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RH: Hill et al. ∙ Marshbirds and Invasive Cattail Control

**Marshbird Response to Herbicide Control of Cattail in Northwestern Minnesota**

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**ABSTRACT** Wetlands provide essential habitat for a wide variety of wildlife species. In the once wetland-rich Prairie Pothole Region and adjacent areas of central North America, many wetlands have been converted to agricultural production. Many remaining wetlands experience ecological change via the invasion and spread of non-native plant species, such as non-native and hybrid cattails (*Typha angustifolia*, *Typha* x *glauca*), which spread aggressively and displace native vegetation, especially in large, impounded wetlands. Management of wetlands in these landscapes often includes broad-scale herbicide application intended to break up mats of cattail and restore areas to more wildlife-friendly conditions. Although restoration of wildlife habitat is a common goal of such management, marshbird response to invasive cattail control is poorly understood. To evaluate this issue, we conducted standardized call-broadcast surveys for 5 species of marshbirds at treatment (herbicide application) and paired control (no herbicide application) sites within 9 wetland impoundments in northwestern Minnesota, USA, using a before-after, control-impact study design. We surveyed American bitterns (*Botaurus lentiginosus*), least bitterns (*Ixobrychus exilis*), pied-billed grebes (*Podilymbus podiceps*), soras (*Porzana carolina*), and Virginia rails (*Rallus limicola*) during the breeding season prior to herbicide application (late summer and early autumn of 2015) and during the 3 breeding seasons after herbicide application (2016 – 2018). We modeled their counts using a generalized linear mixed model with year-by-treatment interactions as fixed effects and site as a random effect. Before herbicide application, expected mean counts did not differ between treatment and control sites. Three years post-treatment, we detected significant increases in estimated mean counts in treatment compared to control sites for soras (*t*193 = -3.373, *p* = 0.020) and Virginia rails (*t*193 = -3.167, *p* = 0.037), and point estimates for all species except least bittern were higher at treatment sites. Overall, our results suggest that these marshbird species responded positively to herbicide control of invasive cattail and that breeding marshbirds in these and similar wetland systems may experience positive population response over a period of at least 3 years following treatment.

**KEY WORDS** American bittern, *Botaurus lentiginosus,* cattail, herbicide, invasive plants, marshbirds pied-billed grebe, *Podilymbus podiceps,* *Porzana carolina,* Prairie Pothole Region, *Rallus limicola,* sora, Virginia rail, wetlands

The Prairie Pothole Region (PPR) and adjacent areas of central North America were once a vast complex of prairie grasslands and glaciated wetlands and lakes (Dahl 2014). Beginning in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, conversion of wetlands for agricultural uses and other purposes eliminated extensive areas of wetlands in the PPR. Drainage and other changes to hydrology disrupted and altered patterns of water flow and nutrient cycling, bolstering conditions favorable to invasion by non-native plants (Kantrud and Newton 1996, Zedler and Kercher 2004, Blann et al. 2009, Tuchman et al. 2009, Kloiber and Norris 2013). In PPR wetlands, dominance of invasive plants has resulted in reduced diversity of the wetland food web, reducing habitat quality for wildlife species that inhabit or otherwise depend on wetlands (Weller 1981, Johnson and Dinsmore 1986, Mulhouse and Galatowitsch 2003). Despite elimination and alteration of extensive areas, wetlands in the PPR remain important to an array of wildlife species, although it is not well understood how some wildlife respond to altered characteristics of wetlands dominated by invasive vegetation or to efforts to restore native vegetation communities (National Research Council 1992, Ratti et al. 2001, Pulfer et al. 2014).

Land managers often aim to restore wetlands to conditions that existed prior to becoming dominated by invasive vegetation (e.g., Vacek and Friske 2012, Minnesota Prairie Plan Working Group 2018), under the assumption that such conditions will support a diversity of wetland-dependent wildlife (Delphey and Dinsmore 1993, VanRees-Siewert and Dinsmore 1996, Glisson et al. 2015). In particular, management of restored and altered wetlands in the PPR and adjacent landscapes often focuses on manipulating cattail (*Typha* spp.; Zedler 2000) via, for example, herbicide application or mechanical removal. Vegetation communities in many PPR wetlands have shifted from heterogeneous native species surrounding broadleaf cattail (*Typha latifolia*) marsh, into dense monotypic stands of more robust and aggressive non-native narrowleaf (*Typha angustifolia*) and hybrid (*Typha* x *glauca*) cattail (hereafter, cattail; Galatowitsch et al. 1999, Bourdaghs et al. 2015). As a result, many remaining wetlands have diminished ecological quality characterized by reduced plant diversity and structural heterogeneity, and altered hydrology from sedimentation, etc. (Tuchman et al. 2009, Spyreas et al. 2010). The most widespread approach to manage extensive areas dominated by cattail is direct application of herbicide (Bansal et al. 2019). On large, impounded wetlands, herbicide application breaks up floating beds of cattail (Linz and Homan 2011), thereby creating a more heterogeneous mixture of open water and emergent vegetation with higher edge density among vegetation cover types, which favors regeneration of native emergent plant species (Linz et al. 1994, Galatowitsch 2006, Linz and Homan 2011). These conditions are believed to be more favorable for breeding marshbirds (Bolenbaugh et al. 2011); however, there are few studies (e.g., Linz et al. 1994, Linz and Blixt 1997, Linz and Homan 2011) that investigated effects on wildlife from widespread herbicide application to control invasive wetland vegetation, and the response of breeding marshbird populations to changes that result from reducing large patches of cattail is unknown. In general, there is almost no published information on breeding marshbird response to herbicide application to control invasive cattail in PPR wetlands dominated by invasive cattail.

In general, breeding marshbirds prefer habitat with patches of emergent vegetation interspersed with open water or mudflats (e.g., Lor and Malecki 2006), high edge-to-interior ratio (e.g., Chabot et al. 2014), and plant communities with a range of canopy height and density (Johnson and Dinsmore 1986), while generally free of woody vegetation (Bolenbaugh et al. 2011, Harms and Dinsmore 2013). However, marshbird-habitat relations at the scale of wetland vegetation in the PRR are poorly documented. Most species rely on seasonally dynamic water levels, and some species, particularly rails (Family Rallidae), are abundant in wetlands that include diverse vegetation structures and patchy interspersion of cover types (Johnson and Dinsmore 1986, Zimmerman et al. 2002). If treating areas dominated by cattail with herbicide restores these conditions, then breeding marshbird use and abundance likely would increase in wetlands following herbicide application (as reported for black terns [*Chlidonias niger*] by Linz and Blixt 1997).

To assess how changes in wetland condition from herbicide management of cattail influences marshbird populations, we assessed an index of marshbird abundance (standardized counts) at large impounded wetlands in northwestern Minnesota, USA, prior to and for 3 years following operational herbicide application to control invasive cattail. Our specific objectives were to (1) estimate responses of individual marshbird species based on change in counts (an index of abundance) from before to after herbicide application and compared between wetland areas that received herbicide application and nearby similar wetland areas that did not (before-after, control-impact study design [Green 1979]) and (2) assess the timing and magnitude of any observed responses. If marshbirds responded to changes in wetland conditions resulting from herbicide application, we expected to see measurable changes in marshbird counts, although we anticipated the direction, magnitude, and timing of those changes may vary among species based on different marshbird-habitat associations.

**Study Area**

We conducted surveys for breeding marshbirds at large (> 30 ha), impounded wetlands near the eastern edge of the PPR in northwestern Minnesota (Fig. 1), USA. This landscape has low relief and high water-holding capacity, resulting in large pooled basins with slow overland water flow and peat bog conditions (Ecoregion Level 3: 5.2.2 glaciated plains of ancient Lake Agassiz and 9.2.2 northern peatlands; Wiken et al. 2011). Climate in northwestern Minnesota is classified as warm-summer humid continental with mean annual precipitation from 51–56 cm, with a small proportion of the total coming as snow (MNDNR 2015). Extreme minimum temperatures are -40 – -43⸰C and extreme maximum temperatures are near 35⸰C (MNDNR 2015)

Efforts in the late 1800s and early 1900s to farm this area included ditching, peat removal, and other attempts to drain water more quickly from the landscape (Bourdaghs et al. 2015). Subsequent protection and restoration of wetland areas has resulted in large, sloped basins impounded by gated earthen embankments, and managed water levels. Generally, these wetlands and surrounding areas are managed to control water movement through the landscape and provide habitat for wildlife. However, the altered hydrology of deep wetland basins provides conditions that favor invasion by cattail (Zedler and Kercher 2004), which quickly becomes the dominant vegetation, resulting in large portions of surface area covered with floating mats (i.e., not rooted in the substrate) of cattail (Wiltermuth and Anteau 2016), with little open water. Land managers employ a variety of techniques to control cattail, including dredging, disking, mowing, burning, grazing, water-level manipulation, and herbicide application (Beule 1979, Sojda and Solberg 1993, Elgersma et al. 2017, Bansal et al. 2019). Long-term control strategies often involve broad-scale application of herbicide at approximately 10-year intervals combined with mechanical control in shallow areas and during the period between herbicide treatments (Galatowitsch et al. 1999, Zedler 2000).

We examined wetlands on wildlife management areas (WMAs) in northwestern Minnesota, USA that were managed to control invasive cattail by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR). Wildlife management areas in this portion of Minnesota often include impounded wetlands, which are primarily managed by manipulating water levels to promote desirable vegetation (e.g., wild rice [*Zizania palustris*]) and wetland conditions that support breeding and migrating waterfowl and other birds. In 2015, the MNDNR implemented a program of herbicide application to control cattail in impounded wetlands in WMAs intended to return wetland conditions to those resembling a hemi-marsh (i.e., a mix of open water and emergent vegetation). Managers delineated areas with the highest density of cattail at 8 WMAs (Beaches Lake, East Park, Eckvoll, Elm Lake, Pembina, Roseau River, Thief Lake, and Twin Lakes WMAs; Table 1, Figs. 1 and 2; elevation = ~285 –355 m amsl) as priorities for herbicide application. In total, the projects resulted in glyphosate herbicide application (target rate of Rodeo® with surfactant at 7.02 liters/ha) in late summer and early autumn (5 August–6 September 2015) to 1,179 ha of cattail mats via aerial sprayers (on fixed-wing aircraft), and to another ~30 ha via ground application (backpack sprayers and from amphibious vehicles).

**Methods**

We used a before-after, control-impact study design (Green 1979) to compare counts of marshbirds at WMAs within the herbicide project area during 4 spring breeding seasons, including the spring before herbicide treatment and 3 subsequent springs after treatment. We conducted surveys for marshbirds at wetlands that received herbicide application (treatment) and at paired wetlands that did not (control). We selected control sites that were similar to treatment sites in terms of initial vegetation composition, density, and interspersion. Where possible, we chose control sites within the same impounded wetland basin as the treatment sites. However, most similarly dense cattail-dominated wetlands within the same basin may also have been targeted for herbicide application, and at some basins suitable control sites were unavailable; in those cases, we chose alternative paired control sites in wetland basins adjacent to those with treatment sites. We surveyed 9 pairs of treatment and control sites (1 pair per WMA, except at Roseau River, which was large enough to encompass 2 pairs; Fig. 1, Table 1). At 4 study sites, treatment and control survey locations were adjacent (i.e. in the same basin, Fig. 2) and at 5 study sites, nearest treatment and control survey locations were separated by 1.1–5.7 km (i.e., appropriate control sites were not adjacent to treatment sites).

We established multiple survey locations within treatment and paired control sites and conducted call-broadcast surveys based on the Standardized North American Marsh Bird Monitoring Protocol (Conway 2011). We positioned survey locations >400 m apart to minimize repeated detections of individual marshbirds from multiple points. To facilitate effective sampling and minimize potential influence of surveys on marshbird behavior, we placed survey locations where observers could stand to detect marshbirds aurally and visually, and with a broad view of the wetland basin, near the wetland edge, often along an embankment or management access road. We therefore sampled the edges of large, impounded wetlands at all of our survey locations. We established 28 survey locations at treatment sites and 28 survey locations at control sites across our 9 paired treatment-control sites (example in Fig. 2, Table 1). Vegetation characteristics were similar among survey locations, with each being dominated by invasive cattail (Supplemental Material).

We conducted surveys for marshbirds during the early-spring breeding season (late May to mid-June; Table 2) before herbicide application (which occurred in late summer and early autumn 2015 and was coordinated by the MNDNR) and during the 3 springs following herbicide application. We conducted initial surveys in spring 2015 at all 9 WMA paired sites (Table 1). We repeated surveys in 2016 at all 9 sites and surveyed a subset of the sites in 2017 (*n* = 8) and 2018 (*n* = 6). We conducted surveys during crepuscular periods around sunrise (~0.5 hour before and up to 3 hours past sunrise) or around sunset (~3 hours before until ~0.5 hour after sunset) to incorporate diurnal variation in marshbird detectability. The same observer conducted surveys within paired sites at a WMA, and we conducted surveys at locations in the same order within individual sites. In 2015 and 2016, 2 observers (NMH and a field technician; a different field technician in each of those years) conducted surveys and in 2017 and 2018, NMH conducted all surveys.

Upon arriving at a survey location, the observer recorded environmental conditions (e.g., ambient temperature, wind speed and direction, cloud cover; to confirm that conditions were within protocol parameters [Conway 2011]) and initial observations of all bird species; this first 3- to 4-minute period after arrival also served as a settling period intended to minimize the influence of the observer on marshbird behavior. The observer then conducted an 11-minute survey. The first 5 minutes involved passive observation without broadcasting marshbird vocalizations. The later 6 minutes were divided into 1-minute intervals (30 seconds of broadcast calls and 30 seconds with no broadcast calls) during which we broadcast calls of 6 marshbird species in order (Conway 2011): least bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*), yellow rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*), sora (*Porzana carolina*), Virginia rail (*Rallus limicola*), American bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*), and pied-billed grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*). The recommended species, order of broadcast, and standardized recorded calls were obtained from national program organizer (http://ag.arizona.edu/research/azfwru/NationalMarshBird/). We broadcast recorded calls from a SanDisk Clip Sport mp3 player (SDMX24; SanDisk Corporation, Milpitas, CA) at 80-90 dB from 1 m away using a portable game speaker (Cass Creek Big Horn Remote Speaker, Cass Creek, Grawn, MI). The observer recorded all aural and visual detections of marshbirds in the target wetlands (i.e., the wetland in front of the observer when the observer was facing the treated or control wetland, and not from wetlands behind the observer), regardless of distance from the observer, and recorded the estimated location of each detected (either visually or aurally) marshbird using printed aerial photographs that included indications of distances out to 400 m, a laser rangefinder, and compass. Recording estimated locations on printed aerial photographs helped observers track multiple individuals calling during surveys to reduce double-counting and verify whether the individual was within the target wetland. Final data for analysis included only birds within 400 m from survey locations to minimize error associated with estimating distance beyond 400 m and to avoid including individual marshbirds in data for >1 survey location. The University of Minnesota Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC protocol #1503-32456A) approved the protocol for this study.

To evaluate the response of marshbirds to herbicide application, we compared the mean number of counts in the control versus the herbicide sites each year with a generalized linear mixed model with a Poisson distribution (package glmmTMB, Brooks et al. 2017). We analyzed each bird species individually with sites included as a random effect and with a treatment-by-year interaction (O’Donnell et al. 2015). We log-transformed expected mean counts and 90% confidence intervals for plotting using the emmeans package (Lenth 2022).

**Results**

During 2015 – 2018, we conducted 202 surveys for marshbirds at herbicide application treatment sites and paired control sites across 9 WMAs. Observers recorded 524 detections of 5 marshbird species (Table 2). American bittern was the most commonly detected species (199 total observations), followed by sora (141), Virginia rail (78), pied-billed grebe (73), and least bittern (33), with no detections of yellow rails. We did not detect any differences in mean expected counts between treatment and control sites during spring 2015 surveys (the spring prior to herbicide application) for any individual species (Table 2, Figure 3).

After herbicide application, the expected mean counts varied among species and by year (Table 2, Figure 3). In 2016, the first year after herbicide application, we detected no difference in mean counts for any of the individual species (Table 2). There were no significant differences in mean counts for any species in 2017 (the second spring following herbicide application). In the third spring following herbicide application (2018), we observed higher mean counts at treatments sites than at control sites for soras (*t*193 = -3.373, *p* = 0.020) and Virginia rails (*t*193 = -3.167, *p* = 0.037; Table 2, Fig 3.

Although we did not quantify changes in vegetation resulting from herbicide application as part of our study design, our observations of vegetation response were consistent with those described in the peer-reviewed literature. The first spring after herbicide application, vegetation structure and condition were similar at both treatment and control sites—large swaths of dead residual vegetation from the previous growing season. However, with the emergence of new growth, areas treated with herbicide had far less green vegetation density than did control sites (without herbicide application). Without renewed growth, residual vegetation in the treated sites decayed over time and floating mats begin to disintegrate through wave and wind action (Sojda and Solberg 1993, Linz et al. 1994). The second season after treatment, at areas treated with herbicide, vegetation differed both from the first year following treatment and from control sites—live cattail was less vigorous and decay of residual stems of previous years’ growth resulted in vegetation with less structural complexity.

**Discussion**

We evaluated how breeding marshbirds responded to herbicide application to control cattail within impounded PPR wetlands over a 4-year period (1 breeding season prior to herbicide application and 3 breeding seasons post-application) in northwestern Minnesota, USA. None of the species (American bitterns, soras, Virginia rails, pied-billed grebes, and least bitterns) that we monitored with standardized surveys exhibited a response to herbicide application the spring following application, although average counts decreased slightly from the prior spring at treatment sites for all 5 species. There was no change in counts of any of the 5 species 2 years following herbicide application. Three springs following herbicide application, counts of soras and Virginia rails increased and point estimates of American bitterns, pied-billed grebes, soras, and Virginia rails were higher at treatment sites. We note that our assessment of least bitterns was likely constrained by small sample sizes resulting from their relatively quiet calls and short detection distances (Benoît et al. 2009, Benoît et al. 2011). And, even though they are known to be present in our study area (Sidie-Slettedahl 2013), we detected no yellow rails during our surveys, perhaps because they prefer shallow wetlands and meadows dominated by sedges, and because they are most active at night (Bart et al. 1984, Martin et al. 2014, Sidie-Slettedahl et al. 2015), outside periods during which we conducted surveys.

Because we observed no difference in counts of individual marshbird species we monitored in the breeding season prior to herbicide application between treatment (areas targeted for herbicide application) and control sites, it appears that our control sites served as an appropriate reference to evaluate the treatment. However, we note that following herbicide application (late summer and early autumn 2015 in our study), changes in vegetation resulting from herbicide application could affect either the behavior of marshbirds that make them more detectable by observers or increase the ability of observers to detect marshbirds, or both. We were unable to control for this potential effect on marshbird detection in our study design. Following treatment, marshbird counts at treatment sites relative to control sites decreased slightly the following spring, but 3 springs following herbicide application, counts of soras and Virginia rails increased, indicating that herbicide application likely increased habitat quality at treatment sites for most or all of the marshbird species we monitored.

Our study design did not allow us to elucidate the mechanism(s) that resulted in increased marshbird counts. Although monitoring vegetation was not a component of our study, we posit that the timing of the marshbird response we observed likely reflects the timing and nature of the response of cattail to herbicide application. Generally, immediately after herbicide application (late summer and early fall 2015 in our study), above-water-level portions of plants that experience direct contact with herbicide begin to die, and herbicide gets translocated into roots and rhizomes of floating mats. The first spring after herbicide application and during the period when marshbirds return to breeding locations in the PPR, vegetation structure and condition appear similar at both treatment and control sites—large swaths of dead residual vegetation (either from plant senescence or the effects of herbicide) from the previous growing season. Later in the spring, at the emergence of new growth, areas treated with herbicide have diminished green vegetation density and over time, residual vegetation decays and floating mats begin to disintegrate through wave and wind action (Sojda and Solberg 1993, Linz et al. 1994). The second season after treatment, at areas treated with herbicide, vegetation differs both from the first year following treatment and from control sites—live cattail is less vigorous and decay of residual vegetation from the previous years’ growth results in vegetation with less structural complexity. The weight of snow and freezing during winter causes cattail mats to disintegrate and sink, creating more edges and interspersion of open water, resulting in higher structural heterogeneity and higher plant species diversity (Lishawa et al. 2015).

Our results suggest that breeding marshbird counts increased in response to control of cattail in impounded PPR wetlands, similar to increases in black tern abundance following chemical control of cattails reported by Linz et al. (1994) and Linz and Glixt (1997). The immediate cause of this response was likely change in vegetation structure that increased habitat quality, such as decaying cattail mats broken apart by wind and wave action, exposing more open water and mud flat areas where marshbirds may forage. Similarly, Lehikoinen et al. (2017) observed an increase in waterbird abundance on Finnish wetlands managed to reduce dense, homogeneous areas of emergent vegetation, although they did not include herbicide application to control emergent vegetation as a treatment in their study. A common result of management actions to reduce dense vegetation is increasing the amount of irregular patch edges and openings of exposed shallow water or mudflat, which affords foraging areas and conditions where native hydrophytic plant species produce seed and harbor macroinvertebrates that comprise marshbird food. We suspect that herbicide application in the wetlands we studied increased marshbird breeding habitat quality within 3 years of treatment through altering vegetation and other wetland characteristics, although documenting these changes was beyond the scope of our study. In addition, we note that marshbird-habitat relations at the wetland-vegetation scale and the response of breeding marshbirds to large-scale changes in vegetation and wetland characteristics are poorly documented in the PPR. Finally, food abundance and availability may also be affected by herbicide application, but we do not know the extent of these effects in our system—future evaluation of the potential effects of food abundance and availability and factors that influence marshbird detection may provide further insight into the response of marshbirds to control of invasive vegetation. However, our results suggest a positive response of breeding marshbirds to chemical control of invasive, monotypic cattail vegetation in impounded PPR wetlands, and that the effect of that control is evident for at least 3 years following treatment.

**MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

We observed an increase in counts in soras and Virginia rails 3 years following operational application of herbicide in late summer and early autumn to control invasive cattail that dominated impounded PPR wetlands in northwestern Minnesota, USA. Our study design did not allow us to elucidate the mechanism resulting in an increase in marshbird counts following herbicide application, but we hypothesize that marshbirds responded to the change in vegetation that occurs in cattail-dominated, impounded wetlands following herbicide application—increased structural and plant diversity and spatial heterogeneity that increased the amount of open water. Our assessment suggests that breeding marshbird abundance increases following application of herbicides to control cattail in impounded PPR wetlands, but those increases are not evident until the third spring following herbicide application. It is not clear how long the effects of herbicide application on marshbird abundance might last, but periodic herbicide treatments may be necessary to maintain vegetative conditions associated with increased breeding marshbird abundance.

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Figure Captions

Figure 1. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) Wildlife Management Areas in northwestern Minnesota, USA, with large, impounded wetlands invaded by dense cattail (*Typha angustifolia* and *Typha* x *glauca*) stands. We evaluated the effects of glyphosate herbicide application by the MNDNR to control dense cattail on breeding marshbirds. We conducted standardized marshbird surveys at treatment (red polygons) and control (indicated by survey locations; located in the same or adjacent basin to treatment) sites and compared counts of marshbirds the spring before and up to 3 springs (2105–2018) after herbicide application.

Figure 2. Map of Elm Lake Wildlife Management Area in northwestern Minnesota, USA, indicating cattail (*Typha angustifolia* and *Typha* x *glauca*) treatment areas that received aerial glyphosate herbicide application in late summer and early autumn 2015, and marshbird survey point locations.

Figure 3. Expected mean marshbird counts (error bars represent 90% confidence interval) within years 2015 to 2018 in treatment and control sites in northwestern Minnesota, USA, and the difference between expected mean marshbird counts for 5 species of marshbirds [American bittern (AMBI), least bittern (LEBI), pied-billed grebe (PBGR), sora (SORA), and Virginia rail (VIRA)]. We evaluated whether herbicide application affected mean marshbird counts by conducting surveys during spring breeding seasons at paired treatment and control sites and evaluated change in number of detections from the spring before to 3 springs after herbicide application (2015 – 2018). Statistical results are pairwise comparisons between the mean expected counts in the control site and the herbicide sites based on a generalized linear mixed model with plot as a random effect and a treatment-by-year interaction that was run for each individual species (log link, Poisson family).

**Summary for online Table of Contents**: In a before-after, control-impact study design, we evaluated response of breeding marshbird abundance (as indexed by standardized counts) to herbicide application to control invasive cattail in impounded wetlands in the eastern Prairie Pothole Region of northwestern Minnesota, USA. Counts of 2 species of marshbirds exhibited an increase in 3 years following herbicide application, and point estimates were higher at treated vs. control sites for 4 of the 5 species we monitored.

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