



THE BLUEBIRD

Evansville Audubon Society Newsletter

Volume 40 No. 9; June, 2011

WWW.evvaudubon.org

This Issue Edited By: Richard & Sue Vernier

Calendar of Events:

Tuesday, June 21, 6:00 pm, Picnic at Wesselman Woods Shelter House #1. Bring your favorite dish to share, table service, and drink. If there is bad weather, the picnic will move indoors to the Nature Center.
7:00 pm, Wesselman Woods Nature Center: Larry Hazelwood "Remediation of Brine Damaged Soil". With an MS in Environmental Science, Mr. Hazelwood worked in the field of soil brine inventory and remediation for the many oil well sites where, in the past, salt water from the crude oil/brine mixture was dumped out on the ground.
8:00 pm, Annual Members Meeting.

Saturday, June 25, 7 am, Field Trip to Goose Pond FWA. Meet at Buehler's Buy-Low grocery parking lot, Hwy 41 in front of 4-H center. Contact is Jim Lodato at 812-867-0063 or jclodato@yahoo.com.

July 8-10, Indiana Audubon Society Weekend of Birding in Southwest IN. Alan Bruner, IAS field trips chair, has sent a special invitation to Evansville Audubon members to participate free of charge! (Normally, they charge individuals \$15 if not members of IAS.) See separate article in this newsletter.

Saturday, August 13, 7 am, Field Trip to Falls of Ohio State Park. Meet at Schnucks grocery at 3501 N. Green River Rd. (near Evansville Day School). Contact is Jim Lodato at 812-867-0063 or jclodato@yahoo.com.

Job Opportunities:

Newsletter Editor

The Newsletter Editor position is still open. Anyone with the motivation is encouraged to step forward. Please note that this is a volunteer position; Evansville Audubon Society does not have paid staff.

While the use of a computer does simplify the layout process it certainly isn't necessary; for many years our newsletter was published using the ancient art of cut and paste. Enthusiasm and commitment along with good English skills are the primary qualifications for a candidate for the newsletter editor position. Please contact Brian Taylor at (812) 480-0588 or brian.taylor@haubstadt.com if you are interested.

Publicity Chair

The Publicity Chair position is also still open. The position involves giving information about our activities to the local media. Please contact Brian Taylor at (812) 480-0588 or brian.taylor@haubstadt.com, if you are interested.

Minutes of Evansville Audubon Society Director's Meetings:

May 17, 2011

Alan Gehret, curator of John James Audubon Museum, presented an enjoyable program on J.J. Audubon's grand last journey, the 1843 Missouri River Expedition.

President Brian Taylor called the meeting to order at 8:26 pm. The minutes from the April meeting will be published in the June newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: Chris Pace reported: checking \$6,177.75-includes reserved funds for OVBF \$2,779.01 (not finalized), Education \$111.27, and Memorials \$470; CD \$4,735.89; Bulk Mail Account \$117.56. Susan Haislip made a motion to automatically renew the CD; seconded by Lois Schmidt. Approved.

Birding Festival: Carol Pettys reported a great turnout of 429 in attendance family day. Susan Haislip reported successful field trips in spite of flooding—out of state attendees were from NY, MD, IL. Don Batema confirmed 170 total species count during the festival. Dr. Greij's visit was a success.

Conservation: Sue Vernier made a motion for EAS to sign a joint response in support of the EPA draft guidance to restore Clean Water Act wetlands protection. Steve Heeger seconded. Motion approved. Brian Taylor distributed copies of National Audubon's Eagle Conservation Plan Guidance comments for review. Alan Gehret asked for public comments on Kentucky's proposed Sandhill Crane hunt.

Field Trips: Sue Vernier reported on trips planned for June and August. Details in the June newsletter.

Bird Counts: Carol Pettys will have the results in the June newsletter.

Old Business: Bart Wilson is still gathering information on whether to have newsletter ads. Brian Taylor issued an appeal for a newsletter editor. Deadline for articles in the June issue is May 22. The EAS website is shutdown due to non-payment. Brian is seeking a new web host. Sue Vernier made a motion appointing Brian Taylor as new webmaster. Sarah Karges seconded. Motion approved.

New Business: Carol Pettys needs Great American Cleanup volunteers. Carol approved two education grant changes; no affect on \$ outlays. Susan Haislip will investigate a TogetherGreen application request.

Nomination Committee: Sue Vernier presented a slate of nominees for officers and directors.

Announcements and Items From the Floor: Carolyn Bennett is home from the hospital but cards and calls are welcomed. Jessica Franck announced her engagement to be married. Friends of PRNWR have a tree planting work day May 21. Due to Tim Griffith's injury, Susan needs a replacement hike leader.

Bird sightings were shared and meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Sue Vernier, Secretary Pro Tem

April 19, 2011

Susan Haislip called the meeting to order following a presentation by Paul Bouseman, botanical curator at Mesker Zoo and Botanical Garden, on "Landscaping with Native Plants for the Birds." The minutes for the March meeting were approved as published in the newsletter.

Treasurer's Report from Chris Pace was presented:

Checking account:	\$2833.34
Reserved Funds:	
Birding Festival:	\$3210.07
Education and Conservation:	\$85.39
Memorials	\$470.00
Total Checking, including resv'd funds	\$6598.80
CD:	\$4733.75
Bulk Mail:	\$117.56

Field Trip report given by Mel Lodato, detailing the numerous trips to be included in the Ohio Valley Birding Festival, April 27-May 1, as well as the Spring Bird Count on May 14, being chaired by Carol Pettys. The status of planning for the OVBF was reviewed by chair LD Harry and EAS members working on the festival. Carol stated that additional volunteers were needed for the Family Day.

Education Carol Pettys stated that thank you notes have been received from several of the schools which received project grants from the EAS. Carol also stated that the annual Great American Cleanup project with Keep Evansville Beautiful will be May 21 at the North Woods, and that additional volunteers are needed.

Conservation Sue Vernier reported that the Senate defeated four amendments that attacked the Clean Air Act and the Environmental Protection Agency during budget battles. The bad news is that the budget deal stripped endangered species protection of gray wolves in the northern Rockies. This circumvents the will of the Federal Courts and science and sets a dangerous precedent that allows a political rather than scientific judgment on the Endangered Species Act.

Nominating Committee The proposed slate for 2011/2012 was presented and will be found later in this

newsletter. A replacement for Publicity chair was stated as being needed.

A possible candidate for web master and newsletter editor was discussed if Brian Taylor does not take over as web master.

Advertising in the newsletter was again discussed as a source of revenue to potentially cover the cost of publishing the newsletter. The problems associated with this, such as guidelines as to what ads would be acceptable, along with the administration of the details, were discussed, and it was moved and approved that Bart Wilson would do additional study, with assistance from S. Rose and S. Heeger, and report back at the next meeting.

Steve Heeger stated that he had again prepared an information sheet describing objectives and activities for the EAS for the past year for PR purposes, to be available at the OVBF and other publicity opportunities such as at the Wild Birds Unlimited store.

Susan Haislip reported that a grant request is to be presented to the EAS for a National Audubon Society collaborative grant on behalf of the Friends of the Patoka River National Wildlife Area for a bird viewing blind and printed material preparation.

Noteworthy bird sightings by members: White Pelicans, Prothonotary, Hooded, and Palm Warblers, Marbled Godwit, Black Necked Stilt, Blue Grosbeak, and a "leucistic" Cardinal (non-albino, but with whitish-pink coloration and red crest and wing borders.)

Steve Heeger, secretary pro-tem

Fourth Annual Ohio Valley Birding Festival

Another successful Ohio Valley Birding Festival finished Sunday May 1. It consisted of birding hikes, talks, workshops, and family day all spread over 5 days. Over 20 hikes were held, led by 15 different local birders. Participants on these outings went to diverse habitats, such as the wetlands of Patoka NWR, the mature forest of Lincoln State Park in Indiana and Audubon State Park in Kentucky, the grasslands of Bluegrass and Squaw Creek mine and mudflats and shorebird habitat of Cane Ridge FWA. The birds seen were as varied as the habitat and ranged from the resident Mississippi Kite who was courteous enough to make his 2011 appearance on the Friday our group birded Scales lake to the diminutive Henslow Sparrow seen at Bluegrass FWA. A total of 170 species were tallied in the five days of birding, 125 in a single trip (Big Day of birding on Wednesday), all this despite a record setting flood blocking access to many birding sites and even to Wesselman Nature Center itself. Checklists were placed on a tack board in the lobby of Wesselman Nature center which became a gathering place for participants.

In addition to the outings there were numerous talks and workshops. These included a talk by artist Pat Brentano at Evansville museum, a workshop on birding by ear given by local expert Evan Speck, and culminated with keynote speaker Dr. Eldon Greij who educated us with his talk on climate change and entertained with his keynote address on 'birding moments'.

Family day was again the central event of the birding festival, and this year the weather cooperated with 427 people attending at least one of the many events held at Wesselman Nature Center on Saturday. The 'Birding Basics' talk by keynote speaker Dr. Eldon Greij anchored Family day. Dr Greij was gracious enough to continue his talk well beyond the appointed time demonstrating his intimate knowledge of and love for birds at the viewing window inside Wesselman Nature Center.

Much thanks is deserved by the members of the organizing committee but Susan Haislip, L D Harry and Carol Pettys deserve special mention.

Steve Rose

The OVBF was made possible thanks to the generous donations from our sponsors:

Evansville Audubon Society
The National Audubon Society
Save the Screech Owl Foundation
John James Audubon State Park

Southern Indiana Master Naturalist Association
Product Acceptance and Research
Friends of John James Audubon State Park
University of Evansville

May 2011 Bird Count

Thanks to the efforts of 19 birders in the field and 8 backyard birders, 104 species of birds were counted in Vanderburgh county on Saturday, May 14. Despite a very overcast day and some rain, spirits were bright. Of special interest were: sightings of a Least Bittern at Howell Wetlands; 9 Wood Ducks in Carolyn Barron's backyard; 170 nesting Purple Martins at Merle and Ray Schapker's yards; a Sora and whip-poor-will in the southwest quadrant of Vanderburgh county; and Bobolinks in the northeast section.

Special Birding Moments of the May Bird Count

"The highlight for our team was the spotting of several Bobolinks and Blue Grosbeaks within a short distance of each other in a farm field in the NE area of the county. A real treat in addition to the other interesting birds spotted during the count." **Steve Heeger**

"The coolest part of my count was when it finished storming. I went back out after the rain ended and you could still hear the thunder. Every time it would thunder the turkeys would gobble. I could hear turkeys gobbling throughout the woods. I also saw a really orange Scarlet Tanager by the pond. A nice bright bird on a gloomy day." **Neal Bogan**, Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve

"My moment would be when Chris Newman spotted the Least Bittern at Howell Wetlands. The bird was in some cattails and would appear and disappear very quickly. It is no wonder there are so few sightings of them." **Jim Lodato**

"I would have to say my most memorable moment was at Howell Wetlands. Jim was asking me if I had ever seen a Rail. We were scanning the shoreline and I spotted a Least Bittern, which I thought was a Green Heron. Jim got all excited and told me what it was and that in his years of birding that was only the second occasion he had seen one. That was a pretty neat experience for a pretty great day!" **Chris Newman** (first bird count)

"A most memorable moment occurred on a rainy morning as we were stopped by Ohio River flood waters. A desolate scene soon revealed a Great Blue Heron on a distant shore and a Common Loon swimming over a corn field. Meanwhile a small flock of Barn Swallows continued their endless circular patterns in search of their next meal. Birds never quit!" **Ted Hitch**

Carol Pettys

IAS WEEKEND OF BIRDING IN THE GREAT SOUTHWEST (of Indiana)

You are invited to join the Indiana Audubon Society for a weekend of birding in the southwest corner of the state 8-10 July 2011. This portion of the state provides a very interesting mix of breeding birds in some very interesting habitats and in the past has produced trip lists exceeding 100 species. Local birders Chuck Mills, Tammy Turner, David Ayer, and Sharon Sorenson, will be present to guide us through their favorite birding areas which include Lincoln State Park, Bluegrass FWA, Hovey Lake, Twin Swamps Nat. Pres., Cane Ridge WMA, and Gibson Lake.

This activity is set up as one late-evening outing on Friday and two full days of birding on Saturday and Sunday. Our activities will center around the city of Evansville and we plan to start the weekend by listening for Chuck-wills-widow NE of town Friday night. Saturday morning will take us to Lincoln St. Park where David Ayer will lead us in our search for Mississippi Kite, Worm-eating Warbler, and Pine Warbler. Tammy Turner will then lead us through the grasslands and wetlands of Bluegrass FWA where Grasshopper Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Sedge Wren, Blue Grosbeak, Dickcissel, and Bell's Vireo reside. As time allows we may hit some other local hotspots in the Evansville area.

Sunday will take us south and west of Evansville (as far south as you can go in Indiana) as Chuck Mills leads us to the Bald Cypress swamps of Hovey Lake and Twin Swamps Nat. Pres. where we should encounter Fish Crow, Osprey, Prothonotary Warblers, and possibly Yellow-crowned Night-Heron. From there we will head north to Cane Ridge Wildlife Management Area and Gibson Lake where we can expect Black-crowned Night-Heron, Black-necked Stilt, and the Least Terns. The latter will be feeding young at

their nesting colony – the only accessible colony in the state. We hope that we will be lucky and see some of the rarer waders (herons, ibis) that often appear in the area following dispersal from their southern breeding range, as well as some early migrant shorebirds.

Meeting spot and starting times:

You are welcome to join us for all or part of the trip. Our starting point for all three mornings will be the north end of the Lowes store parking lot on the east side of Evansville on Burkhardt. Starting times will be as follows: Friday – 7 pm; Saturday – 5:30 am; Sunday – 5:30 am (local or Evansville times).

We will be carpooling for most of the trip and we will be arranging stops for meals and restroom breaks. It would be a good idea to bring snacks and drinks and clothing suitable for current weather conditions (heat, rain, etc.).

We look forward to seeing you 8-10 July 2011. If you have any questions please contact me at: abbird@att.net 765-597-24259 or 765-562-2741(cell).

Alan W. Bruner
Chair, Indiana Audubon Society field trip committee

Conservation Activities

Below is important information for the 112th Congress (1st Session) that will allow you to contact your Congressman and Senators about important conservation issues:

Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN)
306 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-4814

Webmail:
www.lugar.senate.gov/contact/

Senator Dan Coats (R-IN)
B40E E. Dirksen Senate Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-5623

Webmail:
www.coats.senate.gov/contact/

Rep. Larry Bucshon (R-IN-8th)
1123 Longworth House Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-4636

Webmail:
www.bucshon.house.gov

Notices:

e-Mail Reminders for Meetings and Field Trips: If you would like to receive these reminders and updates please send your name and preferred e-mail address to paul-carolyn-bennett@insightbb.com. It's a good way to stay current on last minute changes due to weather etc.

Nomination Committee Report

The following slate of officers and directors will be presented for election at the June annual meeting:

Officers

President: Brian Taylor
Vice-President: Richard Vernier
Secretary: Sue Vernier
Treasurer: Chris Pace

Directors - Term Ending 2014

Don Batema
Susan Haislip
Carol Pettys
LD Harry

A Message From The Indiana Bird Records Committee (IBRC)

Brad Bumgardner, IBRC Chair, sends his annual plea. The IBRC, a committee of the Indiana Audubon Society, identifies and maintains the official checklist of all birds known to have occurred in Indiana. The IBRC is soliciting documentations of rare bird sightings for their archives. Local area documentors this past year included David Ayer and Steve Giffords. *Documentation forms can be found at:* www.indianaudubon.org/Birds/IndianaBirdRecordsCommittee/tabid/110/Default.aspx

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Evansville, IN
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Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve
551 North Boeke Road
Evansville, IN 47711

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President: Brian Taylor, (812) 480-0588, brian.taylor@haubstadt.com

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

Name _____

My check enclosed

Checks payable to: National Audubon Society

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

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