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# aubunique



SUNDAY, MARCH 1, 2009

## Joe Neal visits Woolsey Wet Prairie after prescribed burn and snowfall to find birds active on March 1, 2009

I was out at Woolsey Wet Prairie in Fayetteville this morning, for about as long as I could take it: temps in 20s, north wind, water iced-over, and a thin crust of snow. Woolsey was prescribe burned on February 20, so a lot of the tall grasses are short and black. But there are many places too wet for fire to be effective, and vegetation remained there. First thing I noticed -- more meadowlarks there than I had seen before (35-40) -- no doubt, taking advantage of the good foraging after the burn (I only heard Easterns). Also, maybe 15 Wilson's Snipe. Sedge Wren - 1 -- in sedges not much impacted. Then, suddenly, an American Bittern lifted up in front of me out of some dense vegetation between the prairie mounds, tried to go north, then sort of drifted back low and right over me. Other than a bittern I once saw & watched in a leisurely fashion while sitting in my car at Centerton, this was one of the best looks ever. This bird clearly had both legs and both feet. There were 15-20 Swamp Sparrows, ~10 Song sparrows, 8 White-crowned Sparrows, and a seemingly endless flock of Savannah Sparrows, which I counted up to 78.

Now for a couple of landscape comments: Behind Woolsey is NWA's newest mountain -- it's called Mt Limb & Tree Trunk, child of the ice storm, growing daily, and being returned to wood fiber by the planet's biggest wood chipper. The prairie itself never looked more interesting: with much of the vegetation burned-off, you can clearly see the height & shape of the prairie mounds and the inter-moundal playas.

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