

NOTEWORTHY BREEDING BIRDS OF THE CEDAR CREEK NATURAL HISTORY AREA

CEDAR CREEK NATURAL HISTORY AREA
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A number of the bird species that breed at the Cedar Creek Natural History Area are at or near the extreme edge of their breeding ranges in Minnesota. Cedar Creek is located east of U.S. Highway 65 along the border of Anoka and Isanti Counties, and includes about 22 km² of such habitats as northern pin oak forest, bur oak savannah, birch-aspen woods, cedar forest, cedar-tamarack bogs, alder swamps, marshes, fields, and open water. I have thoroughly searched the southeastern quarter of Cedar Creek during the breeding seasons of 1976-83, and the southwestern quarter during 1977-80, and so have a reasonable idea of the breeding status of the birds there. Coverage of the northern portions of Cedar Creek has been spotty in recent years, and the status of the birds that breed there is less certain. This article will discuss those species whose presence at Cedar Creek might be considered noteworthy.

Common Loon: In every year since 1976 a pair of Common Loons has been on Fish Lake, and adults have been seen with young in 1980, 1981, and 1983.

Sandhill Crane: A pair of Sandhill Cranes had one or two young in the marshes north of Fish Lake in 1979, 1980, and 1983.

Alder Flycatcher: A few Alder Flycatchers are heard at Cedar Creek each year. There are no records of Willow Flycatchers.

Western Kingbird: Formerly a common breeding bird in the area, the last record of Western Kingbirds at Cedar Creek was four birds seen 9/13/76.

Tufted Titmouse: Titmice formerly bred at Cedar Creek, but have been absent for at least the last eight years.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: A small population of Red-breasted Nuthatches is permanently resident in the coniferous forests around and northwest of Cedar Bog Lake.

Brown Creeper: The only recent breeding season record for Brown Creepers at Cedar Creek is a family group seen 7/7/79.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: The only Cedar Creek record for Blue-gray Gnatcatchers are a pair that fledged young in 1977 and single birds 5/1/78 and 5/21/78.

Black-and-white Warbler: Black-and-white Warblers are present each year in small numbers in the moist woods at Cedar Creek, and breeding evidence was found by Breckenridge (Breckenridge, W. J. 1955. Comparison of the breeding-bird populations of two neighboring but distinct forest habitats. Audubon Field Notes 9:408-412) and in 1983.

Golden-winged Warbler: Golden-winged Warblers are common and conspicuous breeding birds at Cedar Creek, especially in the wet areas along Anoka County Road 24.

Blue-winged Warbler: In 1977 Blue-winged Warblers were found paired with Golden-winged Warblers at Cedar Creek. The first Bluewing-Bluewing pair at Cedar Creek was noticed in 1983. Brewster's Warblers have been seen nearly every year since 1977.

Nashville Warbler: Nashville Warblers are common breeders in the bogs at Cedar Creek, and occasionally are also in small aspen woods.

Black-throated Green Warbler: Black-throated Green Warblers have occasionally been found during breeding season in the southern portions of Cedar Creek, and are possibly regular in the pine woods

in the northern portions. No positive breeding evidence has been found, but some breeding probably has occurred since both sexes have been seen.

Cerulean Warbler: Cerulean Warblers possibly bred in former years at Cedar Creek (Breckenridge, *op. cit.*), but there are no recent records of any kind.

Blackburnian Warbler: Blackburnians have been found during the breeding season at Cedar Creek in 1981 and 1983 and may breed there.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: Chestnut-sided Warblers have been found during the breeding season every year 1976-83. The birds are frequently in different places in different years, and do not occupy all the apparently suitable habitat. They probably breed somewhere at Cedar Creek each year.

Northern Waterthrush: Northern Waterthrushes were found feeding young along the northwest shore of Cedar Bog Lake 7/4/79. They are present in small numbers around Cedar Bog Lake every year and in a small area west of the lab buildings. This population is far south of any other reported breeding population in Minnesota, but is apparently viable since the birds have been in the same location at least since 1976.

Mourning Warbler: The only recent

breeding record for Mourning Warblers at Cedar Creek was a pair feeding young in 1979. The birds are probably absent during most breeding seasons.

Canada Warbler: Male Canada Warblers have been seen at Cedar Creek on 6/23/78, 6/30/78, 6/20/80, and 6/6/81. No breeding evidence has been found.

Purple Finch: Fledgling Purple Finches were seen with adults at David and Jean Vesall's bird feeders, adjacent to the Cedar Creek Natural History Area in 1979 and 1980. Purple Finches have occasionally been seen during the breeding season in the coniferous areas of Cedar Creek and may breed there.

Lark Sparrow: Lark Sparrows are common and conspicuous birds of the savannah areas of Cedar Creek and the adjacent Allison Savannah.

White-throated Sparrow: Breckenridge (*op. cit.*) reported White-throated Sparrows one of the most common breeding species in the bog forests near Cedar Bog Lake. The only recent records during the breeding season are a few males heard singing around Cedar Bog Lake. White-throated Sparrows are apparently not as common a breeding species at Cedar Creek as 30 years ago. 1700 Silver Lake Road, New Brighton, MN 55112.