

LOESS HILLS BIRD CONSERVATION AREA

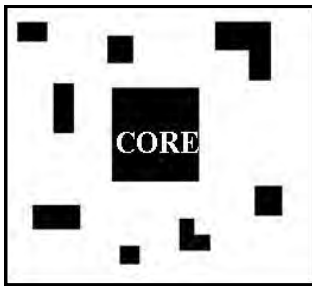
The Loess Hills Bird Conservation Area (BCA) is located in the most unique landform of Iowa; created by windblown loess from the Missouri River bottomland and piled 200-300 feet deep. Once near-totally covered by prairie, today the Loess Hills' land cover is a mixture of native prairie, Bur Oak savanna, and woodlands. This BCA contains 94,048 acres in Monona and Harrison counties, of which nearly 19,000 acres are protected by conservation easements or publicly owned.

Bird diversity here is exceptional, with 249 species identified, including 80 Iowa Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Currently, 111 species are known to nest in this BCA's prairies, savannas, woodlands, and wetlands. This same crucial habitat supplies important



Western Meadowlark
Carl Kurtz

The BCA's western Iowa location makes it a good place to see western bird species that are less often seen elsewhere, like Western Kingbird, Townsend's Solitaire, and perhaps Lazuli Bunting.



The BCA Model: shaded areas depict special habitat

dedicated to the conservation of game and non-game birds. Since 1999, bird conservation organizations and enthusiasts have worked together under an umbrella called the **North American Bird Conservation Initiative** (NABCI) to "conserve all birds in all habitats." As part of this initiative and in an effort to protect dwindling populations of many Iowa birds, Iowa's **Bird Conservation Area** (BCA) program was established by the DNR Wildlife Bureau in 2001.

The present model BCA encompasses at least 10,000 acres of public and/or private lands with 35% or more of the area as key bird habitat. Research suggests that viable bird populations require conservation efforts at a landscape-oriented level. Each BCA should also include a large "core" area (at least 2,000 acres) of protected high-quality habitat. Around this core is both private land and additional public tracts, managed for good bird habitat or at least maintained to be neutral in how they affect bird life.

IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

The Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program is a global effort initiated by the National Audubon Society to identify and conserve areas that are vital to birds and other biodiversity. Designated IBAs include sites for



Blue Grosbeak
Doug Harr
(c) Doug Harr

BIRD CONSERVATION AREAS

In recent decades, alarming declines in a large number of species of North American birds have led to the emergence of national and international programs

breeding, wintering, and/or migrating birds. By working to identify and implement conservation strategies, the IBA Program hopes to minimize the effects of habitat degradation and loss on birds and other wildlife. All Iowa BCAs are also considered IBAs.

LOESS HILLS PRAIRIE DIVERSITY

PLANTS

The Loess Hills contain many unique native prairie species. Bluestem prairies are sprinkled with several colorful milkweed species, as well as Snow-on-the-Mountain, Prairie Larkspur, Fringed Puccoon, Dotted Blazing Star, Locoweed, and Western Purple Coneflower. Interspersed with sprawling Bur Oaks, another unique and threatened Iowa ecosystem - Oak Savanna - includes prairie plants such as Side-oats Grama, Lead Plant, Meadow Rose, Prairie Phlox, and Wild Strawberry.



Regal Fritillary
Mike Reece

ANIMALS

Besides birds, this BCA is home to a diverse group of other animals. These include 105 butterfly species, such as the Ottoo, Pawnee, and Fiery skippers, as well as Monarch and Regal Fritillary. Bumble Bees, Long-horned



Plains Pocket Mouse

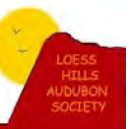
Bees and Mason Bees are important prairie flower pollinators. While strolling through the prairies, keep an eye open for unique reptiles, such as the Six-lined Racerunner, Bullsnake, and Blue Racer, as well as for small mammals, like the Plains Pocket Mouse, Western Harvest Mouse, and Prairie Vole. After heavy summer rains, listen for the loud quacking call of a most unique amphibian, the Plains Spadefoot. Two toads that may be encountered, also unique to western Iowa, include Woodhouse's Toad and Great Plains Toad.



Bullsnake
Bruce Ehresman

PARTNERSHIPS

The Loess Hills Bird Conservation Area is made possible by many partnerships, including: Harrison and Monona County Conservation Boards, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, Iowa Audubon, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Loess Hills Audubon Society, Loess Hills Alliance, Loess Hills Preservation Society, Pheasants Forever, and Iowa Department of Natural Resources.



Bird Checklist for Loess Hills BCA

*= Confirmed or likely area breeder

Iowa Wildlife Action Plan Migratory Species of Greatest Conservation Need

Iowa Wildlife Action Plan Nesting Species of Greatest Conservation Need

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greater White-fronted Goose | <input type="checkbox"/> Golden Eagle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snow Goose | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ross's Goose | <input type="checkbox"/> Virginia Rail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cackling Goose | <input type="checkbox"/> Sora |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canada Goose | <input type="checkbox"/> American Coot |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trumpeter Swan* | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Duck* | <input type="checkbox"/> Sandhill Crane |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gadwall | <input type="checkbox"/> Black-bellied Plover |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Wigeon | <input type="checkbox"/> American Golden-Plover |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mallard* | <input type="checkbox"/> Semipalmated Plover |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blue-winged Teal* | <input type="checkbox"/> Killdeer* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Shoveler | <input type="checkbox"/> Spotted Sandpiper* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Pintail | <input type="checkbox"/> Solitary Sandpiper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green-winged Teal | <input type="checkbox"/> Greater Yellowlegs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Redhead | <input type="checkbox"/> Lesser Yellowlegs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ring-necked Duck | <input type="checkbox"/> Upland Sandpiper* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lesser Scaup | <input type="checkbox"/> Baird's Sandpiper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bufflehead | <input type="checkbox"/> Least Sandpiper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common Goldeneye | <input type="checkbox"/> Semipalmated Sandpiper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hooded Merganser* | <input type="checkbox"/> White-rumped Sandpiper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common Merganser | <input type="checkbox"/> Pectoral Sandpiper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ruddy Duck | <input type="checkbox"/> Western Sandpiper |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Short-billed Dowitcher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gray Partridge | <input type="checkbox"/> Wilson's Snipe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ring-necked Pheasant* | <input type="checkbox"/> American Woodcock* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sharp-tailed Grouse | <input type="checkbox"/> Wilson's Phalarope |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wild Turkey* | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Bobwhite* | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Franklin's Gull |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pied-billed Grebe* | <input type="checkbox"/> Ring-billed Gull |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American White Pelican | <input type="checkbox"/> Herring Gull |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Double-crested Cormorant | <input type="checkbox"/> Caspian Tern |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Tern |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Bittern | <input type="checkbox"/> Forster's Tern |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great Blue Heron* | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great Egret | <input type="checkbox"/> Rock Pigeon* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cattle Egret | <input type="checkbox"/> Eurasian Collared-Dove* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green Heron* | <input type="checkbox"/> Mourning Dove* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black-crowned Night-heron | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-billed Cuckoo* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey Vulture* | <input type="checkbox"/> Black-billed Cuckoo* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Osprey | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mississippi Kite | <input type="checkbox"/> Barn Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bald Eagle | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Screech Owl* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Harrier* | <input type="checkbox"/> Great Horned Owl* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sharp-shinned Hawk | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowy Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooper's Hawk* | <input type="checkbox"/> Burrowing Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Goshawk | <input type="checkbox"/> Barred Owl* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-shouldered Hawk | <input type="checkbox"/> Long-eared Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broad-winged Hawk* | <input type="checkbox"/> Short-eared Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swainson's Hawk | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Saw-Whet Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-tailed Hawk* | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rough-legged Hawk | <input type="checkbox"/> Common Nighthawk* |

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|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chuck-will's-widow | <input type="checkbox"/> Marsh Wren* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Whip-poor-will* | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue-gray Gnatcatcher* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chimney Swift* | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ruby-throated Hummingbird* | <input type="checkbox"/> Golden-crowned Kinglet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Belted Kingfisher* | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruby-crowned Kinglet |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Bluebird* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-headed Woodpecker* | <input type="checkbox"/> Townsend's Solitaire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-bellied Woodpecker* | <input type="checkbox"/> Veery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-bellied Sapsucker | <input type="checkbox"/> Gray-cheeked Thrush |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Downy Woodpecker* | <input type="checkbox"/> Swainson's Thrush |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hairy Woodpecker* | <input type="checkbox"/> Hermit Thrush |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Flicker* | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Thrush* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pileated Woodpecker | <input type="checkbox"/> American Robin* |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Gray Catbird* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Kestrel* | <input type="checkbox"/> Brown Thrasher* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Merlin | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Mockingbird* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peregrine Falcon | <input type="checkbox"/> European Starling* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prairie Falcon | <input type="checkbox"/> American Pipit |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Cedar Waxwing* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Olive-sided Flycatcher | <input type="checkbox"/> Lapland Longspur |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Wood-Pewee* | <input type="checkbox"/> Smith's Longspur |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-bellied Flycatcher | <input type="checkbox"/> Snow Bunting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acadian Flycatcher* | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alder Flycatcher | <input type="checkbox"/> Ovenbird* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Willow Flycatcher* | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Waterthrush |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Least Flycatcher | <input type="checkbox"/> Louisiana Waterthrush* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Phoebe* | <input type="checkbox"/> Golden-winged Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great Crested Flycatcher* | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue-winged Warbler* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western Kingbird* | <input type="checkbox"/> Black-and-white Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Kingbird* | <input type="checkbox"/> Prothonotary Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scissor-tailed Flycatcher | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennessee Warbler |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Orange-crowned Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loggerhead Shrike* | <input type="checkbox"/> Nashville Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Shrike | <input type="checkbox"/> Connecticut Warbler |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Mourning Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White-eyed Vireo | <input type="checkbox"/> Kentucky Warbler* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bell's Vireo* | <input type="checkbox"/> Common Yellowthroat* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-throated Vireo* | <input type="checkbox"/> American Redstart* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blue-headed Vireo | <input type="checkbox"/> Cape May Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Warbling Vireo* | <input type="checkbox"/> Cerulean Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Philadelphia Vireo | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Parula |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-eyed Vireo* | <input type="checkbox"/> Magnolia Warbler |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Bay-breasted Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Jay* | <input type="checkbox"/> Blackburnian Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Crow* | <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow Warbler* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Horned Lark* | <input type="checkbox"/> Chestnut-sided Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Purple Martin* | <input type="checkbox"/> Blackpoll Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tree Swallow* | <input type="checkbox"/> Black-throated Blue Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Rough-winged Swallow* | <input type="checkbox"/> Palm Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bank Swallow* | <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-rumped Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cliff Swallow* | <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-throated Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barn Swallow* | <input type="checkbox"/> Black-throated Green Warbler |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Canada Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black-capped Chickadee* | <input type="checkbox"/> Wilson's Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tufted Titmouse* | <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-breasted Chat* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-breasted Nuthatch | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White-breasted Nuthatch* | <input type="checkbox"/> Spotted Towhee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brown Creeper | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Towhee* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carolina Wren* | <input type="checkbox"/> American Tree Sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House Wren* | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winter Wren | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sedge Wren* | |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Chipping Sparrow* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clay-colored Sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field Sparrow* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vesper Sparrow* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lark Sparrow* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Savannah Sparrow* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grasshopper Sparrow* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Henslow's Sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Le Conte's Sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nelson's Sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fox Sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Song Sparrow* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lincoln's Sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swamp Sparrow* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White-throated Sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harris's Sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White-crowned Sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dark-eyed Junco |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Summer Tanager* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scarlet Tanager* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Cardinal* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rose-breasted Grosbeak* |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Grosbeak* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indigo Bunting* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dickcissel* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bobolink* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-winged Blackbird* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Meadowlark* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western Meadowlark* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-headed Blackbird |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rusty Blackbird |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brewer's Blackbird |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common Grackle* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great-tailed Grackle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brown-headed Cowbird* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orchard Oriole* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baltimore Oriole* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Purple Finch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House Finch* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red Crossbill |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common Redpoll |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pine Siskin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Goldfinch* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House Sparrow* |

Loess Hills

Bird Conservation Area



LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE
CARL KURTZ

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Monona & Harrison Counties

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