



# THE BLUEBIRD

Evansville Audubon Society Newsletter

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Page 3  
Calendar of Events  
Upcoming Field Trips  
Grant Memorial  
Christmas Bird Counts
- Page 4  
Thank You to Donors  
Book Recommendation  
Conservation News
- Page 5  
Letter from Our President



THE SONG OF THE BLUEBIRD

A breast of rusty red,  
A back of sky blue,  
A song of peacefulness.  
A bluebird flies over a golden field to it's home at the edge of the field.  
It stops to rest on a nearby tree and shows off it's chest proudly.  
It twitters a song of relaxation, and peace.  
Of happiness and freedom.  
Of healthiness and all the Pleasures of life.  
The bluebird hops to the top of the tree and watches the sun set over the horizon.  
Soon the crickets are chirping as the moon shines in the darkness.  
The bluebird puffs up it's chest and preens itself. Then it tucks it's head under its wing and falls asleep.

-- Megan Groves  
Age 10  
Southside Student

## Working With Bluebirds

Bob and Judy Peak monitor and maintain eastern bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) nest boxes in two Kentucky state parks (including John James Audubon State Park), as well as the federally-managed Land Between the Lakes (LBL). Their citizen research project has significantly increased the number of bluebirds and other cavity nesters within the area. The Peaks were recently featured in a PBS video during their nest box rounds and were given a national volunteer service award in 2003 from the US Forest Service for their bluebird work at LBL.

**Comment from the Peaks on filming:** "The KET footage was filmed in May, 2007, and the program aired on October 25-26, 2008. We were with the videographer for ten hours that day, and he edited things down to less than ten minutes. He told us he had enough material to do a 30- minute program. It was a very humid and sultry day, and we were pretty exhausted that night."

The video will be shown at the December meeting. Thereafter a link will be available on our website.

If you are interested in reading their annual report, check the link on our website: [www.evvaudubon.org/bluebirdreport.pdf](http://www.evvaudubon.org/bluebirdreport.pdf) The report is available now.



Visit our Website at [www.evvaudubon.org](http://www.evvaudubon.org)  
Latest information regarding field trips, photos,  
recent bird counts, etc.

Contact the webmaster at:  
[therussells.golf@yahoo.com](mailto:therussells.golf@yahoo.com)

## EAS MINUTES

October 21, 2008

Don Batema, UE faculty and EAS board member presented a program on Birds of England and Ireland. He pointed out interesting similarities and differences between them and the birds we see here.

Dick Vernier, president, convened the board meeting at 8:30. Minutes accepted as printed.

Treasurer Ted Hitch presented his bird quiz on cavity nesting birds. Income: NAS 1185.00, Education donations \$1185, Checking Interest \$2.71, CD Interest \$10.79. Expenses: none. Balances: Checking \$5004.00 (reserved for grant memorial \$335), 6 month CD \$4537.67 (due 11-27-08), Bulk Mail \$263.00.

Education. Carol Pettys reported. After discussion Carol moved and Sue Vernier seconded that applications to NAS for grants would be: \$500 for summer camp scholarships for inner city students (Carol writing grant) and \$750 for Birding Festival (Susan Haslip writing grant). Motion passed.

Christmas Bird Counts. Carol is recruiting captains.

Programs. Dick Vernier listed programs through January.

Field Trips/Conservation. Sue Vernier reported that 80 or 90 attended October 4 Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge Appreciation Day including representatives from offices of Senators Lugar and Bayh. Information provided for members requested to request funding for Patoka.

Old Business. Susan Haslip reported that Birding Festival Committee is hoping to expand hikes and activities, May 1-3 2009. Ted Hitch, Carol Pettys and Carolyn Bennett will be Grant Memorial Committee.

Refreshment provider list updated.

New Business. Susan Haslip reported that Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve will have a Bio-Blitz starting Friday. State DNR staff, some EAS members and others will be involved. The results of this inventory will be presented to the public on Saturday.

Bird Sightings. Sue Vernier reported a fallout of Field Sparrows, a Chipping Sparrow, Juncos and a Brown Creeper. Ted Hitch and Tim Griffith still have hummers. Tim reported Pine Siskins, Juncos, and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Bob Wargel reported a White Throat Sparrow.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10.  
Carolyn Bennett, secretary

## EAS MINUTES

November 18, 2008

Alan Gehret, Curator of the Audubon Museum at Audubon State Park, 'took us on a journey' showing us where John James Audubon had seen some of the birds he painted. Alan has been to a number of these places.

Dick Vernier, president, convened the board meeting at 8:30. Minutes accepted as printed.

Treasurer Ted Hitch reported that as of 10/31/08: Education donations are \$1670, Balances: Checking \$5144.55 (reserved for grant memorial \$295), 6 month CD \$4548.85 (due 11-27-08), Bulk Mail \$263.71. It was decided to let the CD roll over for another 6 months.

Education. Carol Pettys reported NAS grants were awarded: \$500 for summer camp scholarships for inner city students and \$750 for Birding Festival. Since more grant money was potentially available, Steve Heeger moved and Sue Vernier seconded that we apply for \$300 for inner city field trips. Motion passed.

Christmas Bird Counts. Carol has captains. Carol recommended the Operation Migration website. She plans to go to try to see the whooping cranes when they get to southern Illinois or northern Kentucky and would be glad to have someone join her.

Programs. Steve Heeger listed future programs. February options were considered.

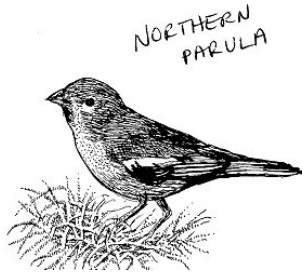
Conservation. Sue Vernier reported Senator Lugar has a new aide with responsibilities for the environment. Sue thinks it is important to send letters urging financial support for Patoka NWR so the new aide will realize people consider it important.

Confined Feeding can be a real problem for the environment. A group formed from representatives of several organizations has written a policy statement, the first item of which is to establish a moratorium preventing new operations until regulations can be set up. Sue will send letters to local Indiana state legislators in this regard.

Keep Evansville Beautiful is interested in applying for a NAS-Toyota Forever Green Grant. As a result of our discussion, Sue will tell them that EAS needs more details before deciding on a supporting statement.

Old Business. We discussed a future online newsletter, partly to save cost and partly to expand information including pictures and contributions from members.

The Grant Memorial will be at WWNP, but will wait for renovation. Steve Heeger is planning field trips for the Birding Festival. Family Day events committee includes Carol Pettys, Debbie Goedde and Connie Walts.



New Business. Information from Tim Griffith concerning periodic census of birds on a reclaimed mine site in Warrick County was presented. There is grazing on this site. Several members were interested.

Bird Sightings. The Hitches reported White Fronted and a few Snow along with Canada Geese and ducks at Sauerhaber. A Snowy Owl has been reported on INBIRD. Albino deer at Audubon State Park.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40.  
Carolyn Bennett, secretary

### Calendar of Events



**Tuesday, December 16, 6:00 PM, Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Christmas Sharing.** Each person bring a favorite covered dish, table service and drink. Following the meal, we will have a show-and-tell of some of your favorite nature memories. Please bring prints, slides or digital (CD.)

**Sunday, January 18, 8:00 AM, Field trip to Land Between the Lakes, Eagle Viewing.** Join us for an opportunity to see these magnificent birds with a naturalist from the LBL Nature Center. Meet at the southeast end of parking lot of the flea market at Highway 41 and the Veteran's Memorial Parkway at 8:00 AM and return after the tour, which will be 1:00 - 4:30 PM. Please make reservations by December 30, or call with any questions, with trip leader Steve Heeger, 867-3873. Those who would like to stay overnight on Saturday or Sunday may make reservations at Ken Lake State Resort Park Lodge (800-325-0143) or Lake Barkley Lodge (800-325-1708.) We will carpool to offset gas prices.

**Tuesday, January 20, 7:00 PM, Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. "The Secret Lives of Acorns,"** by Alan Pursell with The Nature Conservancy. Join us beforehand for dinner and camaraderie at 5:30 PM at the Eastland Mall Food Court.



**Tuesday, February 17, 7:00 PM, Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Our program will feature a nature documentary from the WNIN series, "Indiana Heritage."** Join us beforehand for dinner and camaraderie at 5:30 PM at the Eastland Mall Food Court.



**Tuesday, March 17, 7:00 PM, Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Mutualistic (Friendly) Fungi** by Dr. Jim Brenneman. Join us beforehand for dinner and camaraderie at 5:30 PM at the Eastland Mall Food Court.

### Memorial for Glenn and Nellie Grant



The Evansville Audubon board is soliciting contributions for a memorial to Glenn and Nellie Grant. Ideas for a fitting memorial and contributions should be sent to the Treasurer, Ted Hitch, 8713 Camellia Dr., Evansville, IN 47711. Make checks payable to Evansville Audubon So. with a notation "Grant Memorial".

### Upcoming Field Trips

**February, 2009, Field Trip to Blue Grass Fish and Wildlife Area** Join Evan Speck during one day of the Great Backyard Bird Count (February 13 thru February 16) to look for short-eared owls and migrating waterfowl. When and where to meet TBA. Contact trip leader, Evan Speck, 401-3094

**March, 2009, Visit to the New AMAZONIA at the Mesker Park Zoo & Botanic Garden.** Join us for a tour through this impressive addition to our city's nature facilities. Date in March to be announced



### Christmas Bird Counts

December 20: Christmas Bird Count for Vanderburgh County

December 22: Christmas Bird Count Snow Date for Vanderburgh County

December 27: Christmas Bird Count for Posey County

December 29: Christmas Bird Count Snow Date for Posey County

If you wish to participate in either bird count, contact Carol at 867-6231 or [pettys1234@aol.com](mailto:pettys1234@aol.com)



### Feeder Counters Needed



If you can identify your backyard birds and have an hour to spare on Dec. 20, please help EAS with the annual Christmas Bird Count. Call Carol at 867-6231 or email: [pettys1234@aol.com](mailto:pettys1234@aol.com)

# Thank you!

We are honored to list the Donors to our Educational Programs...

## Thank you for your generosity!

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Larry Alexander        | Mr & Mrs Linstromberg   |
| John Ansbro            | Mary May                |
| Chuck Bauer            | Ray & Cynthia Nicholson |
| Paul & Carolyn Bennett | Kris Perry              |
| Aman & Jugesh Cheema   | Carol Pettys            |
| Carol Christman        | Myron & Marcia Razor    |
| Ron Crawford           | Connie Romain           |
| Jan Currier            | Chris & Rose Sartore    |
| Susan Everett          | Jim & Deb Schade        |
| Betsy Fenner           | Jack & Lois Schmidt     |
| Don & Pat Goodaker     | Clara Schmitz           |
| Ben Greiner            | Lori Schutz             |
| Ruth Hall              | Jim & Joann Schwenher   |
| Lynn R. Hanganu        | Ashland & Margaret Shaw |
| Steve & Dolores Heeger | Marietta Smith          |
| Ted & Nancy Hitch      | Kathy Solecki           |
| Gertrude Koffitz       | Charles Taylor          |
| Lawrence Judy          | Andrew Thieneman        |
| Sarah Karges           | Richard & Sue Vernier   |
| Mr & Mrs Alan Langer   | John Wetzel             |

## Book Recommendation, submitted by Steve Heeger, EAS



Here is a book I found very interesting and which I would highly recommend: **Pioneer Naturalists: The Discovery and Naming of North American Plants and Animals** by Howard Ensign Evans (The following review is from **the Library Journal**, quoted in the **Amazon.com** listing for this book, which is available from the local libraries. The review is used with permission from Amazon.com)

*Nineteenth-century naturalists often latinized personal names to designate new plants and animals collected during the exploration of America. Retired Harvard entomologist Evans uses these names, or eponyms, as the basis for his 75 short, alphabetically grouped accounts describing the plants, animals, and individuals involved in collecting and naming these new species. A vast amount of historical information on the lives of over 100 naturalists, such as John James Audubon and Asa Gray, are interwoven throughout these well-written, interesting stories, which capture the adventure of discovering new plants and animals. Of interest to general readers and naturalists alike.*

- Teresa Elberson, Lafayette P.L., La. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

## "Conservation Matters" - Sue Vernier

Well, "change has come to America". In the spirit of that change a fellow environmental organization, National Wildlife Federation, offered a post-election take on our changing political landscape by providing a "What's Out/ What's In" list that provides a new perspective on the sea-change '08 elections. Here's a selection for your enjoyment...

What's Out:	What's In:
Me! Me! Me!	We!
De-Regulation	Adult Supervision
Fishing for Graft	Fishing with Grandkids
Red vs. Blue	Green
Homeless Polar Bears	Bear Necessities
Partisanship	Partnerships
Scientists on the Menu	Scientists at the Table
Pillaging Public Lands	Public Lands in Public Hands
Starbucks-priced Gas	Volt Jolt
Backroom Deals	Backyard Wildlife Habitats
Billions for Big Oil	Building a Clean Energy Economy
Dumping Dough in Derivatives	Investing in Natural Resources
Global Warming Deniers	Getting Busy on Cutting Carbon
McMansions	More with Less
Dim Bulbs	Compact Fluorescents
Fear	Hope

As this year comes to a close, I don't want to forget to give a great big thanks to everyone who telephoned, wrote, e-mailed, and otherwise did their part to ask our Congress and the Administration to do the right thing for our birds and other wildlife and their habitats. Thank you and have a Merry Christmas!

## McHUMOR.com by T. McCracken



"Do you plan on getting up early to get the worm ALL your life?"

## From Our President:

Despite the economic downturn our members have once again come through with generous donations to ensure that we will be able to continue our education programs. Education Chair Carol Pettys is already busy putting together a list of projects for our Board to consider. Thank you everyone!

Don't forget our "Christmas Sharing" program on Tuesday December 16 at 6 PM. After a potluck meal, we'll share photos and stories. Everything should have a nature theme. Bring prints, slides, digital images, nature related crafts, paintings or just surprise us (within reason of course) - use your imagination. See you there.

The snow and sleet are coming down right now and the feeder birds that were so aloof a few days ago are suddenly frantically interested in the sunflower and thistle seeds that have been on display for their idle curiosity. An inspection of our inventory has shown that we will need to make a trip to town for more, probably in the next day or two. I guess it's time to take the furniture in from the deck and accept that winter has arrived. Maybe this will be the year for good cross-country skiing.

With the leaves off the trees we can see the sapsuckers and the woodpeckers working away. A brown creeper even puts in an appearance. Somehow that little bird is good to see as it spirals up first the sweet gum, then the crabapple and finally the Granny Smith apple tree.

A trio of squirrels has occupied the woods to the east. Possibly siblings, they hang around in the same half acre – usually keeping to their particular tree but sometimes engaging in lunatic chases. I can see one or two of their leaf nests from the window. Seeing three of their kind in my line of sight, I can't help but think that some sort of signals are being sent by the flailing of their tails.



National Audubon has asked us to update the information on Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge and our conservation chair is doing just that. National will use the materials as part of their efforts to advocate for funding for particular Refuges. The Patoka River NWR has the opportunity to purchase approximately 1100 acres of prime bird habitat but has so far been stymied in that effort by the loss of the available funding to other, more politically powerful states.

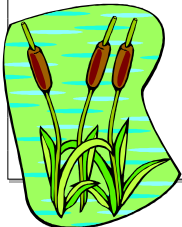
This time there are some hints that there is reason to hope. Information we have received says that our refuge is one of a very small number in the country for which Congress has requested information regarding funding needs. We will keep our fingers crossed.

Red-winged Blackbird  
With wives' all  
speckled brown,  
Nesting near the water,  
Never near the town.

Red-winged Blackbird  
Living in the field,  
Why not the forest,  
Which offers better shield?

Red-winged Blackbird  
Flying through the sky,  
Your colors are so vivid,  
They seem to come from dye.

Joseph Kozlowski



No breakthroughs to report regarding the Bush Administration's plans to damage the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and other key environmental regulations as a parting gift. According to the Christian Science Monitor in a November 25<sup>th</sup> article, the Administration is hard at work to put through a variety of "midnight rules" before January 20<sup>th</sup>. Besides the attack on the ESA, there are plans to allow coal mining debris to be dumped closer to streams, power plants to locate next to national parks, and to exempt large feed lots from reporting toxic chemical releases.

Usually, these "midnight rules" (used by both parties in the past) are difficult to undo but there's hope here too. In 1996, Congress passed something called the Congressional Review Act which gives Congress fast-track authority to hold filibuster free votes on regulations if they were enacted within a certain time frame. Conservationists are counting on the new Congress and the President being favorable regarding their concerns and using the provisions of this Act to undo much of the damage. Stay tuned.

Good Birding,  
Richard Vernier

**Evansville Audubon Society**  
**Evansville, IN**  
**Permit No. 1666**  
**Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve**  
**551 North Boeke Road**  
**Evansville, IN 47711**

**Non Profit Org.**  
**US Postage**  
**Paid**  
**Evansville, IN**  
**Permit No. 1666**

President: Richard Vernier (812) 385-5058  
Newsletter Editor: Judi Russell, (812) 491-7256, therussells.golf@yahoo.com

Moving? Send change of address to:  
Steve Heeger  
15340 Cemetery Road  
Evansville, IN 47725

**The mission of the Evansville Audubon Society is to promote the awareness of and appreciation for birds and other wildlife and their habitats through education and conservation.**

Not an EVANSVILLE AUDUBON SOCIETY member? Join now and become a member of the National Audubon Society as well.

\$20: 1 year introductory rate  
 \$15: 1 year Student/ Senior (62 and over) rate  
 \$30: 2 year Special Rate

Mail to: Ted Hitch, EAS Treasurer, 8713 Camellia Drive, Evansville, IN 47711

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

My check enclosed  
Checks payable to: National Audubon Society

**If this is for a gift, please include name and address of person giving gift:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_