atlas project, 172 species were documented as confirmed breeders, 15 species as probable breeders, and 10 species as possible breeders.

This publication summarizes the results of the data collection. The introductory sections include a description of the project, its methodology, and a summary of results. The species accounts section includes information on the range, abundance, breeding habitat, life history, historical status, recent population trends, and distribution in the state for 183 species which bred in Illinois during the Atlas project period.

