



THE BLUEBIRD

Evansville Audubon Society Newsletter



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Important Program Changes

We are excited to be back in the Wesselman's Nature Center for our meetings.

Please note the location and time change to 6:30pm for our February and March programs.

We would like to thank the Evansville Public Library for hosting our past events.

Information sought

on fatal shooting of peregrine falcon

Indiana Department of Natural Resources **DNR**

DNR Law Enforcement seeks information on the fatal shooting of a peregrine falcon that

was found injured in Floyd County near the I-64 bridge in New Albany on December 22 of last year.

The bird, which was found to be a captive-bred injured female, was brought to the Hardy Lake Raptor Rehabilitation Center that night by Indiana Conservation Officer Gary Pennington. The center's personnel took the falcon to a local veterinarian, whose X-ray determined the bird had been shot. The falcon died December 31.



According to John Castrale, the DNR's nongame bird biologist, the falcon, which he banded and released in Evansville in 1994, had not been reported since 1995. The bird was named Phoenix, and may have been nesting in the New Albany/Louisville area where pairs breed on tall buildings and under bridges. Most peregrine falcons are banded as nestlings and later identification can be made if individuals can be approached. The biologist said the bird was relatively old for the species. The oldest he's aware of in the Midwest lived to age 19.

Peregrine falcons were removed from the federal endangered species list in 1999 but remain a state endangered species in Indiana.

Anyone with information about this shooting should call 1-800-TIP-IDNR (847-4367) or go online to TIP.IN.gov. Lt. Mark Farmer, public information officer for DNR Law Enforcement, said combined federal and state penalties for a conviction could result in a fine of \$15,000, six months incarceration and loss of equipment.

Information about the Midwest peregrines (including a searchable database) can be found at <http://www.midwestperegrine.org/>

About Fish and Wildlife Management in Indiana

Fish and wildlife management and public access are funded by fishing and hunting license revenue and also through the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Programs administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These programs collect excise taxes on sporting arms and ammunition, archery equipment, fishing equipment, and motor boat fuels. The money is distributed among state fish and wildlife agencies based on land size and the number of licensed anglers and hunters in each state. Find out more information about fish and wildlife management in Indiana at www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild.

Officers for 2010Brian Taylor
PresidentRichard Vernier
Vice PresidentChris Pace
TreasurerJoyce Padfield
Secretary

The Christmas potluck was held at Central Library Browning Event Room at 6:00 PM. Everyone brought a favorite dish and it was enjoyed by all.

Afterwards some people brought their photographs and slides of nature trips. It was very interesting. No business was conducted.

Meeting was adjourned.

Joyce Padfield, Secretary

Directors for 2010Don Batema
Susan Haislip
Sarah Karges
Jim Lodato
Carolyn Bennett
Judith Russell
Ron Russell
Jessica Franck
Jason Reffett
Stephen Rose
Bart Wilson
Evan Speck
Delores HeegerEAS MINUTES
January 18, 2011

Following a presentation by Dr. Rashid on Water Conservation, President Brian Taylor brought the meeting to order. The minutes were approved as printed.. The treasurer, Chris Pace, gave the treasurer's report: Checking: \$3,347.83 and CD \$4,727.33

The winter bird counts went well. There were fewer people than usual. Posey and Warrick counties had good counts.

We have three openings on the board of directors. Carolyn Bennett volunteered and Susan Haislip moved to accept her and Bart Wilson seconded the motion. Motion passed. Also, Delores Heeger volunteered and Steve Heeger moved to accept her and Carolyn Bennett seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Brian reported lots of red wings, starlings, grackles and crows were seen in the Posey count. Jim Campbell has seen a northern shrike in Elberfeld numerous times. Greg Meyer reported that Eagle Slough has lots of different kinds of woodpeckers.

There were 15 people present at the meeting.

Bart Wilson will head a subcommittee to discuss whether to have advertising in the newsletter.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Padfield, Secretary

**Committee Members
for 2010**Steve Heeger
Sue Vernier
Carolyn Bennett
Vivian Ruff
Carol Pettys*Calendar of Events*

Tuesday, February 15, 2011, 6:30 pm Wesselmans Nature Center, Richard Vernier, speaker Richard Vernier, past EAS president and current director of the newly formed Friends of Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge group will talk about where and how to bird this sprawling property. He will discuss new walking trails, the best driving routes, birding hotspots, and provide maps and handouts, as well as share photos of the area. Business meeting will be afterward at 7:30 pm.

**NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
REFUGE**

Tuesday, March 15, 2011, 6:30 pm Wesselmans Nature Center, Don Batema "Skomer: A Portrait of a Welsh Island" Skomer Island is one of the premier birding sites situated in the Irish Sea off the Pembrokeshire Coast of Wales. It is home to one-third of the world's population of Manx Shearwater's, and holds impressive populations of Puffins, Guillemots, Razorbills, and an amazing variety of other wildlife. The wildlife of the island rely heavily on a variety of complex and important terrestrial and marine ecosystems. On a cloudy, drizzly day in June 2010, I had the opportunity to spend some time observing and photographing the wildlife and habitat of the island, and now would like to take this opportunity to share my experiences and provide a portrait of this magnificent Welsh island. Business meeting will be afterward at 7:30 pm.



Tell Your NestWatch Story

We hope you've been inspired by some of the great stories showcased on our Featured Participant page. We've had stories about awkward fledging bluebirds, student groups learning about nesting birds, and individuals building more natural bird boxes. Now tell your story! Email your story and photos to NestWatch, nestwatch@cornell.edu. If your story is selected for the website, you will also receive one of our Common Nesting Birds posters, designed by artist Pedro Fernandes.

Audubon Online Bird Guide

This convenient online guide features 750 species. Search and identify hundreds of North American birds with text, photos, sounds, range maps and more. www.audubonbirds.org



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

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Call for Mini-Grant Applicants

Funds help organizers create fun neighborhood events

Ithaca, NY--The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's "Celebrate Urban Birds" project is now accepting applications for another round of mini-grants. Grants average \$250-\$500 and are used to fund neighborhood events that promote an appreciation for birds and nature.

Neighborhood events or projects feature activities involving birds, community service, art, greening, and science. Participants collect simple information about common birds and report to the Cornell Lab. Celebrate Urban Birds mini-grants could be used to support a bird-activity day at a local museum, afterschool program, library, or community center, or fund art and gardening activities at your club, business, school, senior center, or neighborhood.

To apply for a mini-grant, visit www.CelebrateUrbanBirds.org. Organizations working with underserved communities are strongly encouraged to apply. No experience with birds is required. Deadline to apply is February 15, 2011

Celebrate Urban Birds is a free, year-round citizen science project in which participants watch birds in their neighborhoods and report what they see. This information helps scientists better understand how birds survive in cities and make use of green spaces, including parks and gardens.

Contact: Karen Purcell, Project Leader, (607) 254-2455, urban-birds@cornell.edu

Materials Needed!!

Family Day for the Ohio Valley Birding Festival will be Saturday, April 30, at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. We will need lots of:

- toilet tissue rolls
- clean plastic water or milk jugs (half or full gallon) with lids

Believe it or not, the kids will reuse these materials to make nifty binoculars and bird feeders! They will be collected at the EAS meetings on March 15 or April 19. If you're not able to bring them at that time, please contact Carol at: 867-6231 or pettys1234@aol.com for pickup.

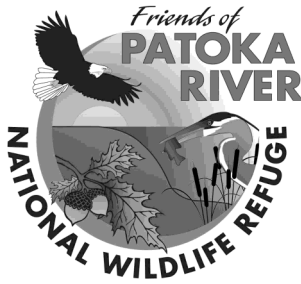
Visit our Website at www.evvaudubon.org
Latest information regarding field trips, photos,
recent bird counts, etc.

Contact the webmaster at:
therussells.golf@yahoo.com



Birding at Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge and Cane Ridge Wildlife Management Area

By: Richard Vernier



Were you aware that a short ways north of Evansville there are nearly 7,000 acres of public land dedicated primarily to birds? That in fact is the focus of Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge (PRNWR). Officially a mid-migration stopover for waterfowl, the refuge does much more than that by providing a range of habitat beyond just moist soil management areas targeted for ducks

and geese.

Within the boundaries of the refuge you will find bottomland and upland hardwood forests with woodpeckers, owls and warblers; old oxbows with herons, bitterns and rails; and open grasslands with birds such as Henslow's sparrows, bobolinks, and dickcissels.

PRNWR stretches for 20 miles along the Patoka River and is approximately centered on Oakland City. An additional unit, the Cane Ridge Wildlife Management Area, is located 24 miles to the west – almost to the Wabash River and just south of the Duke Energy Gibson Generating Station.

Over 231 bird species have been observed within the refuge purchase boundary and over 212 have been seen at Cane Ridge. Some rarities include: golden eagle, wood stork, Hudsonian godwit, white ibis, whooping crane. Bald Eagles regularly nest at Snakey Point Marsh in the heart of the refuge.

The Cane Ridge WMA was established to provide protected breeding habitat for the federally endangered Interior Least Tern but, being situated in close proximity to the huge Duke Energy cooling lake and the Wabash River, attracts far more than that. A visit to the large observation platform almost always turns up a surprise or two.

Because the refuge is still being built out, it is somewhat fragmented and this can make visiting it a little confusing. To help you out, we have posted some maps and roadlogs on the Evansville Audubon Society website. To view these, just visit www.evvaudubon.org. We will also have some printed copies at the February 15, 2011 meeting of the Evansville Audubon Society, where we will present a program on birding at Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge. Also, if you have questions, the refuge office, located at 510 ½ West Morton Street in Oakland City, can be reached at (812)749-3199 during normal weekday working hours.

Learn to identify frog and toad calls, Feb. 16 and 23

Two one-time workshops on Indiana's 17 frog and toad species will be offered this month, one at [Angel Mound State Historic Site](#) on Feb. 23 at 6 p.m. CST.

Attendees will learn how to identify Indiana toads and frogs by their calls and may volunteer to assist the DNR with the [Indiana Amphibian Monitoring Program](#) (INAMP), a national roadside driving survey. You need not volunteer for the program to attend the training session, and you need not attend the training session to volunteer. Past program participants are not required to attend to volunteer again.

Anyone is welcome to attend, but you must be 18 or older to participate in INAMP. Registration for the workshop is not required. Internet access and e-mail is required to participate in INAMP.

Contact Sarabeth Klueh at (812) 334-1137 or sklueh@dnr.IN.gov.

REMEMBERING THE PEREGRINE PATROL

submitted by Carolyn Bennett

News of the shooting death in December of PHOENIX, one of 15 peregrines released in Evansville in 1994, brings to mind the Peregrine Patrol. I recently had been cleaning up old papers and found some information about the Peregrine Project.

Hack Site attendants – 5, hired by DNR.

Volunteers -141, approximately 40 Audubon members. Most hours -Midge Lechner (over 250). The 8 tercel (male) and 7 falcons (female) had wings marked with paint in various combinations of colors for easy identification.

Hack site – roof of then Centrum Building „corner of fourth and Main .

Food provided until falcons could kill their own, frozen (then thawed) quail.

Observation site- roof of Citizens (now Fifth/Third) Bank

Birds released on two dates, age about 45 days.

Volunteers armed with walkie talkies monitored the streets while the birds were learning to fly and hunt. Caps and/or T-shirts marked 'Peregrine Patrol' identified volunteers.

River Ace went missing for 14 days. Found in basement of Court Building had rehabilitation.

More observed kills of of Yellow-billed Cuckoo in downtown Evansville, than any other species.

Christmas Bird Counts

I would like to thank all those that participated in this years Christmas Bird Counts. It was the 111th year for the count. I have given a summary of results below by count circle. The number of participants was down on all counts except Oakland City this year. Hopefully we can recruit more of you out there next year. A team usually consists of a driver, two spotters, and a recorder. I think many out there feel like they would not contribute because they question their skills. We need birders of all skill levels and what better way to improve your skills?! In particular we are in need of yard and feeder counters. We did not have a single yard counter for Posey County.

Special thanks go to Dan Collins from Collins Pest Management for covering the Oakland City and Western Gibson County circles and Tim Griffith from Wild Birds Unlimited for covering the Warrick County circle. If you or your business would be interested in sponsoring the Posey or Evansville circles, please let us know.

Sincerely,
Brian Taylor, EAS President



Vanderburgh County

73 species. 22,236 individuals. 26 participants in 8 parties.

A small band of 10 to 12 permanent resident Cackling Geese continue to be seen around Cracker Barrel Lake. Wild Turkeys broke another record for the 2nd year in a row up to 90 this year from 48 last year. Bald Eagles also broke a high record of 3 from the previous year of 1. Red Shouldered Hawks numbered 19 which is also an all time high in the 40 years of the count
Brian Taylor

Western Gibson County

95 species. 53,752 individuals. 16 participants in 7 parties.

We had another great year. We tied for the second best count in the 35 year history of the count. We had 95 for the second straight year. The best was 97 in 1993. Chuck Mills

Warrick County

74 species. 28,969 individuals. 15 participants in 4 parties.

This was the 2nd year for the Warrick Co. CBC and we had about 1/2 of the participants that we had last year which resulted in lower numbers across the board. A peregrine Falcon was recorded just outside the count circle at the Newburgh Dam. New species to the count included 3 Tundra Swans which had been hanging out for about 1 month, Red Headed Woodpecker, Ruddy Duck on count week, Wilson's Snipe, Winter Wren, American pipit, and Purple Finch.
Brian Taylor

Posey County

68 species. 72,752 individuals. 16 participants in 6 parties.

This years Posey CBC saw very low numbers of Horned Larks. Numbers were low across the board due to few participants. Highlights include 29 Turkey Vultures up from a previous record of 12 last year, Bald Eagles numbered 13, up from 10 2 years ago, and a record 11,898 Crows. New this year to the count was a Merlin. Brian Taylor

Oakland City

82 species. 19,465 individuals. 15 participants in 6 parties.

New, unique species for the count - IMO. The biggest miss of the count was undoubtedly cedar waxwing. Other misses include – green-winged teal, killdeer, Lapland longspur and pine siskin – none really that easy.

It was a great goose and owl year with an impressive five species for each respective category. We had a total of seven high counts and three new species added to the count.

New to the count were: 1) greater-white fronted goose - 80 (two parties), 2) Ross's goose - 3 and 3) winter wren - 1. High counts included 1) cackling goose – 6, 2) bald eagle – 6, 3) eastern screech owl – 8, 4) great horned owl – 16, 5) barred owl – 5 (tie with 2005), 6) yellow-rumped warbler – 22 and 7) common grackle – 10,555.

Dan Collins

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Visit our website at: www.evvaudubon.org

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: Chris Pace, EAS Treasurer, 8722 Whirlaway Drive, Newburgh, IN 47630

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