

2021 Breeding Bird Survey  
Munsch Property  
Coon Valley, WI

Surveys conducted by: Krysten Zummo

**Survey Summary:**

The Munsch Property was surveyed for breeding bird activity from June 3, 2021 through July 21, 2021 for a total of 8 surveys. The purpose of these surveys was to observe breeding bird activity on the property and provide feedback on bird use of the managed rotational grazing areas and the reserve. A total of 6 survey locations were designated on the property: 1 in a managed rotational grazing area set away from the reserve, 2 in managed rotational grazing areas adjacent to the reserve, 1 within the reserve itself, 1 in a field hayed prior to the start of the surveys, and 1 in a field hayed late in the survey period.

**Observation Overview:**

*Managed Rotational Grazing Set Away from the Reserve (Site 1):* This survey site was along the edge of two separated rotational grazing paddocks and had primarily forest and edge bird species present. The most frequently heard species here included: black-capped chickadees, eastern wood-pewees, house wrens, indigo buntings, and a mixture of woodpecker species. On occasion, a dickcissel or savanna sparrow would be heard, but not with frequency enough to indicate breeding activity.

*Managed Rotational Grazing Adjacent to the Reserve (Sites 2 & 3):* These two sites were very similar in bird presence, with Site 2 having a higher density of bird species and individuals (anecdotally). These two sites included high number of grassland birds within the 100m diameter area, including bobolinks, dickcissels, sedge wrens, savanna sparrows, and a small number of eastern meadowlarks. In addition to these priority grassland species, there were also significant numbers of red-winged blackbirds, a handful of field sparrows, and the mixture of woodland and edge species listed for Site 1. These birds remained in the area the entirety of the season and there was significant breeding bird behavior (conspecific territory defense, aggravated circling during my presence, and food carrying) from bobolinks, dickcissels, and savanna sparrows. These species remained at their territories before, during, and after grazing occurred. On occasion, they were also seen using the refuge area, and most breeding behavior was witnessed near the border between these sites and the refuge.

*Within the Reserve (Site 4):* Within the refuge there were dense numbers of bobolinks and a smaller number of savanna sparrows and eastern meadowlarks. The eastern meadowlarks and savanna sparrows seemed to be around the edge while the bobolinks were more centrally located. These species remained in this area during the entirety of the breeding season. The bobolinks displayed significant territory defense and food carrying and on one occasion a savanna sparrow was flushed from an assumed nest. After the main breeding season was over, the bobolinks remained in this area and began grouping up. This would signify, anecdotally, that this refuge was important not just for breeding but for their fledging and pre-migration seasons.

*Field Hayed Prior to Surveys Beginning (Site 5):* This field was hayed in the last week of May/first week of June prior to the surveys beginning. The vegetation stood at approximately 3-5 inches at the start of the surveys and was knee height during the last survey. There was very little to no activity within the 100m diameter of the survey point. The most audible/visible birds included blue jays, house wrens, black-capped chickadees, barn swallows, and a mixture of other woodland/edge species. On occasion, an eastern meadowlark or two or a savanna sparrow were heard at the northern edge of this field where the Reserve began, or an eastern meadowlark was on the southern edge of the field perched on a fence. Last year, when this was the Reserve, a number of bobolinks were present for the duration of the summer.

*Field Hayed Late in the Season (Site 6):* This field was standing grass during most of the breeding season and was hayed in sections during mid- to late-July. Before the haying, there were multiple eastern meadowlarks, savanna sparrows, and a couple of bobolinks in this area. All of which were showing signs of territory defense. After haying, the area had fewer bobolinks, and the eastern meadowlarks and savanna sparrows quieted down but were still in the area. Other species present included indigo buntings, common yellowthroats, and field sparrows.