

## Final Report of the Midwest Birding Symposium

Grant Agreement Number: #06-028W

Grantee Name, Address, Phone Number:  
Quad Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau  
2021 River Drive  
Moline, IL 61265  
(563) 322-3911 Ext. 116

Time Frame of the Report:  
October 13, 2005 to Present

Grantee Representative Completing Report:  
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### Completed Project Description:

The Quad Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau hosted more than 400 birders from 23 states, Canada and New Zealand at the Midwest Birding Symposium. Four Points Sheraton, Rock Island, was an official hotel.

The staff of the Quad Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau (Joe Taylor and Arlyce Musal) organized a planning committee led by members of the Fish and Wildlife Service (Jody Millar), Illinois Department of Natural Resources (Bill Bertrand, retired), Quad City Audubon Society (Kelly McKay, Tim Murphy, Bob Bryant, Mary Lou Petersen and others), Citizens to Preserve Black Hawk Park Foundation (Cliff Stewart) as well as the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

During 2004 and much of 2005, the Quad Cities Convention & Visitors organized a full-scale advertising and public relations campaign to build awareness of the Symposium and to build awareness of the great birding opportunities in Illinois. Efforts included Bird Watchers Digest, Birders World, [www.visitquadcities.com](http://www.visitquadcities.com), Illinois Ornithological Union, Iowa Ornithological Union, targeted emails to birders, news releases to general publications and newspapers, public service announcements on Quad Cities radio stations, and advertising in Quad Cities newspapers. Quad Cities CVB

also conducted many presentations to a variety of groups relative to the Symposium.

Field trips included multiple Illinois locations to bird, including Niabi Zoo, Coal Valley; Blackhawk State Historic Site, Rock Island; Milan Bottoms on the Mississippi River, Andalusia; various Mississippi River locations enroute to Mississippi Palisades State Park and Lost Mound National Wildlife Refuge. A total of 119 species were observed by all birders during all field trips during the symposium.

In addition to field trips, another key component of the Symposium was the Birding Marketplace which featured 40 vendors and exhibitors with displays on optics, birding merchandise, publications, and more. The marketplace was open free of charge to the public and was also the site of several children's activities.

More than 30 birding experts gave presentations on a variety of issues relative to enjoying and protecting birds and their habitats. Among the presenters were Bobby Ray Harrison, one of the rediscoverers of the Ivory Billed Woodpecker in one of his first public presentations on the rediscovery; the Thompson family, founders and publishers of Bird Watchers Digest; Chuck Haeger, editor, Birders World; and Don and Lillian Stokes.

The Symposium included a riverboat excursion on the Celebration Belle riverboat based out of Moline, Illinois. Entertainment on board was presented by the Thompson family who had written a number of songs and skits especially for birders.

The Symposium automatically returns to the Illinois Quad Cities for a second visit (September 13-16, 2007) before moving on to another location for 2009 and 2011.

Summary of Project, Materials, Methods, Results, Expenditures, etc:  
The Midwest Birding Symposium is a general conference on birding and not a scientific project. Thus, many of these areas do not apply. The bureau did send many news releases and listed the Illinois Department of Natural Resources as a sponsor.

Attached are original clippings and publications of the Midwest Birding Symposium.

Total Expenditure by Quad Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau: \$63,478

Less Grant Request: \$2,000

Total Project Funds paid other than Special Wildlife Grant Funds: \$61,478