



# THE BLUEBIRD

Evansville Audubon Society Newsletter

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Volume 37 No. 4, September 2007  
Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve  
551 North Boeke Road, Evansville, IN 47711  
www.evvaudubon.org

*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.*

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### **Fall Programs Shaping Up**

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## **Calendar of Events**

**Saturday, October 27, 7:30 AM, *Field Trip to Rim Rock-Pounds Hollow Recreation Area.*** First field trip of the year to Southern Illinois Shawnee National Forest to see interesting rock formations, fall birds and foliage. Hiking will be easy on good trails. Meet at Wesselman's grocery parking lot at Weinbach and the Lloyd at 7:30 AM. Lunch in the area before heading home. In case of rain, call Steve Heeger at 867-3873 for possible cancellation.

**Tuesday, September 18, 7:00 PM, Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. *What on Earth is a Rain Garden?*** Norma Duckworth, water quality specialist with Vanderburgh Co. Soil and Water Conservation District and Rob Brown, resource specialist with the State Dept. of Agriculture, Div. of Soil Conservation will describe building rain

gardens and their importance for our environment. Join us beforehand for dinner and camaraderie at 5:30 PM at the Eastland Mall Food Court.

**Tuesday, October 16, 7:00 PM Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve, monthly meeting, program TBA.**

**Tuesday, November 20, 7:00 PM Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. *Nature Photography with Al Perry,*** prize winning photographer, local business man and EAS member. Perry will showcase exotic birds and other sights from his world travels.

**Tuesday, December 18, 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.

## ***A Message from the President***

We are ready to begin a new year at the Evansville Audubon Society after another successful 2006-2007 year. We've again heard informative and enjoyable speakers at our monthly meetings and have gone on interesting field trips. Our speakers programs included such topics as fascinating work done by a noted hummingbird bander; the outstanding pictures of the birds and animals of Kenya by two of our members; the impact of global warming by John Blair, head of the local Valley Watch; and the geology of Garden of the Gods by a USI professor.

Our field trips provided views of thousands of Snow Geese, White-fronted and Canada Geese and other waterfowl in nearby Sauerheber Slough Wildlife Refuge south of Henderson, Bald Eagles at Reelfoot Lake in Tennessee, shorebirds and the nesting area of the interior Least Terns at Lake Gibson and Cane Ridge west of Princeton, a liberal sampling of spring wildflowers, and just nice, leisurely hiking.

We again had very good support for our Spring and Christmas bird counts and the Great Backyard Bird Count. We provided in excess of \$1900 in financial assistance to local school children for participation in nature programs at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve and for three school projects. We also provided volunteers for the Earth Day program this spring at Howell Wetlands. Our conservation chair person has been working very effectively with the staff of our congressional representatives and took the lead in obtaining from congressman Brad Ellsworth the first request in twelve years in the House of Representatives for funding for the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge.

This coming year promises to be another exciting year. Come join us for some fascinating speakers, followed by refreshments, and also join us on our field trips for guaranteed interesting sights as well as an opportunity to meet some interesting people. As always, programs and field trips are open to the public.

Steve Heeger, President

### **2007-2008 EAS Officers**

**President:** Steve Heeger  
**Vice-President:** Ted Hitch  
**Secretary:** Carolyn Bennett  
**Treasurer:** Dick Vernier

#### **Directors, term ending 2008**

Delores Heeger    Kate Lynch  
Nancy Hitch        Sharon Sorenson

#### **Directors, term ending 2009**

Jack Schmidt        Vivian Ruff  
Charles Sorenson    Lois Gorrell

#### **Directors, term ending 2010**

Joyce Padfield        Tim Griffith  
Sue Vernier            Evan Speck

**Field Trips:** (to be filled)

**Programs:** Lois Schmidt

**Membership:** Lois Gorrell

**Publicity:** Lois Schmidt

**Education:** Carol Pettys

**Bird Counts:** Carol Pettys

**Conservation:** Sue Vernier

**Newsletter:** Sharon Sorenson

**Mailing List:** Steve Heeger

**Mailings:** Joyce Padfield

**Hospitality:** Nancy Hitch

**Webmaster:** Judith Russell

**HAC:** Carolyn Bennett

## **EAS Minutes June 19, 2007**

Following an informative presentation about global warming and coal burning power plants by John Blair, Ted Hitch gave information about the upcoming field trip and Sue Vernier mentioned the handouts concerning conservation issues.

Steve Heeger, president, convened the annual meeting. April and May minutes were approved as printed.

Dick Vernier presented the Treasurer's Report as of 5/31/07. Income: Personal Contributions for Camp Scholarships \$480.00, NAS Collaborative Grant \$900.00, NAS Incentive \$70.00, Interest \$5.60. Expenses: Camp Scholarships \$1080.00, Newsletter \$80.00, Program Speaker \$20.00. Balances: Checking \$4172.39, 6 month CD renewed \$4278.57, Bulk Mail \$94.66. All accounts \$8545.62.

Conservation Chair Sue Vernier's handouts concerned taxpayer subsidy of clearcutting of Tongass National Forest, Congress's energy bill, and opposition to liquid coal. The most important call to action concerned Patoka Land Acquisition.

Education Chair Carol Pettys announced nine schools have applied for Nature Camp Scholarships. She thanked those that had helped with bird counts, and other projects.

Steve Heeger announced that Carol Pettys is working with Susan Haslip of the Nature Center staff on programs regarding IMBD next May 1-4. International Migratory Bird Day is May 10, the day of the Indiana spring bird count.

Lois Schmidt presented the slate of officers for the 2007-2008 year. The slate listed elsewhere in this newsletter was elected unanimously.

NAS has allocated \$3900 for collaborative grants in Indiana for 2007-8. The deadline is Oct.3. In 2006-7 EAS received grants totaling \$900, including one for the kiosk at Pine Ridge.

Thanks were given to Webmaster Judi Russell for the improvements she has made to the chapter website: [www.evvaudubon.org](http://www.evvaudubon.org).

Members and board are invited to the planning meeting which will be Sunday afternoon, August 12 at the home of Virginia Simmons. It will be followed by pitch-in supper.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00.

Carolyn Bennett, secretary pro tem

## **EAS Minutes August 12, 2007**

The annual planning meeting of the board and members of the Evansville Audubon Society was called to order around 3:00 P.M. by president Steve Heeger at the home of Bill and Virginia Simmons. (Thanks, Virginia, for hosting us.) New officers were introduced and committee chairs were announced. Sue Vernier passed out a directory to the members present.

Minutes from the June meeting will be printed in the next newsletter.

The audit committee, Carol Pettys and Ted Hitch, reported the books balanced and were in order. A copy of the 2007-2008 budget was distributed by Dick Vernier, treasurer.

There was a short discussion on wording in the educational donations letter. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the proposed budget. A form now required by the IRS for the treasurer to file to retain our tax exempt status is not yet available from the IRS, but they have been notified that we still exist and we have our ID number.

Sue Vernier reported she had been sent a letter explaining a four day, expenses paid, training program which is available for becoming an environmental activist regarding Alaskan wilderness issues on Sept.22-26.

Carol Pettys, education chair, reported that a student scholarship winner did not use the scholarship to Wesselman Woods summer camp, so she requested that it be retained for a winner next summer.

Nancy Hitch passed a calendar schedule for refreshments at monthly meetings. By the end of the meeting each spot had been filled.(We love to eat.)

A field trip chair has not yet stepped forward, but many exciting trips were suggested. Steve Heeger will plan a trip in October and Tim Griffith will look into an overnight bus trip. A few suggestions for programs were given with more birding programs desired.

Tim Griffith and Carol Pettys reported on a three-day birding festival being planned for May

2-4, 2008. Nationally known authors and birders will present programs and lead hikes. There will be activities for adults and children.

Sue Vernier reported that collaborative funding requests from National Audubon Society are due by Oct. 15. Requests must explain how the money is being used, e.g., scholarships for low-income school children, Project Wild, etc.

Sue Vernier reported that the Patoka River National Wildlife Preserve has been neglected again in the appropriations bill. Sue has sent a letter to our Senators on behalf of the EAS requesting that appropriation for funding be included in the senate budget.

Sharon Sorenson reported that Webmaster, Judith Russell, is having hand surgery. Sharon also stated that she needs any items for the September newsletter before August 26.

Meeting adjourned for a covered dish dinner.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lois Schmidt, Secretary pro-tem



## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### Lake Gibson/Cane Ridge

Twelve Evansville Audubon Society members joined Chuck Mills for a June 23 morning field trip to Lake Gibson and Cane Ridge. Lake Gibson is currently closed to birders and so only the road surrounding the 3000-acre cooling lake was covered. The state-owned Tern Bar Slough and federally-owned Cane Ridge were also birded. Forty-three species were seen.

Some of the highlights were a bald eagle feeding an almost full-grown chick, 5 black-crowned night herons, a willow flycatcher, the largest least tern

nesting colony in Indiana, and five species of swallows on the same fence.

The 43 species sighted were as follows:

Great Blue Heron	N. R-winged Swallow
Great Egret	Bank Swallow
Green Heron	Cliff Swallow
Black-cr Night-Heron	Barn Swallow
Canada Goose	Gray Catbird
Mallard	Brown Thrasher
Turkey Vulture	American Robin
Bald Eagle	Blue Jay
American Kestrel	European Starling
Northern Bobwhite	House Sparrow
Black-necked Stilt	Warbling Vireo
Killdeer	American Goldfinch
Forster's Tern	Common Yellowthroat
Least Tern	Field Sparrow
Mourning Dove	Song Sparrow
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Indigo Bunting
Belted Kingfisher	Dickcissel
Red-headed Woodpecker	Rd-wngd Blackbird
Northern Flicker	Eastern Meadowlark
Willow Flycatcher	Common Grackle
Eastern Kingbird	Baltimore Oriole
Tree Swallow	

Submitted by Chuck Mills

### Needed: Field Trip Chairperson

Field trips have attracted many new EAS members. Now we need someone with fresh ideas and a willingness to coordinate destinations with the appropriate seasons, set the times and places for meeting (and eating!), and then share that information with EAS members and newsletter readers. The Field Trip Chair is not expected to lead trips, only to plan and coordinate.

All field trips are open to the public and offer both education and entertainment, whether to birding hotspots, wildflower hikes, or other native habitats.

If you're willing to coordinate such events, please contact Steve Heeger, EAS president, at 867-3873 or [sdheeger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sdheeger@sbcglobal.net).